


The Apparel Story

January-April 2017

Special Interview
Johan Frisell
Ambassador of Sweden
to Bangladesh

New Horizon
**INNOVATION
NO LONGER A
MERE OPTION**



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MESSAGE FROM BGMEA PRESIDENT

Dear valued Members,

You are aware that challenges have always been on the way to our RMG industry's success, only nature and types of the challenges have changed with the passage of time. It's a matter of pride that our collective efforts have helped us overcome them. Hence we underscore the importance of collaborative efforts for ensuring a sustainable garment industry. But for that we need to determine the roles of each stakeholder especially suppliers, buyers, government, policymakers and development partners. BGMEA for the second time organized the Dhaka Apparel Summit 2017 with a theme 'Together for a Better Tomorrow'. Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina inaugurated the daylong Summit which drew a packed audience from home and abroad to listen to national and international speakers. The Summit features three panel discussions on how to establish a more sustainable apparel supply chain that creates a better future together. Besides, important proposals for improving the environmental and sustainable credentials were made in the event.

You know our industry needs skilled workforce and BGMEA has been working with the government and other international organizations in different projects to serve the purpose. The Skills for Employment Investment Program (SEIP) is one of the ongoing skills development projects where BGMEA is actively involved. We organized a job fair to provide job opportunities for those who have completed training under BGMEA-SEIP project. Around 40 RMG factories took part in the job fair to recruit employees through spot interviews from more than one thousand worker-level and mid-level trainees. The BGMEA-SEIP project has already provided training to around 20 thousands trainees through 50 public and private training centers in 35 districts in the country. Among them around 10 thousands trainees were provided with jobs in different garment factories.

Working for our beloved apparel industry is undoubtedly our top priority. However, we also try to organize programs for our valued Members. Like previous year we organized a grand picnic for our Members in a naturally beautiful place where they passed some refreshing moments with their family members amid festivity and fanfare. We also organized BGMEA Football Cup 2017 for our Member Factories.

BGMEA will continue efforts for the development of the RMG industry and we believe your support will be with us.

Md. Siddiqur Rahman
President, BGMEA



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- Gratitude for years of support for us, willing to cooperate sincerely with you and create a better future



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EDITORIAL

The RMG industry of Bangladesh has made unprecedented strides in adopting international safety standards while green revolution is sprouting in the sector. Already Bangladesh has world's top rated green factories. This is to play a crucial role in opening a window of opportunities for the sector in getting a sustainable footing in the global apparel market. And we believe our potentials are within the realms of possibility. However, questions remain -- which ways the industry should take, which strategies we should adopt and what roles the stakeholders should play to seize opportunities. To dig out the answers, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) for the second time organized the Dhaka Apparel Summit 2017 under theme 'Together for a Better Tomorrow'. The event was a big gathering of local and international experts with vast experience and innovative ideas. The cover story gives a snapshot of the Summit with key accounts of the event and recommendations made by the speakers for sustainable development of the Bangladesh apparel industry.

Value addition and diversity to product ranges through research is a silent but significant development in the apparel industry of Bangladesh. Apparel manufacturers are setting up R&D in their facilities for product development and efficiency enhancement. They are now offering their designs and products to buyers and it is encouraging to note that offers' adoption rate is noteworthy. A special story on R&D in the apparel industry unfolds what new opportunities are being brought by R&D for the garment companies. What is the importance of stable policy support for the development of industries, including RMG sector, is detailed in a report with remarks from economists and business leaders. This is really a very important issue to consider because the government has put special emphasis on industrialization to materialize its declared Vision 2021. An exclusive interview of the Chairman of Bangladesh Export Zone Authority (BEZA) gives an overview of government plans of facilitating industrialization by setting up economic zone across the country. This issue also contains an interview of the Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh where he talks about ways to enhance trade between Bangladesh and Sweden. He also points out how Bangladesh can prepare itself for GSP Plus when it will become a middle-income country and will be no longer eligible for current GSP facilities provided by EU.

All our endeavors are to enlighten our valued readers about the apparel industry with latest news and information. We hope all the articles and reports of this issue will be a worthwhile reading.

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The Apparel Story





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Dhaka Apparel Summit 2017

By Omar Gias

With the objective of opening dialogue on framing strategies to secure a more sustainable apparel supply chain from local and global perspectives, Dhaka Apparel Summit 2017 was held on 25 February 2017 at Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The theme of the second edition of the prime event on textile and

apparel industry in Bangladesh, the first edition held in December 2014, was 'Together for a Better Tomorrow'. The summit organized by Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) in collaboration with Bangladesh Apparel Exchange (BAE) brought together some of the world's leading experts to share their experiences and visionary thoughts on issues pertaining to the apparel industry and ways in which the business could realize sustainable growth well into the 21st century.

The Dhaka Apparel Summit 2017 was inaugurated by Honorable Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina. Addressing the summit, the Premier of Bangladesh said the Government is committed to ensuring compliance with regard to labour rights, workplace safety and environmental standard in Bangladesh's apparel and textile industry as its contribution to the economy of the country is huge. Sheikh Hasina asserted that several initiatives are underway to ensure the legal



rights of the workers and also the formation of many welfare-oriented programs like Labour Welfare Foundation and Welfare Fund for the workers in the export-oriented industries. Besides, the Government also strengthened the Department of Inspection of Factories and Establishment for improving the environment of factories and ensuring their safety, she said.

The other guests in the inaugural ceremony were Finance Minister Abul Maal A. Muhith, MP, Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP, Foreign Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, MP, State Minister for Labor and Employment Md. Mujibul Haque (Chunnu), MP, and Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh Pierre Mayaudon.

BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur

“
The summit
featured three main
panel discussion
sessions, offering
an open and
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allowing full
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the opportunity for
exchange of ideas.”

Rahman presided over the inaugural ceremony which was packed with participants, including diplomats, government high-ups, buyers, academics, industrialists, business leaders, labor leaders, journalists, students and other professions.

The summit featured three main panel discussion sessions, offering an open and inter-active environment, and allowing full audience participation and the opportunity for exchange of ideas. The sessions were also attended by representatives of the Government, international organizations, economists, brand representatives, development organizations, employers, workers' representatives, civil society members, academics, and media from home and abroad.



Session-1: Business Policy and Environment-Towards a Better Bangladesh

In the session the speakers talked about the importance of stable policy for further growth of the RMG sector and to reach the goal of 50 Billion exports by 2021. Key note speakers presented data that reveals the opportunities as well as challenges that this industry faces. Valuable suggestions as well as ideas to overcome the challenges were replete in every speaker's presentation from different perspectives. Speakers also expressed their hopes that Bangladesh will overcome all the challenges and reach its vision as by nature it's a nation of survivors and winners.

Speakers:

- Tofail Ahmed, MP, Commerce Minister, Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh
- Dr. Nazneen Ahmed, Senior Research Fellow, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS)
- Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat, US Ambassador to Bangladesh
- Syed Nasim Manzur, Former President, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI), Bangladesh
- Robert McDougall, Executive Director, South Asia, Global Affairs Canada, Government of Canada
- Mohammad Nasir, Vice President (Finance), Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)
- Dr. Martin Rama, Chief Economist, South Asia Region, World Bank
- M. A. Sabur, Chairman, United Commercial Bank Limited
- Dr. Christopher Woodruff, Professor, Development Economist, Oxford University

Moderator:

- Md. Shafiul Islam, First Vice President, The Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI)



Session-2: Collaborative and Responsible Sourcing for Sustainable Growth

The session was a dynamic and inspiring one in terms of what has been achieved by this industry so far and what can be expected in the near future. All the speakers defined and explained the terms 'collaboration', 'responsible sourcing' and 'sustainable growth' from different perspectives and agreed that both collaboration and responsible sourcing are absolutely necessary for sustainable growth of Bangladesh garment industry. Collaboration has been defined as true partnership and shared responsibility among all the stakeholders of this industry, whereas responsible sourcing denotes the consideration of environmental issues, energy efficiency, workers' rights and workplace safety. Sustainable growth means growing without using up all the resources. The fact that this industry has come a long way and faced numerous challenges over the years was mentioned by the speakers.

Speakers:

- Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
- Nazma Akter, Executive Director, AWAJ Foundation
- Leoni Margaretha Cuelenaere, Ambassador of the Netherlands to Bangladesh
- Faruque Hassan, Senior Vice President, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BGMEA)
- Dr. Fahmida Khatun, Research Director, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
- Thomas Klausen, CEO, Dansk Fashion & Textile
- Dr. Sharif As Saber, Professor, RMIT University, Australia
- Jennifer Schappert, Policy Analyst, Textile & Garment, Responsible Business Conduct Unit, Investment Division, Directorate for Financial and Enterprise Affairs, OECD
- Mohan Seneviratne, Program Manager PaCT, IFC
- Mikael H. Winther, Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh

Moderator:

- Miran Ali, Director, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BGMEA)



Session-3:

Bangladesh Apparel Industry – Transformation and the Road Ahead

Throughout the session all the discussants shared their respective views on how much the Bangladesh apparel industry has transformed over the years from its inception. They have also made predictions regarding the future of this industry and discussed on the best practices for the growth of this industry even further. Most of the panelists talked about the importance of shared responsibility, necessary investment in social and physical infrastructure, research and skills development for workers as well as for mid-level managers, workers' rights, work place safety, true partnership and collaboration among all the actors of this industry and such other issues. Compliance and sustainability were two buzzing terms that kept coming in almost every speech, which proves the significant roles these play in the road ahead of Bangladesh RMG sector. Demands have been made for fair pricing and level playing field for Bangladesh industry.

