

The Apparel Story

April-May 2016

Cover Story

BANGLADESH: THE DENIM DESTINATION

Interview of the Month
H.E. Pierre Mayaudon
Ambassador and Head of the European Union
Delegation to Bangladesh

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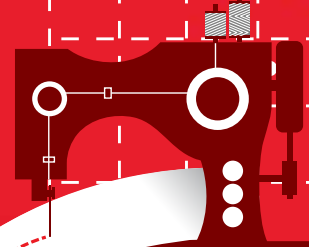
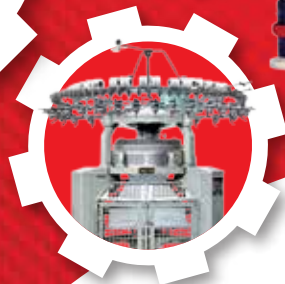
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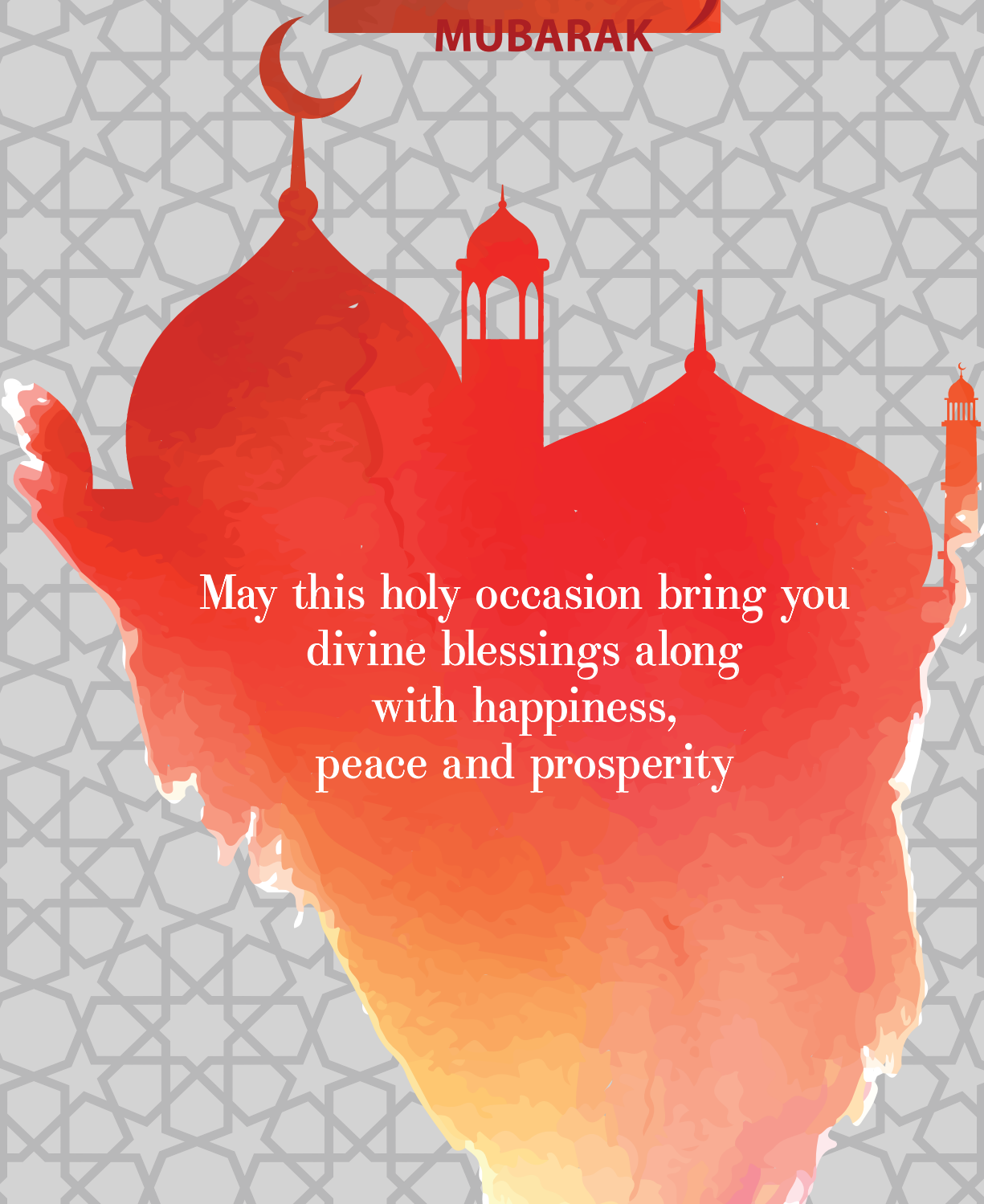
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MESSAGE FROM BGMEA PRESIDENT

Dear Valued Members,

You know the government policy support has played a significant role in the rise and development of our ready-made garment industry. Therefore, we are really grateful to our government for its various initiatives and steps for development of the sector. Since stiff competition always prevails in the world market, policy support is very important to retain our sector's competitive edge. Hence, ahead of national budget for 2016-2017 fiscal years we arranged a press conference to present a set of our proposals, including cut in source and corporate taxes, with due justification for consideration of the government. But in the proposed budget source tax was increased from 0.6% to 1.5% for the garment and textile industries. Immediately we hold another press conference to reiterate our demands to keep the source tax at 0.6%. Finally, the government decreased the source tax from the proposed 1.5% to 0.7%. We must express our thanks to the government for paying heed to our voices.

