



Indigo

Natural dye

Bengal's indigo dye production originates in the late 18th century. During the East India Company's rule, the indigo planters persuaded peasants to plant indigo instead of food. As demand for indigo increased in Europe, Dhaka became the main industrial centre. The oppression by the indigo planters sparked the Indigo Revolt in 1859. After the invention of synthetic indigo dye,

the demand of natural dye decreased, which put an end to indigo cultivation in the Bengal region. Indigo leaves are processed through fermentation and oxidation which causes the color shift from green to blue. Sediment is then boiled and dried for four days. Finally, the resultant flakes are used for dyeing.

In the 1990s, the Mennonite Central Committee revived the indigo cultivation and extraction in Bangladesh. Now, the social enterprise, Living Blue and Friendship are the two largest indigo dye producers with over 6,000 farmers.



REGION

Rangpur, Chittagong Hill Tract

MATERIAL

Cotton, silk, wool, any natural fiber

CONTENT

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