Speakers:

- Johan Frisell, Ambassador of Sweden to Bangladesh
- Riaz Hamidullah, High Commissioner of Bangladesh to Sri Lanka
- Mahmud Hasan Khan (Babu), Vice President, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BGMEA)
- Hedayetullah Al Mamoon, Ndc, Senior Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
- Peter Mcallister, Executive Director, Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI)
- Pierre Mayaudon, Ambassador and Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh
- Srinivas B Reddy, Country Director, International Labor Organization (ILO), Bangladesh
- Dr. Jochen Weikert, Head of Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry (PSES), GIZ, Bangladesh
- Tim Worstall, Senior Fellow, Adam Smith Institute, London

Moderator:

- Asif Ibrahim, Vice Chairman, Newage Group of Industries

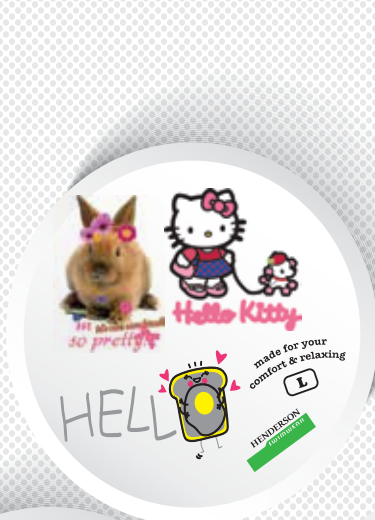


A Networking Dinner was organized on the eve of the event to set the tone of the following big day. Dignitaries including ministers, secretaries, diplomats, speakers, entrepreneurs, business leaders, buyers, brands and workers' representatives and sponsors attended the dinner. On the summit day the venue was branded with sustainable materials like fabric as canvas, bamboo to make frames of the picture boards to bring a semblance to the sustainable journey of Bangladesh apparel industry. The achievements of Bangladesh and its garment industry were showcased throughout the corridors of the event. Overall the summit created great interest and enthusiasm among all the stakeholders of the apparel industry. Views were expressed in the summit with a broad spectrum of proposals to further improve the industry's credentials.



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INNOVATION NO LONGER A MERE OPTION

By Nasim Uddin

Apparel manufacturers in Bangladesh are increasingly opting for innovation in the industry as a means of getting competitive edge and sustainable footing in business. They are opening up research and development (R&D) department in their facilities and making investment in this field taking future demand into consideration.

N

ow is the age of fast fashion where fashion trends change rapidly. This philosophy drives companies to quickly produce a product in a cost-efficient manner to respond to fast-changing consumer tastes. Practice of quick manufacturing at an affordable price has made apparel business more competitive. Companies are in tug of war over attracting consumers by offering a wide variety of products.

Research and development (R&D) is the cornerstone for translating imaginations into reality. Hence R&D in apparel industry is an ongoing process. Thanks to R&D, constantly new developments, innovations, improvements are seen in existing processes in terms of fabric, patterns, style, stitching, printing etc.

Bangladeshi garment and textiles factories are viewing R&D an important part of their business as it helps them not only to retain competitiveness but also to stay ahead in

the competition. They have set up R&D cells in their manufacturing units to add value to products, bring diversity to product ranges and development of efficiency.

Abdus Sobhan, Managing Director of Auko-Tex Group, thinks that continuous development is a must to sustain business. "If anything is developed anywhere in the world, it easily becomes public thanks to ICT. The products popular today become a commonplace after a certain period, gradually losing their appeal to customers. So it would be very difficult to sustain the business if we are not constantly in creative mood." He said. "Development of new and unique products through innovation will certainly bring business benefits to you," added Abdus Sobhan.

R&D departments of the factories carry out research in the areas of fabric, design, printing, washing, embroidery, and garment styling. The departments also work on how



We are really happy that Bangladeshi factories have now the capabilities to offer products developed by them. If you can offer your products to buyers, you can expect good prices for that.

Abdus Sobhan

Managing Director, Auko-Tex Group



Apart from garment styling, we have made notable development in textiles sector, especially woven and denim fabric manufacturing. This is a good support to our garment industry as we are able to meet the demand of various kinds of fabrics.

Kawser Majumder

Managing Director, Evince Textiles Ltd

to enhance efficiency and productivity in the factory, and this is a continuous process. Works of the research cells in the factories are paying off – products are being diversified and value being added to them. And most importantly the products developed and designed by innovative minds of the cells are being commercially liked by the buyers.

Abdus Sobhan said value-added products and innovative designs help to get better prices from buyers. “The R&D department in our company is very promising and the innovative team has already demonstrated their talents and potentials. The hit rate of the products developed and designed by the R&D team in my factory reaches up to 80 percent. It means up to 80 percent of our developed products are commercially liked by buyers.”

“We are really happy that Bangladeshi factories have now the capabilities to offer products developed by them. If you can offer your products to buyers, you can expect good prices for that,” he said in a note of satisfaction and pride. Experts also think that

manufacturers must develop capacity to produce high-end products, diversify the ranges of products and be innovative in designs to get higher prices from the buyers.

Kawser Majumder, Managing Director of Evince Textiles Ltd, also thinks that Bangladeshi apparel and textiles factories are doing very well in terms of research on product development. “We have been working with renowned global buyers for a long time, which has enriched both our knowledge and experience. R&D teams with their experience and innovative thinking are doing really well in product development. Apart from garment styling, we have made notable development in textiles sector, especially woven and denim fabric manufacturing. This is a good support to our garment industry as we are able to meet the demand of various kinds of fabrics.”

According to him, success is significant in denim fabric development and adoption rate touches up to 60 percent. He believes that Bangladesh has huge potentials in denim industry and R&D teams of

the mills are bringing diversity to product ranges through research. However, fruits of R&D cannot be achieved overnight. It takes considerable amount of time and huge investment to see the results. “You have to have a vision, patience and also investment if you really want to see visible outcome of setting up R&D in your factory.”

Graduates from renowned universities in Bangladesh, including Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), and BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (BUFT), are working in the research and development cells of the factories. They have already been able to prove their mettle in the industry. They only need proper training and guidelines. Dependence on foreign professionals for

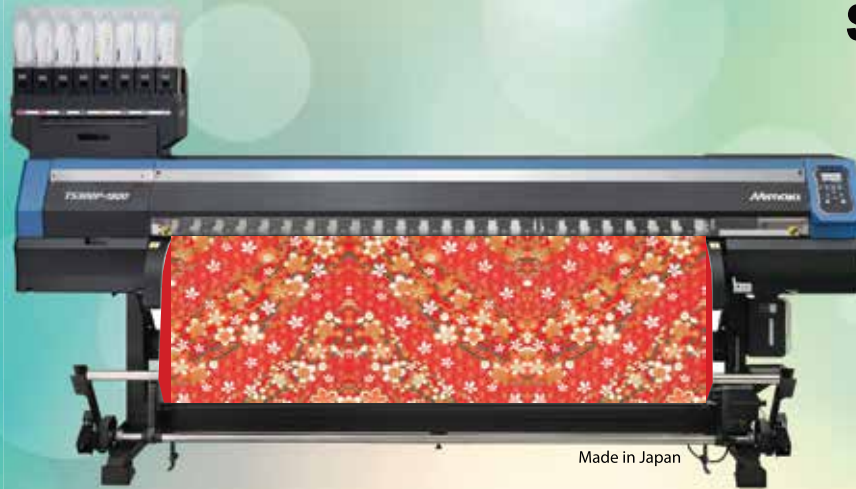
design and development is declining as now young talented graduates are entering the sector and they have huge potentials. The R&D team members occasionally travel to foreign markets to get the idea of fashion trends, stories, themes and color combinations. After studying the markets, they apply the same to prepare their style packages.

There is no denying that R&D helps the industry to stay ahead and compete with other countries. Experts recommend concentrating on value addition and efficiency enhance through research to sustain RMG business in Bangladesh. Research and development needs to more promoted and supported in the country to ensure sustainable future of the apparel and textile industries in Bangladesh.

- Bangladeshi factories now offer product design to buyers
- Hit/adoption rate of developed products reaches up to 80%
- R&D cells work to add value to products, bring diversity to product ranges & develop efficiency.
- Local graduates work in the R&D departments
- Textile industry is doing well in terms of innovation, especially in woven and denim fabrics

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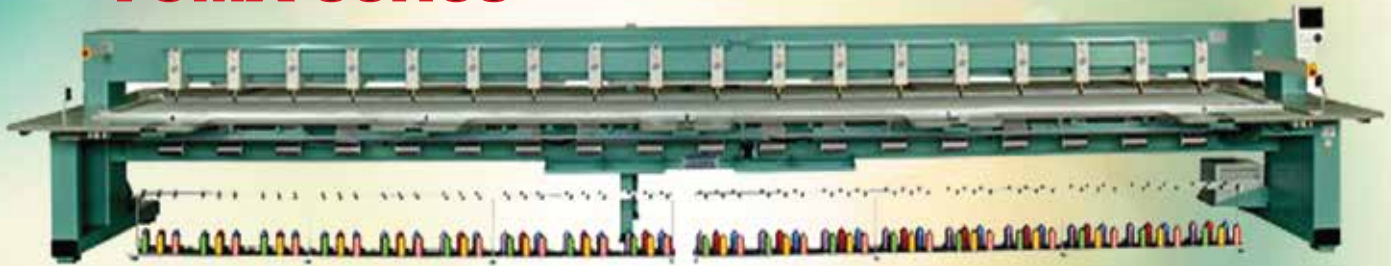
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**‘I am fully convinced
that Bangladesh will
continue to grow’**

Sweden is one of the biggest export destinations of Bangladesh's readymade garments (RMG). The country is also actively supporting the RMG sector in many ways. Omar Gias and Nabila Jamal Rusha of the Apparel Story took the interview of the Swedish Ambassador to Bangladesh His Excellency **Johan Frisell**. Mr. Johan in the interview elaborately talked about the strengths, achievements and challenges of the industry and also suggested the ways forward to overcome the challenges.