We not only speak for our industry at national level, but also raise our voice at international level to promote the interests of our country, especially our apparel industry. Recently I along with the BGMEA Vice President (Finance) attended an international dialogue organized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. WTO Director General Roberto Azevedo invited 20 business leaders, including us from BGMEA, across the world to join the "WTO Dialogue with Business" to discuss opportunities and challenges that the businesses faced and how the WTO can help. At the meeting we strongly placed our demands, including WTO steps for duty-free quota-free market access for the least developed countries as per the Hong Kong declaration.

We always try to provide necessary supports to our valued Members to facilitate their business. As part of such efforts, BGMEA recently supported to extend the canopy of cargo warehouse at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport for safely storing imported RMG goods. Hope our Members will get benefits from this initiative. Besides, we decided to bring dynamism to the Apparel Club to provide better services to the club members. Accordingly, we formed an 11-member executive committee of the club for the term of 2016-2018 to make the club more functional in a coordinated way so that the club members can get best services out of it.



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EDITORIAL

Bangladesh, well known as the second largest RMG exporter in the world, is also an emerging player in international denim market. The growing demand of denim globally has created new opportunities for the country. Though Bangladesh currently occupies 22.88% and 11.35% of the denim markets in the EU and the USA respectively, its share in the cake globally is still not significant (around 6%), meaning more opportunities lying ahead for further penetration in the global market. But how? The cover story spotlights the denim industry of Bangladesh with focus on present market situation, underlying strengths of the sector, growth prospects, and plans to tap the potential. Two more stories on the topic are included in this issue to give our readers a comprehensive picture of our denim industry. In an exclusive interview with The Apparel Story, Pierre Mayaudon, Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to Bangladesh, talks about different issues of the Bangladesh's RMG industry, including safety and sustainability of the sector. This issue contains another interview of the Vice Chairman of Policy Research Institute (PRI) Dr. Sadiq Ahmed who shares his expert opinions and recommendations for the development of our apparel sector.

It is really encouraging to note that our RMG industry is going for green to make the sector sustainable. Already we have 30 green garment factories in the country LEED certified by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC); of them 9 are Platinum rated. About 120 more factories have already registered in the USGBC for going green. A special story on green financing will be helpful for those factories which are mulling over going green. Besides, a feature of this compendium sheds light on the investment potential in the textile industry of Bangladesh. A feature on the employment of disabled persons in the RMG sector brings to the readers the stories of success of the physically impaired people. This issue also contains regular contents, including behind the brand, Beautiful Bangladesh, statistics etc. Hope our readers will find all the stories and features of this issue of The Apparel Story informative and worthwhile.

