

PINON HADI

Crafting tradition with a modern twist



Pinon hadi has long been a symbol of cultural identity. Historically, it was worn around the chest, functioning as both a blouse and an elegant upper garment.

With time and external influences, a separate blouse was introduced to the ensemble, enhancing its overall look, without taking anything away from its authenticity.

So much so that celebrated designers believe that it is oddly reminiscent of the evolution of the saree, for it too, was a one-piece for much of its initial lifetime!

The craftsmanship behind pinon hadi is an intricate process, relying on a traditional *komortaant* or back strap loom, operated manually to weave each piece. The process is not only labour-intensive but also demands exceptional skill, making the fabric both expensive and highly valued for its sustainability.

The garb has gained momentum within its cultural boundaries, and beyond, becoming a popular option in local weddings. "Things are much easier now," shares Tenzing, thoughtfully. Today, imported threads have become a common alternative, adding convenience but slightly altering the authenticity of the garment.

"When I was new in the industry, I hardly ever saw pinon hadi as bridal wear. So, I tried to bring public focus and popularity to the attire," he said.

And thanks to Tenzing Chakma's hard work and the desire for people to wear something new or different, the ensemble is making its mark as an elegant, traditional option for both bridal and *holud* (pre-wedding) ceremonies.

"I have begun integrating modern elements like zardozi and *karchupi* embroidery into it," confides Tenzing. "To add a touch of fusion, and perhaps to ensure its appeal to younger generations while maintaining its roots."

Taking almost a month to make, a basic set is priced between Tk 4,000 and 8,000 in local markets, while bridal versions, can exceed Tk 65,000. The range reflects the quality of craftsmanship, fabric, and detailing involved.

There are local markets in Rangamati, teeming with activity every Saturday and

Wednesday, though, and these are where you can purchase authentic handmade pinon hadi at affordable rates," added the renowned designer.

With increased online availability and innovative marketing strategies, pinon hadi is quickly transitioning from a cultural relic to a fashion statement, blending heritage with modern aesthetics.

It is evidence of the enduring appeal of indigenous craftsmanship and the flexibility of traditional clothing in contemporary fashion.

By Munira Fidai

Photo: Salek Bin Taher

Models: Upama Chakma, Kochpana Chakma, Trijita Khisha, Shestee Khisha, Anushka Chakma, Sumedha Chakma, Wardrobe: Sozpodor by Tenzing Chakma Mua: Mohammed Abu Salem