“I have been in Bangladesh for two and a half years. Before coming here I realized that when you go to fashion stores in Europe or Sweden, often you see there that the clothes are made in Bangladesh. The revolution that has been made in this country, putting Bangladesh from basically a zero position since early 80s to a position where Bangladesh is now -- the second largest producer of apparel in the world which also just became the largest producer of denim, in basically 35 years. It is no less than a miracle. And of course we know the impact of RMG on the society as a whole, the economy, the balance of trade, the foreign currency earnings, the employment, also in addition we see that the RMG sector is driving change in society, the social sphere, bringing women to workplaces. The standard that you now apply in the sector, in the export-oriented sector, sets an example for industrial efficiency and modernization for the entire Bangladesh. You can see

how other sectors are learning from the progress and experiences made in the RMG sector. Whatever the RMG sector has come up with say in terms of social protection for its workers, ETP, how to solve transport issues, how to get the stuff through Chittagong port, they have learnt from their experiences along the way.

So it is a blessing for Bangladesh and definitely it is not a gift by foreign brands. The absolute major part of RMG is the bold management by Bangladeshi entrepreneurs. They are the ones who have been able to find the mid-point between good buyers and good sellers, and that explain 95% of the story. The consecutive governments of Bangladesh has adopted some policies that have paved the ground, but this is not a government to government success, it is a business to business success, it's private.

And we have to make sure that this can continue. Also over the last four years there has been tremendous progress in occupational safety and health, building, electricity, fire etc. So what are the challenges that we have to look at now? I recognize and applaud the very ambitious goal by the government and of course by BGMEA to reach \$50 billion export target by 2021. I think that is realistic to come there, maybe you will be half a year or a year late, but basically you will be there. It is a good thing to set a target because once you have a target then you have something to work towards. Once you have a target, you can start unwrapping the truth. "What does it take to come to this point? Are we looking at expanding the existing factories, are we looking at trying to stimulate the creation of new industries, are we staying in the current sector of production which is very much knitwear, etc. basically cotton-based, or do we go outside of this box? What do we need? How do we reach production of higher-end

products etc.? So I think that is in process.

One of the major factors that can guarantee the success of RMG industry in the long run, not only up to 2021, but up to 2030 or 2040, is to secure market access for RMG products to the key markets in the long term. Export to the EU market now is operating under beneficiary trade preferences from EU, no quotas, no tariffs, and Bangladesh is benefitting tremendously from current customs policies of EU. As a matter of fact, of all the least developed countries in the world that benefit from this, Bangladesh captures 80-85% of the entire export to EU that is under this policy. So of course if you did not have this non-tariff, non-quota regime, export to EU will be 12% more expensive. And this 12% for many producers here could be the difference between loss and profit. Margins are so small in this market so 12% can actually make a difference between a good business and a bad business. So how does Bangladesh secure good access to these markets in the long run? This is something that each of the RMG factories can think about but the ultimate solution has to be with the Government. So industries, the producers with support of buyers are really advised to bring this up to the attention of the Government. How can the government through agreements with other governments, EU or North America etc. secure this market access?

Here we are approaching very quickly a new status. Currently Bangladesh is a so-called least developed country (LDC) which gives Bangladesh this beneficial customs regime. But with the high ambition of the Government of Bangladesh and with good progress, Bangladesh will leave the LDC group in maybe four to six years. That means you will also leave the current EU trade regime with no tariff and no quota. So we have to think together on how we can

Key Points of the Interview

- The standard that you now apply in the sector, in the export-oriented sector, sets an example for industrial efficiency and modernization for the entire Bangladesh. You can see how other sectors are learning from the progress and experiences made in the RMG sector.
- It is a blessing for Bangladesh and definitely it is not a gift by foreign brands. The absolute major part of RMG is the bold management by Bangladeshi entrepreneurs.
- One of the major factors that can guarantee the success of RMG industry in the long run, not only up to 2021, but up to 2030 or 2040, is to secure market access for RMG products for the key markets in the long term.
- To arrive at the status where Bangladesh will be compliant for GSP plus and this is something Bangladesh should not wait till until the eleventh hour.
- The average industry can save 10-25 percent in just efficiency measures to cut down energy usage. Buyers are increasingly asking for apparel made by renewable energy as well.
- For growth in RMG and other sectors, easy access to technology from abroad is very necessary.
- How come China with its high salary and high cost still can capture so much of the RMG industry and the global production? And here you will find some of the answers that will be applicable for Bangladeshi RMG industry. Bangladesh has to expand vertically.
- The average industry can save 10-25 percent in just efficiency measures to cut down energy usage. Buyers are increasingly asking for apparel made by renewable energy as well.
- Unless industry in Bangladesh finds a sustainable way of using water, then there would be no water left for use because rivers and lakes will be polluted and ground water will be depleted.
- New materials, new designs and a proactive R&D in the industry can meet the buyers at an earlier stage. that would help Bangladesh to capture new market, and also to ensure that buyers stay and that they increase volume over time.
- A trade union should have one task that is to gather workers of a factory and to create an association to safeguard the common interest of the workers.

get the best possible trade regime with EU after this. And this is not something that you can start thinking about when you leave the group, but this is something that the Government needs to engage in a dialogue many years ahead to secure the lowest possible tariffs like GSP plus. So the removal of the present regime and introduction of GSP plus will still be a shock. So we have to prepare for that but at least we should reduce that shock. And the government of Bangladesh will have to ask that what exactly do we need to comply with to receive GSP plus and there has to be an action plan by the government. What do we need to do, to achieve, to arrive at the status where Bangladesh will be compliant for GSP plus and this is something Bangladesh should not wait till until the eleventh hour. The sooner the EU sees and is convinced that Bangladesh will comply, then you will have smooth transition from the current customs regime to the new customs of regime. Now I am talking about scenario that will probably happen between 5 up to 17 years from now. What will happen after that? I am fully convinced that Bangladesh will continue to grow even after that. After being the least income country, you will be a lower middle income country and in another decade you will become the medium middle income country and the richer this country gets, the less beneficial customs and trade regimes there will be. When Bangladesh will be a fully developed country, of course by then Bangladesh will get no automatic benefits. And then you will have to think of what will be the trade regime between Bangladesh and the key markets like Europe, North America and so on. This is a process that some of the developing countries have been through. Vietnam also has very strong RMG sector. They went through an internal policy

process a few years back. And they concluded that it is in their interest to reach an agreement with EU for free trade. That means that even when they leave the developing scenario and go into an industrialized country, they will have zero tariff and zero quota export to the EU. So now EU and Vietnam has concluded a Free Trade Agreement. For the RMG industry of Vietnam this is extremely good news because they know that not only in the next 5 years, but in the next 15-30 years they will have free access in the EU market for their RMG products. I believe Bangladesh has to go in that direction also. Right now it is very appealing to think that you can stay in this trade scenario where you can export to EU without any customs or any charges or any barriers whereas the EU when they try to export to Bangladesh, there is a lot of customs and tariffs charges. In the long run of a sustainable trade scenario, there has to be a balanced trade regime. Of course free trading means that Bangladesh also has to reduce its customs and tariff charges for products coming from EU. So even if these kind of things are may be a few years ahead, I would advise the government in consultation with BGMEA and many other actors of the industry to start thinking what is the vision of government of Bangladesh for the long-term trade scenario. Not only RMG but there are lots of other products that are coming up now like pharmaceuticals, ship-building, lifestyle, food & beverages- there is growth in almost every sector. So now it's easy and cheap to export. This will change. So trade is extremely important. The benefit of mutual trade relations is that the industry in Bangladesh can also import at low rate. Innovation and entrepreneurship in this country also takes place a bit outside of the box. So how do

Currently Bangladesh is a so-called least developed country (LDC) which gives Bangladesh this beneficial customs regime. But with the high ambition of the Government of Bangladesh and with good progress, Bangladesh will leave the LDC group in maybe four to six years. That means you will also leave the current EU trade regime with no tariff and no quota.

you make sure that you access the best possible technologies and solutions from outside, even in the scenario where you don't know if it will be in the export industry? We want innovations to grow. Be spontaneous. You don't know if it will be for export, maybe it will stay for the domestic market but even in that case the industry has to get access to the best technology. So it means that for growth in RMG and other sectors, easy access to technology from abroad is very necessary.

For the industry itself, let's think how does this Bangladesh RMG industry capture more market shares? One may think that we can sit and wait, because salaries and cost of production in China is growing, growing faster than it is in Bangladesh. But then that's not good enough. How come China with its high salary and high cost still can capture so much of the RMG industry and the global production? And here you will find some of the answers that will be applicable for Bangladeshi RMG industry. Bangladesh has to expand vertically, it has to find ways to do the entire vertical process -- all the spinning, weaving, dyeing. So that the more control you have over the chain of production, the more profitable you will be. So I will encourage those RMG companies that have the ability to look into vertical integration and not being fine with just importing fabrics or just doing sewing or knitting but actually go down in the vertical supply chain. Obviously we will never have a large cotton production in Bangladesh so at some point you will have to do import.

I also think that industry here now has to go outside of the cotton scenario. If you look at the production of clothes, so many polyester materials, different kinds of artificial, non-natural fabrics coming, lot of mixes and I think Bangladesh needs to develop this part of its production. Because that will help you diversify, it will help you secure the existing markets as well. Many of the apparels that used to be in cotton may now be a mixture of cotton and other materials- stretches and different qualities. So you have to expand in terms of the material. It will be very nice to see some industrial families in this country to invest in chemical and petro-chemical in this country, and to expand the production of plastic materials.

There are some other aspects that has both to do with efficiency and sustainability -- this country is now facing a scenario where domestic gas will gradually phase out and imported gas will be phased in. Currently natural gas in Bangladesh is very cheap, it is definitely cheap compared to world market prices. Unless we find new large gas reserves in Bangladesh or in the sea-shelf, the current domestic gas will have to be replaced by imported LNG or other sources of energy. A lot of the RMG industries, if not all but vast majority are operating on fairly cheap gas and this will change. And how does the industry prepare for this change? There are several ways. Of course every industry has to look into energy efficiency. Without expanding the reserve, how do we spend less energy? The average industry can save 10-25 percent in just efficiency measures to cut down energy usage. Buyers are increasingly asking for apparel made by renewable energy as well. So how can government increase the share of renewable in total energy mix? Electricity produced by renewable or solar power could be an obvious choice.