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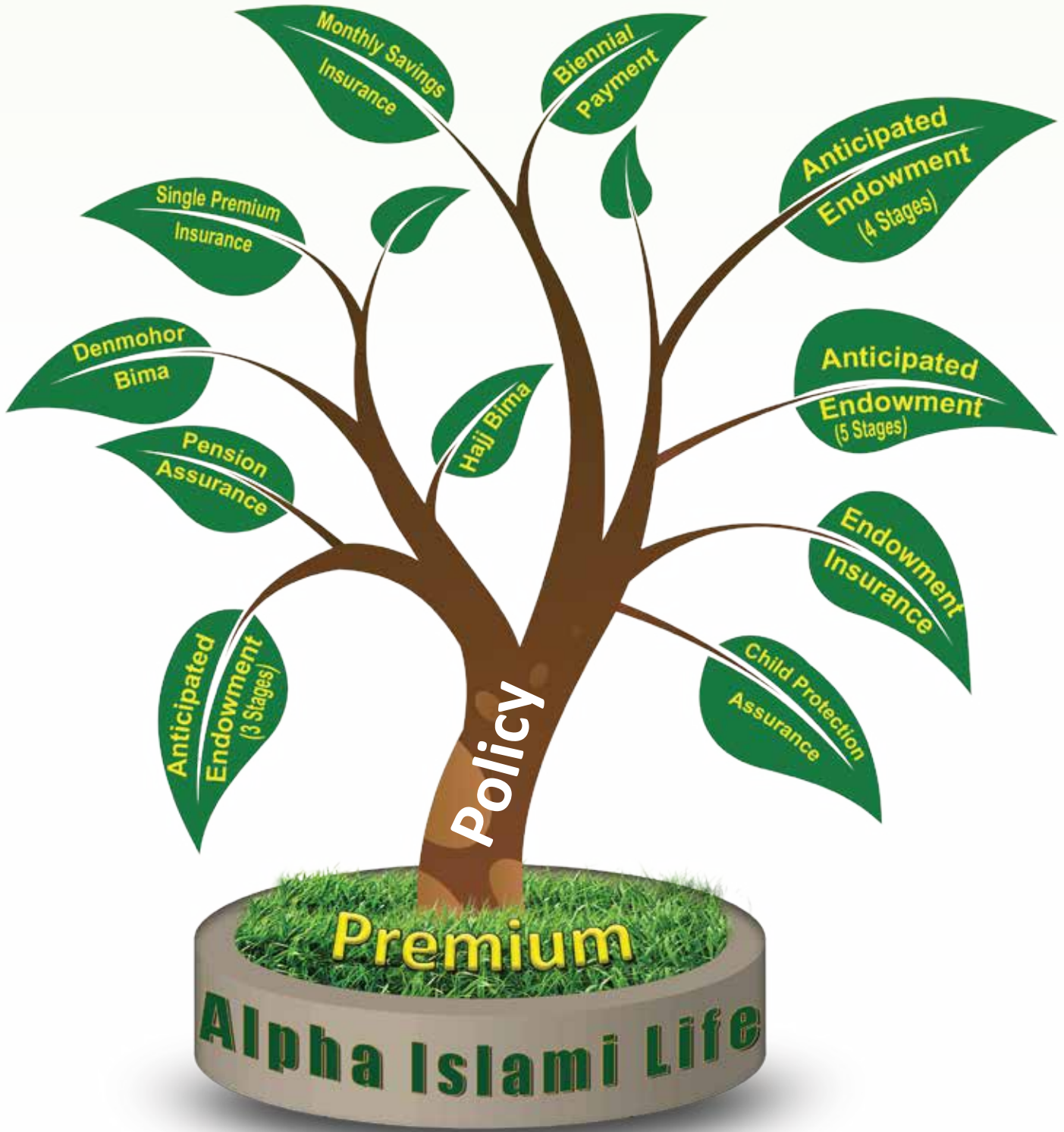
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CONTENT

- 03 **Message from BGMEA President**
- 05 **Editorial**
- 07 **Content**
- 09 **Cover Story**
Bangladesh: The Denim Destination
- 12 **Exporter's Story**
Pacific Jeans: Pioneer and Leader in Premium Jeans Manufacturing
- 14 **Trade Event**
Bangladesh Denim Expo: A Perfect Platform for Denim Makers and Lovers
- 18 **Spotlight**
WTO Trade Dialogue
- 20 **Interview of the Month**
H.E. Pierre Mayaudon, Ambassador and Head of the European Delegation to Bangladesh
- 24 **Focus of the Month**
Once Given Chance They Become Asset
- 26 **Beautiful Bangladesh**
Bright Butterflies
- 28 **Feature of the Month**
Apparel-makers Compete in BGMEA Cup Football
- 30 **Special Interview**
Dr. Sadiq Ahmed, Vice Chairman, Policy Research Institute (PRI)
- 34 **Behind the Brand**
Trendz: A Blend of Fashion & Quality
- 36 **Special Feature**
Training on Social Dialogue, Workplace Safety & Social Insurance Held in Germany
- 39 **Environment & Sustainability**
Green Finance for Sustainable RMG Industry
- 41 **Investment Series**
Opportunities in Textile Industry
- 44 **New Market**
Tapping the Russian Market
- 50 **News in Pictures**
- 55 **Bulletin**
- 59 **Statistics**

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BANGLADESH: THE DENIM DESTINATION

By Omar Gias

In the 1800s unless you were a cowboy or doing heavy work, denim was not meant for you. The fabric was actually invented as the American gold-miners demanded something to wear that can withstand the work-stress and don't tear up easily. The product is not anymore confined to the workmen rather has evolved as a great fashion wear. Today, denim can be considered as the staple garment of the world as all people irrespective of their location, age, gender and status own a pair of jeans or two. Be it Europe, America or Asia, denim is the most common casually used outfit. It's hard to find a wardrobe where there are no denim products in it. Fashion brands that design and market denim products are also endless. Everyday new styles and new designs are born and all of them are accepted warmly in the denim market.



Denim, as it is defined is a woven fabric with 100% cotton yarn. And when it is sewed into a pair of trousers it is termed as jeans. The global denim market by sales was US\$ 56.20 billion in 2014. The total number of denim jeans sold worldwide in the year was 2.10 billion pieces. A study report titled 'World Denim Market' published in 2012 mentions that before 1970 practically all denim was manufactured by the United States. But today the global production of denim is approximately 7.3 billion meters per year and 30 countries across five continents are producing this, out of which the Asia is contributing about

70%. Consumption-wise 27% of the world's denim demand is in the US and EU.

Bangladesh's denim export in 2014 was US\$ 2.5 billion and if other denim articles were considered it was US\$ 3.5 billion. In the year, the country exported a total of 185 million pieces of denim apparel; out of which 44 million pieces were exported to the US which is 22.88% of the market and 141 million pieces to the EU which is 11.35% of the market.

