Pashmina Products Receive BIS Certification

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has published an Indian Standard for identification, marking and labelling of Pashmina products to certify its purity.

The certification will help curb the adulteration of Pashmina and also protect the interests of local artisans and nomads who are the producers of Pashmina raw material. It will also assure the purity of Pashmina for customers.

BIS certification of Pashmina will go a long way in discouraging counterfeit or substandard products presently mislabeled and sold as genuine Pashmina in the market. It is a step in the right direction and will ensure better prices for the goat herding community in Ladakh as well as for the local handloom artisans producing genuine Pashmina products, currently a disadvantaged lot due to rampant marketing malpractices.

The nomadic Pashmina herders live in the hostile and tough terrain of Changthang and are solely dependent on Pashmina for their livelihood. At present, there are 2400 families rearing 2.5 lakh goats. This initiative of hallmarking Pashmina will protect the interests of these families, motivate the younger generation to continue in this profession as well as encourage more families to take up this occupation.

The Changthangi or Pashmina goat, is a special breed of goat indigenous to the high altitude regions of Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir. They are raised for ultra-fine cashmere wool, known as Pashmina once woven. The Textiles are handspun and were first woven in Kashmir. The Changthangi goat grows a thick, warm undercoat which is the source of Kashmir Pashmina wool the world’s finest cashmere measuring between 12-15 microns in fiber thickness. These goats are generally domesticated and reared by nomadic communities called the Changpa in the Changthang region of Greater Ladakh. The Changthangi goats have revitalized the economy of Changthang, Leh and Ladakh region.