How to reduce water and chemical consumption is also an important topic. Ground-water level is depleting in many areas and long term sustainability is key here. How to make sure that every single ounce of water that comes from dyeing and washing processes is being clean and treated before being let out? It is a long term sustainability issue not only because it is a part of compliance issue for buyers but unless industry in Bangladesh finds a sustainable way of using water, then there would be no water left for use because rivers and lakes will be polluted and ground water will be depleted. I would also encourage the industry to invest more in research and development. I think many buyers here are expecting to have a very dynamic counterpart that follows the buyers' "instinct", sometimes even before the buyers knows what they want. New materials, new designs and a proactive R&D in the industry can meet the buyers' needs at an earlier

There are some other aspects that has both to do with efficiency and sustainability -- this country is now facing a scenario where domestic gas will gradually phase out and imported gas will be phased in.

stage. Not waiting for buyers to say "Can you come up with this? Can you do this? But can actually be on the forefront. I think that would help Bangladesh to capture new market, and also to ensure that buyers stay and that they increase volume over time.

Sweden is active in supporting the RMG sector in few ways. One is skills development, which is CEBAI, it is a pilot to show how you can increase the competence of RMG factory workers. It is a pilot and it showcases what you can do best in your area. Our current flagship project is in social dialogue and industrial relation. We are doing it with Denmark, we are funding ILO with the involvement of BGMEA, industry, trade unions and the project is a 5 year project that will hopefully improve social dialogue. The dialogue, the relations between workers and employers of factories both by training management and workers on how you structure your dialogue at the work place. It will be training in conflict resolution, we are supporting Ministry of Labor and Employment to expand their conflict resolution mechanism. We also want to stimulate the work places to find their own conflict resolution methods because not everything has to be resolved by Ministry. In some places there are WPCs which are trained for this and in some places there are trade unions to do this as well.

Labor issues have come more and more in the limelight in the last year or two. And currently Bangladesh is under the review by ILO for some aspects of the labor rights. A trade union should have one task, that is to

gather workers of a factory and to create an association to safeguard the common interest of the workers. A trade union should not be a business, it should not be owned or directed by the management of the factories. It should not be an outfit of a political party, it should not be associated with any criminal activity or strong man. It should only take care of the interest of the workers of that factory. If this can happen, and you already have such kind of trade unions in many factories, then they will also have a very good relationship with the management. So how do we foster both tolerance from management to have this kind of healthy and sound trade unions and how we can help these workers for actually going for this kind of set up? If we manage to do that then I think we can easily improve the situation of work places. And as a government or as a part of embassy we cannot set up trade unions, by definition it has to be the workers themselves who can do this. This is the part of the freedom of association. Any indication that trade unions are being hampered, polices trying to obstruct trade unions from organizing, there are un-justifying delays and problems in registering trade unions- of course all these will cause more concern. Even as a compliance issue, more and more brands and fashion companies in Europe and North America are also asking how do these factories treat their workers. Do they enjoy the right to free trade associations and trade unions? Is there collective bargaining? So it's an important issue."



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International Women's Day

5 BANGLADESHI WOMEN DEBUNKING TYPICAL SUCCESS MYTHS

By Monoshita Ayruani

In our society, we already have a preconceived notion about “success.” We fail to realize that success is not limited to degrees and promotions. Real success is progress in life. On occasion of International Women's Day, we would like to share the stories of those who have struggled with not only their lives, but also with their existence and yet came out as winners. Their happiness has been brought not by the incentives they have received but by the barriers they have overcome. From being the pillar to one's parents' house, to being the architects of their own lives – these women have proven that with an intent to strive, one can really attain success – and it doesn't always mean a successful corporate career, having a phd or being an entrepreneur. We bring to you 5 awe-inspiring stories of Bangladeshi women from the RMG sector!



1

Story of a garment worker in Chittagong

"My father never wanted a daughter. Perhaps that's why he was always biased towards my three brothers. When we were young, he used to tell them stories of war and freedom when he fought with pride, in '71. I used to sit in a far corner of the corridor and hear him beam with pride.

I also wanted to make him proud some day. But there was no war to be fought. Us girls, we were never allowed to take up any important responsibilities. Last year, when my father fell ill and got bedridden, I took up this job at the garments to support him. My brothers have all abandoned the family, living in the city. I realized, just like there was a sense of pride for my father in fighting for our country, I had a sense of pride in fighting for my family."



2

Story of a worker at washing unit in a garments factory in Chittagong

"I hate waiting. I've spent a big chunk of my life, waiting. Waiting to be acknowledged, waiting for the right time for one thing or the other. I think the most frustrating part was waiting to be heard. Growing up as a girl in our culture is like growing up silently - As if we are not allowed to have opinions. Or choice. Even if we had any opinion, there was no one to pay heed to them. Just like that, when my father decided to marry me off, I had no option, no opinion, no choice, and no one to

express my feelings to. I felt suffocated. But eventually, I moved on with my married life. The waiting, however, did not stop after my marriage. It only translated to new forms of waiting. I used to wait for my husband to return home from work. It was difficult to kill time, doing nothing at home all day. So I tried cooking different dishes, or learning how to sew to keep myself occupied. My husband loved fish. Sometimes I cooked his favorite, Shorisha Ilish to make his day! But after few months at a stretch of keeping myself occupied at home, I realized, I was tired of waiting like that. That's when I convinced my husband and took a job here. I think the best part was "being heard!" It felt so liberating to be heard by someone for the first time!"



3

Story of an operator at a garment factory

funeral, I was still not ready to accept her departure. It was a very difficult time for both of us. Now my elder sister is the only person I have left to call family. Since there was nothing and no one left anymore to call 'home' back in the village, my sister and I decided to move out of there in search of a better fortune. We've had a tough life after we moved to the suburbs on our own. We share a single room in a nearby slum. My sister works as a house-help in the neighbourhood. We both get home pretty late at night, after work. But regardless of how tired or hungry we are at day end, we always, always, wait for each other and have our dinner together. That's the best part of my day. She's the only family I have"

"Last time I saw my father, I was an infant. I don't remember what he looks like, and I have no memory of him. Mother told us that he had left her for another woman. Since then, Ma has raised my sister and me by herself. She was the closest person in the world to me. When she passed away last year, my sister and I were devastated. For the first few weeks after her



4

Story of a worker, at a ready-made garment factory in Gazipur

"My parents were astounded when I went to Germany for training. This was the proudest moment in their lives. They went around telling everybody that I have a job that takes me to train in Germany! I came back to Bangladesh with new energy and motivation. I've become more respected among my co-workers, friends, and family. I taught them everything I learnt in Germany. I even conducted my own workshops. I want to tell everyone I meet that they should not have wrong perceptions about people and places. Knowledge is a powerful thing and ignorance is dangerous."



5

Story of a security guard at a garment factory

"I am one of the first female security guards in this garment factory. People think that I get teased for my work, but in reality, I get treated like everybody's little sister at the gate. This job is fulfilling and it makes me empowered to be responsible for the lives of many workers."



FIRST-EVER BGMEA-SEIP JOB FAIR

By Apparel Story Desk

U

sually it is quite difficult for someone to find a formal job without skills and experience, be it in Bangladesh or any other part of the world. But Skills for Employment Investment Program (SEIP), a joint skill training initiative by the government and BGMEA, offers golden opportunity for such persons with both job and skills required for

that. Thus the project has become a boon for those who are in search of jobs to earn a decent living but have no skills required to get a job.

Under the auspices of the Finance Ministry and with funding from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) is implementing the SEIP project to develop skills of around 44 thousands workers and mid-level employees in ready-made garment

industry by providing them with training.

BGMEA for the first time organized a job fair to provide employment opportunities for those who have completed training under BGMEA-SEIP project. A daylong job fair was held at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP, attended the inaugural ceremony of the fair as chief guest while State Minister for Labour and Employment Mujibul Haque, MP and Senior Finance Secretary



BGMEA-SEIP project has already provided training to around 20 thousands trainees through 50 public and private training centers in 35 districts in the country. Among them around 10 thousands trainees were provided with jobs in different garment factories.

Hedayetullah Al Mamoon, ndc were present as special guests.

BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman, former BGMEA President Md. Atiqul Islam, present BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, BGMEA Directors, among others, were present at the program.

Around 40 RMG factories took part in the job fair to recruit employees through spot interviews from worker-level and mid-level trainees.

BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman said that Bangladesh's RMG industry has huge potentials to increase its share in the global market. Value addition and product diversification is a key to seize the opportunities, and for that skilled workforce is required, he added.

"The Finance Ministry took up the SEIP project in partnership with nine trade bodies and five public and private organizations to create 260,000 skilled manpower across the country by 2018," said BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir. BGMEA has tied up with the SEIP to create 43,800 skilled manpower on 15 subjects by 2018 as per the requirement of the garment sector, he added. Among the total number of trainees, 27600 will be operator-level and 16200 will be upskilling of mid-level management. Operator training program includes Woven Machine Operation, Knit Machine Operation, and Sweater Machine Operation. Factory based upskill programs have been introduced for mid-level management employees to upgrade their skill level for better productivity and efficiency. This training program comprises of Industrial Engineering and Manufacturing System, Production Planning and Control, Garment Quality System, Quality Assurance &

Textile testing, and Fire safety and Compliance.

Mohammed Nasir, who is also Convener of BGMEA-SEIP project, said that the BGMEA-SEIP project has already provided training to around 20 thousands trainees through 50 public and private training centers in 35 districts in the country. Among them around 10 thousands trainees were provided with jobs in different garment factories, he added.

A seminar was also organized by BGMEA-SEIP on the same day at job fair venue where speakers underscored the need for coordinated and holistic approach to meet the growing demand of skilled workforce in the RMG industry.

Md. Siddiquir Rahman, BGMEA, President, chaired the seminar while Mohammed Nasir, Vice President (Finance), BGMEA moderated the discussion.