After the composite knit industry, denim is next important and potential sector for Bangladesh which is growing at a faster pace. Former President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and also the Managing Director of Argon Denims Anwar-Ul Alam Chowdhury (Parvez) believes that this growth in denim export will be continued for some more years. Because he thinks that the buyers have the confidence on Bangladesh as a hub of trusted and committed denim and denim related products manufacturers. "Buyers always want to place their orders to a country where they could continue their business for 15-20 years at a stretch. Bangladesh has already carved its niche in the international market as a manufacturing country of denim products and buyers have no other alternative destination as strong as Bangladesh at present", opines Anwar-Ul Alam Chowdhury (Parvez). "Moreover, the entrepreneurs of our country are 'aggressive'. To flourish a sector, you need to invest for technological advancement. The sector witnesses new innovation and evolution every day as our people have a lot of investment in technology and automation", he added.

Abdus Salam Murshedy, the former President of BGMEA and



Buyers always want to place their orders to a country

where they could continue their business for 15-20 years at a stretch. Bangladesh has already curved its niche in the international market as a manufacturing country of denim products and buyers have no other alternative destination as strong as Bangladesh at present”

-Anwar-Ul Alam Chowdhury (Parvez)

also Managing Director of Envoy Textile Ltd thinks that the recent increase of denim mills in the country has strengthened Bangladesh's position in the denim world. Currently there are 30 denim fabric producing mills in Bangladesh which can meet up about 60% fabric demand of existing around 550 denim readymade garment factories in the country. The denim units of Bangladesh are also adopting eco-friendly production practices. A good number of them are going green like the Envoy Textile Ltd which recently obtained LEED Platinum Certificate from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). These green

factories will be instrumental in fetching more orders for Bangladesh, believes Abdus Salam Murshedy.

At present Bangladesh is producing basic to mid-high denim products. “To tap the upper denim market, we need to establish R&D at our factories, develop sophisticated skills required for value-added denim apparel and improve the efficiency of our workers”, said Abdus Salam Murshedy. Moreover, he urged the government to make gas connections available for the industry. “Without the gas connection, no new denim fabric mill could come as the gas is the foremost pre-requisite to operate the mills”, he added.

However, Anwar-Ul Alam Chowdhury (Parvez) thinks that we do not necessarily need to cater 100% of the denim fabric by local mills. “Considering the reality that one has to be competitive in price, delivery and customers’ requirement, even by sourcing fabric we could increase our value addition by securing upper-hands in washing. One major characteristic of denim is the amount and variety of off-structure effects that can be designed on it. There are numbers of different denim wash technologies that impart these variable color-shades. For the above characteristics it would not be an exaggeration to say that the international

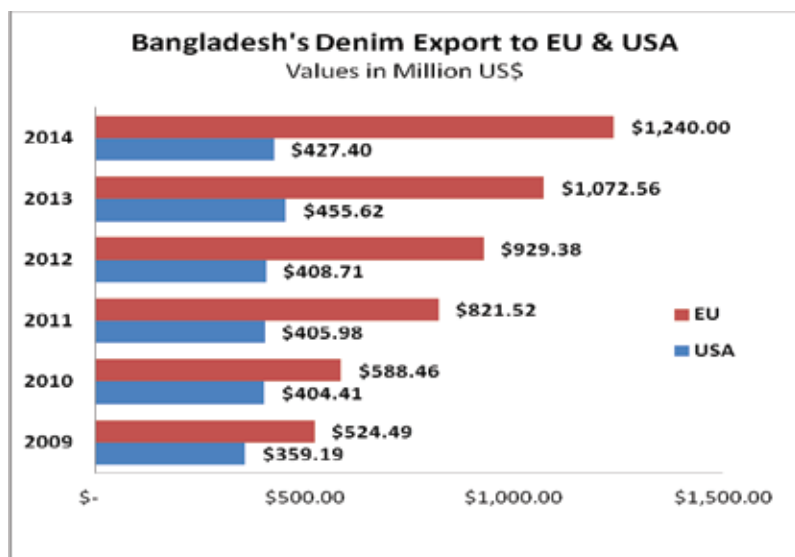


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production practices. A good number of them are going green like the Envoy Textile Ltd which recently obtained LEED Platinum Certificate from the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). These green factories will be instrumental in fetching more orders for Bangladesh.

-Abdus Salam Murshedy

denim realm will be ruled by Bangladesh without much upheaval in the coming years. The readymade garment industry of Bangladesh is expected to touch US\$ 50 billion export milestone in 2021. The denim industry is likely to contribute at least US\$ 7 billion in it.