Dr. Khan Ahmed Sayeed Murshid, Director General, Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) presented the keynote speech at the seminar where ABM Khorshed Alam, Chief Executive Officer, National Skill Development Council (NSDC); Abdur Rouf Talukder, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Finance, and Project Director, SEIP; Md. Atiqul Islam, former President, BGMEA; and Paul Weijers, Team Leader, Sudokkho were present as speakers.



Speakers at a seminar on skills development in the apparel industry of Bangladesh.



Birds: Stunning Treat of Nature

B

Birds are among one of the most beautiful creatures in nature. They are known as symbol of beauty, love, fascination and grace for their colorful feathers and chirping sounds. Wherever you go or roam across Bangladesh, a wide variety of winged beauties will soothe your eyes with splash of their colors and chirping sounds. Stunning treats of nature are just waiting to be observed and enjoyed.





Masudur Rahman Mamoon

Photography is a passion of Masudur Rahman Mamoon, which he started back in 1998. Initiated with portrait photography using a film camera, Mamoon was unable to give time, due to his work in RMG sector. In 2007, when he had started his own business, he managed to give more time, especially in wildlife photography. He loves wildlife photography, especially bird photography, for which he traveled many places across the country. He is one of the founder member and president of Chittagong Bird Club (C.B.C).



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STABLE POLICY FOR STEADY INDUSTRIAL GROWTH

By Nasim Uddin

P

olicy support has played a crucial role in the development of textile and RMG industry in Bangladesh. The sector has potentials to grow in future, so has many challenges on the way. Capturing the huge opportunities will largely depend upon the ability to address the challenges.

The RMG industry of Bangladesh has come to the today's position overcoming a various obstacles. Still the sector faces a number of challenges though their types and nature have changed over the period. Timely and prudent policy support is considered a key to dealing with the emerging challenges and taking the industry ahead. Now Bangladesh is the second largest apparel exporting country in the world and envisions more growth in future.

In this context economists and industry leaders think that far-sighted policies coupled with pragmatic strategies are required to deal with the challenges. At the same time the policies need to be stable so that entrepreneurs and investors make their business plans and make investment accordingly.

While frequent changes in policies and strategies hinder development of running businesses, it also discourages new investment. Uncertainty due to unpredictable policies can have significant negative effects on investment, particularly when investment involves large irreversible costs. Investors can delay the decision to invest until they have further information.

Mohammed Nasir, Vice President



Uncertainty due to unpredictable policies can have significant negative effects on investment, particularly when investment involves large irreversible costs.

(Finance), Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), thinks that the industry suffers silently due to the policy instability and unpredictability. "For example, the tax rates and policies are changed almost every year which affects our business viability. Similarly the price of gas and electricity is being revised frequently which also have impacts on our competitiveness."

"Cost competitiveness will be the key for sustaining in the global market and it is possible only when we have a stable fiscal policy. If we have a stable policy regime at least for 10 years this will boost the confidence among the investors," added the BGMEA Vice President (Finance).

World Bank Lead Economist Dr. Zahid Hussain also thinks policy unpredictability is not conducive to healthy business environment. "If a bad policy is predictable, an entrepreneur can make his business plans through risk assessment and accordingly set strategies to cope with it."

"Frequent changes in policies create uncertainty, making business risk assessment impossible. How can an

"Cost competitiveness will be the key for sustaining in the global market and it is possible only when we have a stable fiscal policy. If we have a stable policy regime at least for 10 years this will boost the confidence among the investors,"

Mohammed Nasir
Vice President (Finance), BGMEA

"Frequent changes in policies create uncertainty, making business risk assessment impossible. How can an entrepreneur invest without risk assessment?"

Dr. Zahid Hussain
Lead Economist, World Bank

entrepreneur invest without risk assessment?" he said.

"You may have the best road and quality energy but no stable policy. Then it will be of no use," said Dr. Zahid, who has been working in the World Bank since 1995.

Sustainable energy supply is a prerequisite to bring investment and foster industrialization in Bangladesh. In order to ensure targeted GDP growth where industry has the most important role to play, there is no alternate to secured and predictable energy supply for the industrial sector.

BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir said that at this moment the most important drawback for investments in textile and RMG sector is the lack of gas supply.

"So we request our government to adopt a long-term and cost effective power and energy policy so that entrepreneurs can plan their next investments accordingly," he said.



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CLIFTON APPARELS SYNONYMOUS WITH QUALITY AND COMMITMENT

By Sameya Karim

Clifton Apparels Ltd is one of those garment manufacturing factories which began their journey at the early days of RMG industry in Bangladesh. Clifton started its operation in 1985 on a small scale with a unit of garments named "Clifton Garments." Since then the company has grown horizontally and vertically with currently nine units running under the company.

According to Md. M. Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Director and CEO of Clifton Apparels, three

things have been prioritized as Clifton went ahead with their endeavor: quality of service and material, punctuality of delivery and commitment to provide the best. These factors in addition to others have allowed the Clifton Apparels to move forward in the field. Research, patience and hard work are constant driving forces behind the company and the work they do. It has allowed Clifton Apparels to earn the trust of their foreign clients in the last 35 years.



Over the years Clifton has won several different awards and recognition not only on the local front but internationally as well. They have won awards such as, “Best Quality Supplier” and “On Time Shipment” among others. They have clients from several well-known brands such as DKNY, Nautica, Pierre Cardin, Calvin Klein, Hugo Boss, Tommy Hilfiger, in addition to several others. Besides, they also work for retailers like Target, Walmart and Macy etc. Clifton manufactures the fabrics themselves in order to maintain the fabric quality. They take care of the fabric cutting, dyeing, sewing, knitting and final preparations. They consistently strive to ensure essential measures are taken to attain the finest fabric for their products. In line with this, the best machines are purchased to meet with factory compliance rules and regulations.

One of the main areas Clifton has aspired to gain expertise in manufacturing is undergarments, ranging from women's bikinis, sports bras, to men's underwear or boxers. Clifton also manufactures men's shirts of different varieties and different types of women's wear.

Clifton Apparels produces a wide range of branded clothes, including undergarments. While many garments factories stick to one particular type of clothing, at Clifton Apparels the variety is greater. Mohiuddin Chowdhury said, “When dealing with branded products the first condition is the quality of material. It takes a year for the client to research the quality of the fabric we provide. Unless and until they are satisfied with the fabric, they will not want to go into business.”

There is a long process that takes places before the clients agree. Several barriers need to be overcome by the manufacturers in order to ensure the client's satisfaction. They range from hygienic, safe and secure factories, maintaining workers' rights, and

Md. M. Mohiuddin Chowdhury
Director and CEO, Clifton Apparels Ltd.

Three things have been prioritized as Clifton went ahead with their endeavor: quality of service and material, punctuality of delivery and commitment to provide the best. These factors in addition to others have allowed the Clifton Apparels to move forward in the field.

following both local and international laws pertaining to factories. Clifton has attained expertise in all these areas and earned the confidence of their clients. And journey of more than three decades bears the testimony of their quality and commitment. Mohiuddin Chowdhury thinks that Bangladesh has potentials in manufacture undergarments or “intimate clothes”. If Bangladesh is to see a greater number of factories manufacturing in this line of clothes, the type of fabric being used and its ability to remain hygienic or sustainable needs to be looked into, he added.

As for the revenue the garment industry is bringing in for the country, the amount can go even beyond what is currently being generated. Mr. Chowdhury said, “If we get adequate infrastructure from the government, then the country's export earnings for the sector would cross 50 billion dollars. Currently we are making the designs based on buyers' demand but when we will be able to develop our own designs, the business may cross 50 billion.”



‘Economic Zones would be a major driver of economic growth and job creation through facilitating planned industrialization’

The ‘Vision 2021’ declared by the government envisages that Bangladesh would achieve middle-income country status by 2021. Industrial development has been given high priority to make the vision a reality. The government has decided to establish 100 economic zones to facilitate planned industrialization and encourage investment in Bangladesh.

▶ **Paban Chowdhury**, Executive Chairman of Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA), in an exclusive interview with the Apparel Story shares BEZA’s activities and plans to foster industrial development.

What are perspectives and objects of the government behind the formation of Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA)?

Not only Bangladesh, many South-East Asian and Far Eastern countries especially China and Vietnam established special economic zones long ago to facilitate planned industrialization by localizing industries, providing special incentives, utility and infrastructure services. They have made tremendous progress in this regard. In Bangladesh, Export Processing Zone (EPZ) was set up in 1980 by passing the Bangladesh EPZ ACT, and later Bangladesh Export Processing Zone Authority (BEPZA) was established to oversee EPZ development and operation related issues. In the last 37 years a total of 8 EPZs were established on 2290 acres of land by the government under BEPZA’s supervision; and there was no scope to build EPZ by the private sector. In the meantime,

Apart from infrastructure provision, various incentives are provided to the developers of the economic zones as well as manufacturing units to be established in the zones. Benefits to the zone developer range from income tax exemption to reduction of capital expenditure.

our economy has expanded to a great extent and people's purchasing power has increased, creating a huge domestic market. But EPZs are only meant for export-oriented industries. So, industries are needed to meet the growing demand of the domestic market. Spillover effects of the EPZs on the economy and society were not to the level as it was expected. Against this backdrop, the government of Bangladesh decided to establish a more liberalized trade regime. Accordingly, the government formed Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) under the Bangladesh Economic Zones Act, 2010 to build new economic zones. The authority is attached to the Prime Minister's Office and is mandated to establish, operate and control economic zones in Bangladesh. BEZA's objective is to establish economic zones with a view to facilitating economic development through diversification of industry in a planned way, attracting local investment and FDI, and generating employments in the country. We believe Economic Zones would be a major driver of economic growth and job creation through facilitating planned industrialization, thus would be able to play a crucial role in the economic development of Bangladesh.

As we know the government has a plan to set up 100 Economic Zones across the country within 2030. So far how many economic zones have been built and ready for use?

Yes, the government has already set a target of establishing 100 economic zones covering about 75,000 acres of land across the country by 2030. The zones are of six categories. Firstly, PPP Economic Zone (public and private partnership). It is established through public and private partnership by local or foreign individuals or organizations where governments provide land and the developers are mandated to develop the zones and make it ready for setting up industries and the developers also work to attract investment in the zones. Another one is Private Economic Zones, which will be set up individually or jointly by local, non-residential Bangladeshis, business organizations or groups. Government Economic Zones will be owned by the government while Special Economic Zones is built privately or by public-private partnership or through the government initiative for establishing any kind of specialized industry or commercial organization. G2G Economic Zones will be set up upon initiative by the government of a foreign country or the government of Bangladesh or in partnership between government of Bangladesh and government of a foreign country. Another category is Economic Zones which is established in collaboration with or partnership between Government Authorities or Organizations.

We have already given final license to four Private Economic Zones, where industries have been set up and more are being established. The biggest cement factory of the country has been established in the Aman

Economic Zone. The daily production capacity of the mill is around 10 thousand metric tons. Besides, industries are being built in Meghna Economic Zone. We have given final approval to Abdul Monem EZ Ltd, where we are expecting a big amount of FDI and discussion regarding this is in final stage. Bay Economic Zone in Gazipur also got license from BEZA for operations where entire investment will be from foreign investors. Besides, developers have been selected for the PPP EZs, One in Mongla and the other in Mirsharai. Moreover, development works in Jamalpur EZ, Naf Tourism Park and Sabrang Tourism Economic Zone are going fast and within 2 years those will be ready for investment. In addition, BEZA is offering land directly to the large and specialized industries in Mirsharai and Srihatta Economic Zone. We are receiving proposal for the land which is more than double the land we have at present in this zone.

What conditions have been taken into consideration before selecting sites for Economic Zones?

Well, a few things are always on top of the list before choosing sites for setting up any establishment, be it an industry, educational institution, hospital, or tourism park. If you want to build a tourism park, you have to ensure that road, rail and air connectivity is available and hotel, resorts, and recreational activities are within easy reach. Economic zone is no exception. Strategic locations for the economic zones have been chosen based on the

regional connectivity, easy access to ports, road, rail, airport, availability of labor force and backward linkage industries, utility services like water supply, electricity, gas supply etc. We have taken all these important issues into consideration while selecting areas for economic zones to make them suitable for investment.

What special facilities or incentives are offered to attract investment in the economic zones?

Apart from infrastructure provision, various incentives are provided to the developers of the economic zones as well as manufacturing units to be established in the zones. Benefits to the zone developer range from income tax exemption to exemption from dividend tax. The incentive structure for investment unit is also attractive ranging from fiscal incentives such as exemption of taxes, custom duties to non-fiscal incentives such as no FDI ceiling, issuance of work permits and recommendation for citizenship. For developers, income tax exemption for 12 years, VAT exemption on electricity, local purchase excluding petroleum products. Exemption from stamp duty and registration fees for land registration or credit document, dividend tax etc are offered for the developers and the unit investors in the EZs. Each Economic Zone is treated as a bonded warehouse station. Unit investors can enjoy income tax exemption for 10 years, no ceiling on FDI, 20 percent sale of finished products to DTA, duty exemption on export,

sub-contracting with DTA allowed. Besides, facilities including FC account for non-residents, FC account for both local and joint venture industry, duty-free import of raw materials, foreign investors to be free to enter into JV, etc are also available in EZs. Besides, upon initiative from BEZA, the Cabinet has already approved, in principle, the One Stop Service Act, 2017 which will be placed before the Parliament in its next session. The OSS Act, once it is passed, will compel all the government departments and agencies and also the utility service providers to give time-bound service, license and NOC to the investors. The investors need not to go to door to door to get all the services and licenses. They will get all services from one point online.

We are very well aware of the fact that our garments industry is one of the largest industries in Bangladesh. Is there any plan for establishing a separate Economic Zone this industry?

We already offered BGMEA a proposal for establishing a garment park at Mirsarai in Chittagong on 500 acres of land. If they want, we are still ready to build the park in our own land at a reasonable cost. Huge development works are already going on in Feni-Mirsarai to build a world-class industrial city on 30 thousand acres of land. Infrastructure and other modern facilities will be provided in the zone. Gas lines are being installed, roads are being developed there. Apart from this it will be decorated with lakes and man made waterfalls. Besides, it has easy access to the sea and very close to Chittagong port. Moreover, upon our request Chittagong Port Authority, has been carrying out feasibility study to

Against this backdrop, the government of Bangladesh decided to establish a more liberalized trade regime. Accordingly, the government formed Bangladesh Economic Zones Authority (BEZA) in 2010 under the Bangladesh Economic Zones Act to build new economic zones.

set up a port to cater to the needs of the Mirsharai-Feni Economic Zones. The zones will be connected to the Dhaka-Chittagong city through a four lane road and railway. Karnaphuli Gas Company Ltd has been working to install gas pipe-line to supply dedicated gas connection in the zones. Once all the facilities are in place, it would be the largest and modern EZ in Bangladesh. So it would be an ideal location for setting up Garments Park as skilled and unskilled work-force will be available here since the EZs are situated in Dhaka-Chittagong Economic Corridor. So I personally feel that it will be more attractive destination for investors in the garments sector.

How much responses have BEZA got from investors in the economic zones?

We are getting excellent response from both local and foreign investors. Along with foreign investors, many Bangladeshi investors have shown interest in setting up steel mills, cement factories, LPG and garment factories at Mirsarai. Besides, we have received huge responses to set up textiles, garments and denim factories in Srihatta EZ.



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RENEWABLE ENERGY FOR RMG INDUSTRY

By Mohammad Monower Hossain

B

angladesh is one of the most climate vulnerable countries of the world; with a population of around 160 million the risk is much intense especially for the poor people. Though previously it was known as an agro-based economy, in recent time Bangladesh has witnessed steady economic growth thanks to support from industries. In the coming days this growth trend will be led by the industry and service sectors. It is expected that with a huge industrial growth and rise in service sector, Bangladesh has huge potential to be a part of the future leader. With a steady growth in industrialization, demand for energy is also on the rise putting a huge pressure on the limited natural resources of the country. Moreover, the environmental cost of production is also a serious concern as a climate vulnerable nation.

Against this backdrop, energy efficiency and renewable energy could be two significant stepping stones toward a sustainable growth of the country. Currently Bangladesh's power generation capacity is around 15,550 MW of which share of renewable energy (RE) is only 2.76%. As per the power system master plan, the government has targeted to increase the share of RE to 10% of the total power generation by 2020, which is around 2000 MW. To

reach that target, the government has already taken some projects with major focus on solar power (solar heating, solar boating, pump, irrigation, mini grid etc), waste to energy, biogas and biomass etc. Bangladesh RMG industry has set a target of USD 50 Billion from apparel exports. So the sector requires sustainable supply of energy. In doing so the industry has already taken a number of initiatives in the area of





energy efficiency and renewable energy. The PaCT project being implemented in 215 wet processing factories reduces energy consumption around 1.9 million MWh/year.

In recent years a good number of RMG factory have achieved LEED Green certificate from US Green Building Council (USGBC). A green factory consumes around 40% less energy than a regular factory and generates significant percentage of energy from renewable sources. There is a controversy about the cost of RE generation through Solar-PV. Moreover, impracticable return

on investment makes it more unattractive to the investors. Though there is green finance facility for investing in RE but the return on investment and price of Solar PV does not make it attractive. "Renewable energy especially roof-top Solar PV has the potential to diversify the energy sources for the Bangladeshi RMG sector as well and also improve energy reliability given the sharp reductions in cost of solar PV panels we have witnessed in the last two to three years" said Mr. Mohan Seneviratne, IFC Global Water Lead. "Our experience is that roof-top

Solar PV can substitute 15- 20% of electricity demand subject to production patterns" he added.

"Renewable energy is inevitable nowadays considering the prevailing energy crisis and global demand for green energy" said Mahmud Hassan Khan (Babu), Vice President, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). Globally carbon neutral economy is getting huge popularity and consumers are becoming more concerned about the carbon footprint of the products they are consuming, he added.

Non-renewable will eventually dwindle and becoming too environmentally damaging to retrieve. Considering this in recent times Bangladesh RMG industry is also investing heavily to make more environment friendly products with lesser carbon footprint. More support to this initiative is needed to keep up the momentum.

BANDO DESIGN CLINCHES BGMEA CUP 2017

By Sameya Karim



ooooooooo! This must be the one and only word that went through the heads of Bando Design Ltd's mid-level management team! And they made their day! Bando Design Ltd took home the BGMEA Cup 2017, sliding in a win against Comfit Composite Knit Ltd [1-0] at the final that took place at the Army Stadium. This was their second

consecutive win since 2016.

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) organized the football tournament for the second time. This tournament endeavor was started last year in order to help mid-level management officials from different garment factories to take a break from the constant stress of work life. It was a means of motivating them by recognizing their latent talents. The tournament also aims to promote sportsmanship among all working in the apparel industry.

A total of 16 well-known garment factories took place in the competition, being divided into a further 4 groups. The participating teams are: Bando Design Ltd (Champions of the 2016 competition), Comfit Composite Knit Ltd of Youth Group (Runner-Up of the 2016 competition), Epyllion Group,



In a nail-biting final between Bando Design Ltd and Comfit Composite Knit Ltd, spectators held their breath to the last minute of the match to see who lifted the BGMEA Cup 2017 trophy.

Ananta Group, Rayontex Group, Nassa Group, Setara Group, Majumder Group, Babylon Group, Sterling Group, Versatile Group, Mehnaz Styles & Craft, Interstoff Apparel, Torque Fashions, Musk Trousers and Apparel Industry. This year the tournament kicked off on March 2nd at the International Turkish Hope School ground. It was a 7-a-side inter-garments football tournament. The matches were played on weekends, and the final match was held at Bangladesh Army Stadium.