PACIFIC JEANS: PIONEER AND LEADER IN PREMIUM JEANS MANUFACTURING



By Omar Gias

T

he journey of Pacific Jeans Group started by establishing NZN Fashion Ltd in 1984 on a small scale. The factory began manufacturing jeans for an Italian brand in the following year when there was no denim laundry in the country. The Group started the first denim laundry in Bangladesh in 1985. The second unit of the Group namely the Pacific Jeans was set up in Chittagong Export Processing Zone in 1994. Today the Pacific Jeans Group is a

well-known name to almost all denim connoisseurs all over the world. At present the Group has five production units with a total capacity of 36 million pieces of premium jeans manufacturing every year. It exports jeans to the US and around 20 countries in Europe as well as explored unconventional markets in Asia like China, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

One of the unique traits of this leading RMG conglomerate of the



Nasir Uddin, Chairman, Pacific Jeans Group

“All these factors in place, we’ve been able to achieve confidence of world’s renowned fashion retailers as one of their leading premium jeans manufacturer”

country is that it remains focused on jeans and did not opt for diversifying products in its long, more than three decades, journey. “I have always believed in specialization. Since the beginning I wanted to manufacture a product which no one had done it yet till then. In the early 80s Italy was the hub of premium jeans manufacturing. During the time of factory establishment I had visited many such manufacturing facilities in Europe to learn. I was amazed to see the facilities and the beautiful products they were

making. I said to myself, ‘If they can do it, why can’t we!’ That was beginning of the denim industry of Bangladesh. We are the first company to start jeans production in Bangladesh. We believe in achieving excellence in what we do and thus we have been relentlessly working on improving efficiency and add value in the same product instead of diversification”, said Nasir Uddin, Chairman of the Pacific Jeans Group.

During the commencement of the Group, RMG business was an alien to the people of this country. So, Mr. Nasir brought 20 expatriates to train and educate local human resources. Till then he never stops the investment in training and building high skilled human resources and the relentless efforts and focus towards product development through innovation. “All these factors in place, we’ve been able to achieve confidence of world’s renowned fashion retailers as one of their leading premium jeans manufacturer”, the Chairman of the Pacific Jeans Group added.

The Pacific Jeans believes in the corporate growth that will balance economic progress while instilling a culture of sustainable development for the environment and community. So, the Group has embraced greener methods and made efforts to develop new techniques of producing jeans which is sustainable and at the same time commercially

feasible. It has reduced water consumption by about 35% to wash a pair of jeans. Moreover, the Group has adopted many sustainable practices to make jeans manufacturing more environment-friendly and socially responsible such as installing LED lights, using waste heat to generate energy etc. It is going to set up solar panels very shortly to reduce carbon emission.

The Group has also established two primary schools and two high schools as a part of its CSR activities with an objective to eradicate illiteracy and empower the women in the community.

Mr. Nasir Uddin thinks that the future of the readymade garment industry of Bangladesh will be promising if the existing companies focus on adding value to products by innovation and work for efficiency improvement. “Bangladesh has proved its capacity and capability. But it is high time to move upwards in the value chain. Denim industry has become very price sensitive and there has been massive addition of capacity in recent years. That’s why differentiation is very important to stand out from the crowd”, he said.



BANGLADESH DENIM EXPO

A PERFECT PLATFORM FOR DENIM MAKERS AND LOVERS

By Nasim Uddin

W

hat event could be more effective other than a trade exhibition to showcase an industry's strengths and create a perfect platform to facilitate fruitful business interactions between manufactures and buyers? Bangladesh Denim Expo has proved its mettle in serving the purpose – presenting the underlying strengths of Bangladesh's denim industry to the world and offering international fashion buyers a one-stop sourcing platform for all aspects of jeans wear. The expo also explores ways to tap opportunities for Bangladesh to secure stronger position in the world denim market in the future.

Bangladesh Denim Expo started its journey in 2014, creating a perfect platform for manufacturers and buyers of denim to derive maximum business benefits through direct trade interactions. Mostafiz Uddin, Managing



Director of Denim Expert Ltd, is the dreamer, planner and organizer of the exhibition which has already created positive vibes among the denim makers and lovers at home and abroad. So far four editions of the Bangladesh Denim Expo have been organized, each show attracting more number of denim makers and lovers from different countries. Mostafiz Uddin said: "Bangladesh is well-known for denim and denim products manufacturing,

for both niche and mass markets. The expo's objective is to showcase Bangladesh's growth potential in the denim industry and to demonstrate before global buyers our ability to offer great margins and high-quality goods."

"My personal drive is to make a difference for the denim industry with the Bangladesh Denim Expo. My efforts are to ensure the expo plays a key role in laying a fertile ground for our industry for further



development. We also want to set a new scene for how international buyers and brands see Bangladesh in the future. Bangladesh Denim Expo has already become a much-awaited event in the international denim calendar and in the wake of huge response from exhibitors; we are going to double the size of the expo on its 5th edition to be held on 8 & 9 November 2016": he added.