In a nail-biting final between Bando Design Ltd and Comfit Composite Knit Ltd, spectators held their breath to the last minute of the match to see who lifted the BGMEA Cup 2017 trophy. Supporters of both teams with their musical instruments tried their best to encourage the players. Finally Bando clinched the title of BGMEA Football Cup 2017.

Arik of Bando Design scored the goal, marking him the man of the match (and perhaps even competition)! He also scored a total of 7 goals, making him the top scorer among all the matches that took place. Mahtab became the best goalkeeper of the tournament while Shakil of Bando was awarded as the most valuable player.

Commerce Minister of Bangladesh Tofail Ahmed, MP, attended the final

match as a chief guest. BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman presented the champions trophy and crests to the winning team. BGMEA Vice President S. M. Mannan (Kochi), Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Vice President Mahmud Hasan Khan (Babu), Vice President Ferdous Perves Bivon, and other BGMEA directors were also present at the final. The final match was telecast live on GTV.

Among the sponsors and partners that helped to organize the tournament were: United Commercial Bank Ltd, Prime Bank Ltd, JUKI, Sailor, Rising Group, Sterling Stocks and Securities Ltd, BUFT, Amaze Power, New Auto Galaxy, Vertex Group, BBS Cables, Ananta Group, Mampower, Ceylon Biscuits Ltd, A.C World, Qubee and ITHS.



Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP and BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman are seen at a stakeholders' engagement meeting jointly organized by BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (BUFT) and Netherlands Initiative for Capacity Building in Higher Education (NICHE). The NICHE project/BGD-199 aims to enhance the knowledge and application of CSR and Innovative Leadership within the RMG sector, and to promote socioeconomic development, environmental protection, international compliance and equal participation of women in mid and top level positions in the sector.

A 4-member delegation of European Parliament (EU) led by Arne Lietz, S&D Co-rapporteur on the Garment Report, attended a meeting organized by BGMEA at a city hotel in Dhaka. Later at a press briefing they informed the media about their discussion on the RMG industry.



BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman is seen speaking at a roundtable discussion on reproductive health of RMG workers. The Daily Prothom Alo and SNV Netherlands organized the discussion where different stakeholders shared their expert views on ways to ensure reproductive health services for garment workers.



Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP, and BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman are seen inaugurating the Garments Accessories & Packaging Exposition (GAPEXPO)-2017 in Dhaka. The latest technology of garment accessories and packaging trade were showcased in the GAPEXPO.

BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman receives Commercially Important Person (CIP) award from Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP at a function in Dhaka. The CIP status was awarded for the contribution to the country's economic growth through exports.



A 16-member delegation of National Defence College (NDC), Oman paid a courtesy visit to BGMEA. BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan and Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir welcomed the delegation which was led by Brigadier Yarub Majid Al Saifi, Director General of NDC, Sultanate of Oman.

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বাংলাদেশে সর্বপ্রথম স্প্রে পদ্ধতির Fire Extinguisher, **Reinold Max Stop Fire**, যা খুব সহজে ঝুঁকিমুক্ত ভাবে আগুনকে সম্পূর্ণ ভাবে নিভিয়ে ফেলে আপনার জীবন ও মূল্যবান সম্পদকে রক্ষা করবে।

সুবিধাসমূহ :

- ১। খুব সহজে স্প্রে বাটনের মাধ্যমে ব্যবহার করা যায়।
- ২। এটা **Aqueous Film Forming Foam** দ্বারা তৈরী, যার কারনে মানব দেহের এবং পরিবেশের কোন ক্ষতি করে না।

বাংলাদেশ ফায়ার সার্ভিস ও সিভিল
ডিফেন্স অধিদপ্তর কর্তৃক অনুমোদিত।

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বাংলাদেশে এই প্রথম নিয়ে এলো বিদেশ থেকে আমদানীকৃত “টিউবলেস টায়ার” লিকেজের মিনিটেই সমাধান।

Tyre Fix যা অত্যাধুনিক প্রকৃতিতে প্রস্তুতকৃত এবং গুণগত মান সম্পন্ন একটি পণ্য যার মাধ্যমে কার ও মাইক্রোবাস এর টিউবলেস টায়ার দ্রুত মেরামত করা যায়।

সুবিধা সমূহ :

- ১। আপনার মূল্যবান সময় ও কষ্ট বাঁচবে।
- ২। টায়ার খোলা বা জগ দিয়ে চাকা উঠানোর কোন প্রয়োজন নাই।
- ৩। টায়ার ব্যালেন্স এর কোন সমস্যা হয়না।
- ৫। **Tyre Fix** ব্যবহারের পর ন্যূনতম ১০০/৩০০ কিঃমিঃ পর্যন্ত যাওয়া সম্ভব।

ব্যবহার বিধি :

- ১। ব্যবহারের পূর্বে ভালভাবে বোতলটি ঝাঁকিয়ে নিন।
- ২। টায়ার ভাঙ্গা ঘড়ির কাটার ৫-৭ অবস্থানে রেখে বোতলে লাগানো পাইপযুক্ত নজলটি ভালভাবে আটকিয়ে বোতলটি স্প্রে করুন।
- ৪। বোতলের ক্যাপটি খুলে পুশ বাটনে চাপ দিন।
- ৫। **Tyre Fix** ঢুকানোর পর গাড়িটি ২ মাইল পর্যন্ত ১০/৩০mph গতিতে ধীরে ধীরে চালাতে হবে। এরপর স্বাভাবিক গতিতে চলবে।
- ৬। **Tyre Fix** ব্যবহারের পর সুবিধাজনক জায়গায় আপনার চাকার লিক স্থায়ীভাবে সারিয়ে নিন।

“যদি থাকে Tyre Fix
নো টেনশন-নো রিস্ক”



হট লাইন ০১৯৫৫৫০০৩৭৪, ০১৯৯১১৯৯৪৪৫



Africa can be better source of cotton

In its continuous efforts to promote and foster intra-trade development, the International Islamic Trade Financing Corporation (ITFC), member of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) Group, organized its first African-Asian Cotton B2B Meeting event as part of its Cotton Development and Partnership Program. The meeting took place in Dhaka.

The event was inaugurated by Abul Maal Abdul Muhith M.P, Minister of Finance, Bangladesh and Chairman of the IDB Board of Governors, and Eng. Hani Salem Sonbol, Chief Executive Officer, ITFC. The meeting also witnessed the attendance of West African cotton producers, the African Cotton Association, the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, the Bangladesh Cotton Association, and Bengali Spinning/Textile Mills.

The meeting supports in the first place the Bangladeshi textile industry, which is the source of employment and export earnings for Bangladesh economy. ITFC was able to bridge between the Asian countries, specifically Bangladesh and Indonesia, to reach out and develop new business partnerships with African cotton suppliers. Finance Minister Abul Maal Abdul Muhith expressed his confidence in the impact of this meeting to the Bangladeshi's to the textile and garment industry, which is the backbone of the Bangladeshi economy and stimulator of its economic growth. "This meeting opened doors to our cotton importers to build new opportunities with the African suppliers. With the current challenging economic environment and the increasing competition, ITFC had given us the chance to reach out to new destinations."



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Bangladesh economy to grow by 6.8 percent in 2017: World Bank

Bangladesh economy is expected to grow by 6.8 percent in 2017, the World Bank says. In its twice-a-year report the South Asia Economic Focus, the WB said Bangladesh has managed to fend off the effects of global uncertainties on the back of strong investments and recovery of exports.

The report titled 'Globalization Backlash' identifies infrastructure gaps and inadequate energy supply, along with the high cost of doing business as the main obstacles for Bangladesh to realise its growth potential.

The report also forecast Bangladesh's GDP growth to stand at 6.4 percent in 2018 and 6.7 percent the next year.

"To make the most of this export opportunity, countries in the region should continue to focus on policies that promote economic growth," a World Bank statement quoted its South Asia Region chief economist Martin Rama saying.

He said: "A survey of South Asian experts conducted for this report reveals a strong consensus on the need to promote human capital accumulation, investments in infrastructure, and a more business-friendly environment."

The statement quoted its South Asia Region Vice President Annette Dixon saying "Simulations on the impact of hypothetical new trade barriers show that South Asia is not only resilient to a potential rise in protectionism but could possibly even gain from it in some circumstances."

Advanced economies are recovering and could see faster growth that will likely increase demand for South Asian product, Dixon added. "The region should seize this opportunity to diversify its exports and enhance its supply response."



Call to develop trained manpower for readymade garment industry

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid has termed the country's readymade garment (RMG) industry a goose that lays golden eggs as some 4.5 million female workers alongside a good total of male ones are employed in this sector. He urged the garment exporters to lay greater emphasis on making the industry reliant on local youths having skills of international standard especially in the field of design and fashion to cope with other global RMG exporters. The Education Minister said that the foreign experts employed in making newer designs and fashion in the RMG buying houses are earning a lot of money staying in the country. "Our youths can become even better quality masters and experts in the field if provided with proper academic environment which is prevailing in the CBIFT and BUFT as they have developed designs suiting the choice and taste of the foreign buyers," he said.

The Minister said this while speaking as the chief guest at the fourth anniversary of the CBIFT (Chittagong BGMEA

Institute of Fashion and Technology) and passing out ceremony of the first batch trainees who successfully completed four-year BSc Honours course from the institute. The event was organised at the auditorium of Chittagong Club Ltd in the port city.

A total of 14 students were given the degree of BSc Honours from the Apparel Manufacture and Technology (AMT) with 12 more from the Fashion Design and Technology (FDT).

BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman, First Vice-President Moinuddin Ahmed and Founder Chairman of the Trustee Board of the BUFT (BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology) Mujaffar Uddin Siddiq were present on the occasion. Presided over by the President of the governing body of the CBIFT Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, the ceremony was addressed as special guests by Vice-Chancellor of Chittagong University Professor Iftekhar Uddin Chowdhury and BGMEA President Siddiqur Rahman.



OECD releases due diligence guidance for garment sector



The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has released 'Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains in the Garment and Footwear Sector'. This will help companies identify and prevent potential negative impacts related to human rights, labour, the environment and corruption in garment and footwear supply chains worldwide.

The guidance offers comprehensive and government-backed

recommendations to businesses that address risks they may face in both manufacturing and sourcing materials. The guidance provides, for the first time, a common understanding of supply chain due diligence for the garment and footwear supply chains in line with the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

It promotes a systematic and integrated approach to managing risk and purchasing, involving on-going, proactive and reactive processes, with a focus on progressive improvement. It recognises both the diversity of the sector as well as the complexity of the challenges that the sector faces.

The guidance recommends that enterprises take a collaborative and risk-based approach to identify ways to address impacts of its operations and sourcing decisions and monitor progress over time, while encouraging ongoing engagement with business partners in developing economies. It calls on buyers to embed social, human rights and environmental considerations into their purchasing practices, and collaborate with common buyers to avoid supplier audit fatigue, so that companies can direct their resources towards prioritising the prevention of more severe impacts.

"The OECD and emerging economies worked closely with businesses throughout the supply chain, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and other experts to produce the guidance," the Paris based OECD said on its website.

The guidance is a concrete response to the G7 Leaders' Declaration adopted in June 2015 in Schloss Elmau, which welcomed international efforts to "promulgate industry-wide due diligence standards in the textile and ready-made garment sector."

Bangladesh govt launches safety campaign for RMG workers

In a bid to create awareness on the basic Occupational Safety and Health (OSH), the Bangladesh government has launched a safety radio-based campaign titled 'Safe Workplaces, Go ahead Bangladesh for RMG workers'. The campaign will broadcast a series of 19 episodes on Dhaka FM 90.4 on Thursday and Friday. Each episode will highlight OSH related problem.

The Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Department of Inspections for Factories and Establishments in collaboration with the International Labour Organization funded by Canada, Netherlands and UK will implement the campaign, according to Bangladesh media.

"Efforts to improve workplace safety remain the highest priority for Bangladesh government. The campaign will reach out to RMG workers to help them better understand many safety areas," said senior labour and employment secretary Mikail Shipar. A large number of RMG workers will benefit from the campaign, said ILO country director for Bangladesh Srinivas Reddy. He added that it is vital that the safety culture will go beyond the RMG sector.

The campaign will also include a series of safety-related radio commercials which will focus on various issues such as what to do in case of fire, maternity protection and the role of safety committees which comprise representatives of the management and workers.



H&M, IFC partner to boost sustainability in garment sector

Fashion retailer H&M and IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, have entered into a joint partnership to boost the use of clean, renewable energy in the garment sector, while also slashing greenhouse gas emissions. The association will guide the strategic tier one and two suppliers in China, India and Bangladesh in adopting renewable energy solutions.

H&M and IFC will develop a platform for implementation of practical renewable energy solutions on the ground to achieve meaningful reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through adoption of clean energy sources such as solar, wind, and hydro power; an approach that will be initially taken in three countries of high importance to H&M but which can ultimately be replicated in other markets.

"H&M has an ambition to work with a climate neutral supply chain (Tier 1 and Tier 2) by 2030 and we see IFC as an important partner in this journey. IFC's vast experience working with renewable energy and climate related topics in several developing countries will be very valuable in driving this agenda together with our business partners. We believe that this partnership will not only have a positive climate impact on H&M's supply chain but also on the fashion industry as a whole," said Pierre Borjesson, sustainability business expert - Climate Change and Water Stewardship, H&M.

H&M is committed to a goal of 100 per cent renewable energy usage in its own operations, and is one of the first companies in the industry to start setting climate-change and renewable energy goals along its value chain.

"Cutting greenhouse gas emissions is crucial for the environment, but importantly, this project will create a low-carbon roadmap that shows how it makes good financial sense for firms too," said Milagros Rivas Saiz, global head advisory at IFC.



72% of repairs of Alliance factories completed

The Alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety announced that 71 Alliance-affiliated factories in the country completed all material components outlined in their Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).

The country director of US based brands and buyers' forum, alliance for Bangladesh Worker Safety (ALLIANCE) Jim Moriarty revealed the information in a press conference at a city hotel.

In the programme, the former US Ambassador to Bangladesh hopes that the number will reach double within the next few months. Moriarty said that 72 percent of all required repairs across active Alliance factories have already been completed.

"Of them, 64 percent of the repairs we deem 'highest priority' and 'high priority'- the most critical items including the structural retrofitting of columns and the installation of fire doors", he added.

Alliance also suspended 142 factories from its compliant list till today, for their failure to provide evidence of remediation, he said.

Alliance's Deputy Country Director Paul Rigby, Director of Engineering Kazi Wadul Haque and Director of Operations Quamrunnesa Babli were present during the press conference.

Alliance started the journey in Bangladesh in 2014 with 676 factories. CAP completion is only the first step in constructing a continuous improvement culture focused on improving workplace safety. The Alliance expects all factories to sustain their commitment to safety through on-going efforts to maintain the investments already made.



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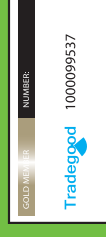
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BANGLADESH'S RMG EXPORTS TO WORLD, FY 2015-16 & 2016-17

Value in Million US\$

Month	ALL COUNTRIES								
	Woven		Growth Rate	Knit		Growth Rate	Total (Woven+Knit)		Growth Rate
	Year			Year			2015/16	2016/17	
	2015/16	2016/17		2015/16	2016/17				
July	1087.79	1040.35	-4.36	1127.37	1077.23	-4.45	2215.16	2117.58	-4.41
August	1138.68	1330.68	16.86	1131.19	1395.61	23.38	2269.87	2726.29	20.11
September	962.65	894.08	-7.12	991.55	927.95	-6.41	1954.20	1822.03	-6.76
October	878.82	1021.19	16.20	920.31	1134.35	23.26	1799.13	2155.54	19.81
November	1158.09	1212.31	4.68	1066.31	1097.60	2.93	2224.40	2309.91	3.84
December	1477.50	1397.51	-5.41	1195.32	1180.84	-1.21	2672.82	2578.35	-3.53
January	1456.00	1456.81	0.06	1169.70	1246.72	6.58	2625.71	2703.53	2.96
February	1324.69	1209.70	-8.68	1041.66	1015.95	-2.47	2366.35	2225.65	-5.95
March	1281.54	1222.65	-4.60	1030.91	1067.30	3.53	2312.45	2289.95	-0.97
April	1133.62	1097.86	-3.15	1063.14	1110.62	4.47	2196.76	2208.48	0.53
May	1264.04	1236.69	-2.16	1182.74	1250.77	5.75	2446.78	2487.46	1.66
June									
Total:	13163.42	13119.83	-0.33	11920.20	12504.94	4.91	25083.63	25624.77	2.16

BANGLADESH'S RMG EXPORTS TO WORLD, FY 2014-15 & 2015-16

Value in Million US\$

Month	ALL COUNTRIES								
	Woven		Growth Rate	Knit		Growth Rate	Total (Woven+Knit)		Growth Rate
	Year			Year			2014/15	2015/16	
	2014/15	2015/16		2014/15	2015/16				
July	1210.08	1087.79	-10.11	1307.90	1127.37	-13.80	2517.98	2215.16	-12.03
August	815.34	1138.68	39.66	898.44	1131.19	25.91	1713.78	2269.87	32.45
September	937.29	962.65	2.71	1064.12	991.55	-6.82	2001.41	1954.20	-2.36
October	731.53	878.82	20.13	787.96	920.31	16.80	1519.49	1799.13	18.40
November	999.23	1158.09	15.90	939.36	1066.31	13.51	1938.59	2224.40	14.74
December	1269.23	1477.50	16.41	1063.8	1195.32	12.36	2333.03	2672.82	14.56
January	1303.77	1456.00	11.68	1116.10	1169.70	4.80	2419.87	2625.71	8.51
February	1146.72	1324.69	15.52	960.62	1041.66	8.44	2107.34	2366.35	12.29
March	1144.21	1281.54	12.00	930.58	1030.91	10.78	2074.79	2312.45	11.45
April	1000.54	1133.62	13.30	938.94	1063.14	13.23	1939.48	2196.76	13.27
May	1199.27	1264.04	5.40	1159.71	1182.74	1.99	2358.98	2446.78	3.72
June	1307.40	1575.32	20.49	1259.26	1435.22	13.97	2566.66	3010.54	17.29
Total:	13064.61	14738.74	12.81	12426.79	13355.42	7.47	25491.40	28094.17	10.21

Source: EPB

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- ৫০ হাজার স্কয়ার ফুটের মাঝারি আকারের একটি কারখানায় প্রায় ৩৫০টি সিলিং ফ্যানের প্রয়োজন হয়। অথচ মাত্র ১৪টি হাই ভলিউম লো স্পীড (HVLS) ফ্যান দিয়ে তা প্রতিস্থাপিত করা যায়।
- ১৪টি (HVLS) ফ্যান স্থাপনের মাধ্যমে প্রায় বার্ষিক ৫২,০৮৩ কিলোওয়াট প্রতি ঘন্টা পর্যন্ত বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয় করা যায়, যা বার্ষিক ৫.৭২ লক্ষ টাকা সাশ্রয় করে এবং ৩৫ টন কার্বন নিঃসরণ কমায়। কারখানায় শব্দ দূষণ কমায় এবং মাত্র ৩ বছরে এর খরচ উঠে আসে।

HVLS ফ্যান ব্যবহার করে বিদ্যুৎ সাশ্রয় ও কর্মপরিবেশে অধিকতর স্বস্তি আনয়ন করুন।



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A red industrial fire pump unit, likely a diesel-powered fire engine. It features a large red rectangular body with a black diesel engine mounted on top. To the right, there is a separate red control panel with a digital display and various buttons. The entire unit is mounted on a red metal frame.



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