A total of 993 companies took part in the fourth edition of the expo held on 25 & 26 April 2016 which drew around 4165 visitors from 43 countries. The number of

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visitors is growing day by day, indicating the expo's increasing popularity in the denim market. Visitors from France, Spain, Germany and Turkey thronged the fair venue. The majority of all visitors were buyers followed by garment manufactures and brands and retailers. Exhibitors from the whole supply chain of denim production – from garment manufacturers to denim mills and laundries over accessory suppliers to the machinery and fiber industry—participate in the fair. The new denim trends are showcased alongside new textile application and innovative technologies.

The Bangladesh Denim Expo is divided into two segments – (1) display of products and latest technologies and (2) seminars attended by world-renowned denim experts and leading



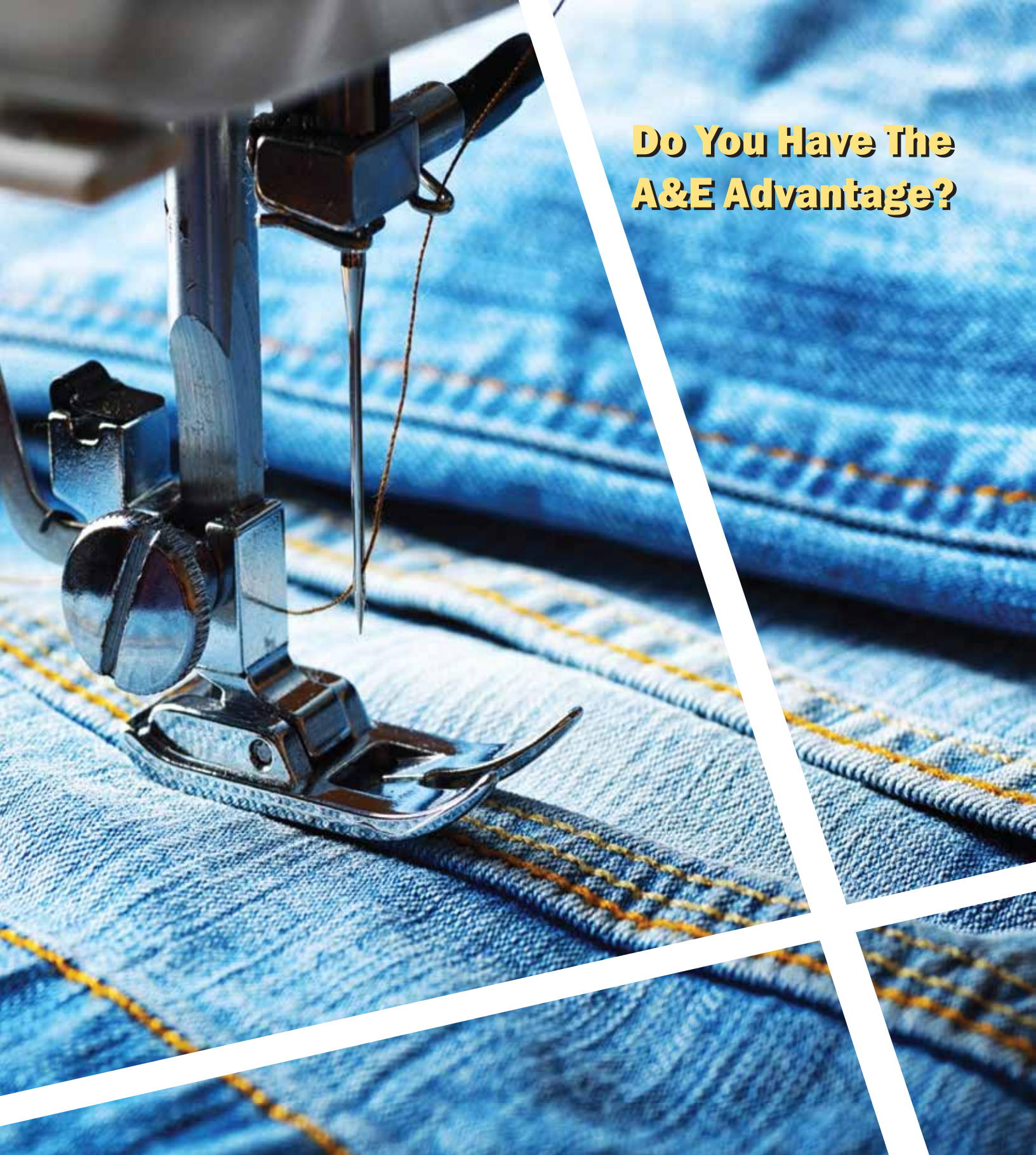
Discussants, including BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Director Syed Mohammed Tanvir, and CEO of Bangladesh Denim Expo Mostafiz Uddin, during a seminar in the Expo.

“ Bangladesh is well-known for denim and denim products manufacturing, for both niche and mass markets. The expo’s objective is to showcase Bangladesh’s growth potential in the denim industry and to demonstrate before global buyers our ability to offer great margins and high-quality goods.”

manufactures. The first one provides the denim manufactures an opportunity to showcase their products of the most recent trend and style while the buyers get first-hand glimpse of quality denim Bangladesh offers at very competitive prices. Being up-to-date with the latest technologies is a must to keep pace with the international market. Keeping that in mind the organizer in the latest edition of the expo set up ‘Trendzone’ in the exhibition premises to introduce the manufacturers with the latest evolutions in denim.

The Trendzone helped to discover a trend-driven selection of fabrics and products of the international denim industry. It also focuses on the latest washes, bleaches, weaves and finishes of denim. On the other hand, informative seminars look into future of the denim industry – ways to ensure sustainable denim, how to bring more innovation to product development and diversity. The organizer brought together experts of

the global denim industry to present knowledge on different technologies in denim production. In the fourth edition of the expo the global leader in garment finishing technologies Tonello presented their revolution new finishing technologies while JEANOLOGIA talked about their new 3D finishes and eco technologies. Vice President (Finance) of BGMEA Mohammed Nasir thinks that Bangladesh, the second largest RMG exporter in the world, is also an emerging player in international denim market. “The growing demand of denim globally has created new opportunities for the country”: he said. The BGMEA Vice President also said: “Global buyers are increasingly coming across our expertise in quality denim production through exhibitions, especially the Bangladesh Denim Expo, in the country.” Mohammed Nasir believes that the prospect of Bangladesh denim industry is very bright. “Bangladesh has already proved itself as a promising hub of denim production in the international market. We would be able to increase our share in the global market by tapping our potential.”



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WTO TRADE DIALOGUE

**Demand of
DFQF market
access for
LDCs raised**

By Nabila Jamal Rusha

The World Trade Organization's (WTO) platform is multilateral and therefore unique in the world of trade. It brings together 162 countries that negotiate and decide on the future of international trade rules. 2013 and 2015 marked historic breakthroughs in WTO negotiations and demonstrated the ability of the organization to deliver substantive outcome in areas like trade facilitation and agriculture. 2016 is the year when WTO decided to capitalize on their progress and to reflect on the organization's future path. To facilitate this process, the WTO Director-General

has started a series of 'Trade Dialogues', offering stakeholders the possibility to share their views on outstanding and emerging trade priorities and the way these can be reflected in WTO's future work.

Hence one Trade Dialogue took place on 30th May 2016, which brought together over 60 business leaders to discuss the challenges and opportunities they face in conducting trade operations and to discuss how the WTO can help in dealing with them. The attendees were from small and large enterprises, from developed and developing countries, and from a



variety of sectors. The event was held at the request of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the B20 group of leading independent business associations from G20 economies, and facilitated by the WTO.

This high-level event for the business community is the first of its kind to be held at the WTO and the President of the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Md. Siddiqur Rahman was one of the business leaders who were invited to the dialogue. He was accompanied by Mohammed Nasir, Vice President (Finance), BGMEA. Apart from them, the event was attended by high-level representatives from various sectors and different parts of the world. The guest list included discussants from companies like Apex, Brasil, Teyseer, Qatar, Nestle, Switzerland and many more. There were also representatives from associations and unions like Sharon Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), John Danilovich, Secretary General, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and et al.

This event has given the private sector the possibility to discuss its challenges and opportunities and the possible ways in which the WTO can help in dealing with them.

The idea was to provide a platform for exploratory dialogue and share the outcome with the WTO Membership.

In the discussion session with the WTO Director-General, the BGMEA President extended his deep appreciation for the dynamic role for bringing the WTO back to business. WTO's role to bring the most awaited breakthrough in the Doha Round through the Bali package, the relaxation of Rules of Origin in the Nairobi Ministerial and the extension of the TRIPS transition period in favor of the LDCs are highly appreciated.

He also emphasized that to expand the manufacturing industries and to increase exports of Bangladesh, duty-free market access is one of the most critical factors for export led growth strategy. Many countries came forward by providing duty-free market access, except the United States of America. The United States remains the only developed country to deny duty-free market access to Asian LDCs, though the Sub-Saharan and Caribbean LDCs enjoy duty-free market access to the USA. He requested and believed that through the Director General's prudent

leadership commercially meaningful market access will be ensured, especially to Asian LDCs, by the countries who are currently avoiding the DFQF commitment. Particularly the labor intensive manufacturing goods like apparel should be included within the 97% list of duty-free quota-free products under the Hong Kong decision. Their DFQF lists should be constructed in a way that provides commercially meaningful market access to all LDCs.

He also talked about the growing number of Regional Trade Agreements such as the Transpacific Partnership (TPP) which was recently adopted by 12 developed countries representing nearly 40% of global GDP. Such arrangements create adverse impact on trade for country like Bangladesh that aspires to grow through labor intensive manufacturing industries. TPP like trade deals limit the space for the LDCs and distort the level playing field.

While Bangladesh RMG sector has transformed significantly in the last few years, but we are still living in the age of price cuts. Hence the BGMEA

BGMEA President demanded respect to be given to fair pricing in order to end the price war. He mentioned that to build a sustainable value chain it is the moral obligation of the developed world to ensure equitable share of the value chain to all the stakeholders.

President demanded respect to be given to fair pricing in order to end the price war. He mentioned that to build a sustainable value chain it is the moral obligation of the developed world to ensure equitable share of the value chain to all the stakeholders. So he requested WTO to play the role of setting the right tone in the market dynamics to ensure reasonable balance of bargaining power between buyers and sellers in global supply chain.

At the conclusion of the dialogue, ICC called on WTO members to maintain contacts with the business community in taking forward possible new trade talks and initiatives. Drawing the event to an end, ICC Secretary General John Danilovich said: "We have seen a positive discussion today about how we can work together to maximize the contribution of trade and investment to achieving inclusive growth and sustainable development. We hope that today's initiative can be followed up with concrete steps including further meetings of this kind."

Interview *of the Month*

**BUYERS WILL
PREFER
BANGLADESH**



H.E. Pierre Mayaudon, Ambassador and Head of the European Union Delegation to Bangladesh, is deeply involved with the readymade garment industry of Bangladesh since his appointment in the country. In his own words he came to Bangladesh at a time when the industry turned around and he could contribute to its move forward. Nabila Jamal Rasha of the *Apparel Story* interviewed the EU Ambassador to know what changes in the industry he recognized during his one and half year stint in Bangladesh.”

Pierre Mayaudon

**FOR ITS
PROGRESS
IN SAFETY
AND CSR**

Q: What do you like most about Bangladesh?

Pierre Mayaudon: I have been here for more than 1.5 years which is over half of my mandate. Frankly speaking from the very first day I found this to be a very interesting mission. It is undoubtedly a difficult one too as it is hard to adjust to the specific context of a country with such a strong identity as Bangladesh. So you have to perceive it properly to not brew any misunderstanding or mistakes. Also there is quite a huge expectation from European Union as EU is number one trading partner of Bangladesh as well as a development and humanitarian assistance partner. I notice that it is extremely relevant and inspiring that so many people expect so much from EU but at the same time they also have the understanding of what we can do and what we cannot do, so we have very mature stakeholders that we are dealing with. And for my first position as an ambassador of EU, I must say that it is a blessing to be in Bangladesh especially at this time when I feel I could contribute more.

Q: A lot of efforts have been made in terms of safety and sustainability in recent times in the RMG industry of Bangladesh. How do you see the changes?

Pierre Mayaudon: It is unfortunate that we had to start with the Rana Plaza tragedy to reach where we are now which is an incredibly better situation than it was a few years back. Obviously everybody would have preferred for things to go smoothly without the pain and tragedies that this country has experienced but certainly it has been as often referred to a wake-up call. All relevant stakeholders of the industry including BGMEA, foreign buyers, Government and foreign institutional

partners have joined as a team and this team has produced substantial results that made a difference. As the ambassador of EU mission in Bangladesh, I am very proud that my own institution has been one of the drivers as to reach this result. As you know, one of the very first initiatives that EU took day after Rana Plaza is the adoption of Sustainability Compact which has been the catalyst of this evolution. An opinion shared by many is that today, God forbid, it is almost impossible to fathom that a tragedy of the magnitude of Rana Plaza could occur. But we all know that it is still a work in progress as all has not been done and what is comforting is that everyone especially the suppliers are working hard to achieve the objective that has been jointly identified.

Q: Support from different stakeholders, especially European buyers, for safety reforms in the RMG industry is undoubtedly praiseworthy. But slow response has been noticed from brands and buyers in terms of financial support in carrying out remediation in the factories, especially SMEs. Don't you think financial support in the form of low-cost loan would mean a lot to these factories and help them stay in business?

Pierre Mayaudon: It is a very important point as all companies here do not have an equal capacity when it comes to access to low-cost funds which is necessary to conduct the remediation plans. But there are a number of prominent buyers who have come in agreements with their suppliers and offered them a certain guarantee for the years to come. Based on these guarantees they could get

What is positive for Bangladesh, as discussed in the Sustainability Compact meetings in all its dimension, is that Bangladesh among the small world of RMG buyers and suppliers has made a name as a country which is now the forerunner in the field of safety at work

grants or fund themselves, at least part, if not all of the remediation plans. Still you are right to mention that some, mainly SMEs, are facing difficulties. To assist these companies, donors and development partners of Bangladesh have put together some credit in the form of soft loans or grants to facilitate these SMEs to have access to credit in conditions that are better and far under the market conditions. We have put together something around \$200 million, which is not a small amount. Even though these funds are available, not all are yet channeled to those companies in need, prioritizing SMEs: in the channel of disbursement there are some local institutions from private and public sectors which have a role to play and this does not come free of charge. After passing these channels the loans are no longer soft loans, they are if not equal but closer to the market price. As we are aware of this issue, we have requested the government to work on that. Substantial efforts have been made and we are not far from a good news where the soft loans provided by donors will remain soft loans at the times when they reach the companies in need.

Q: This is undoubtedly a very good initiative by the EU brands but I wonder if companies in need are aware of this loan?

Pierre Mayaudon: I am not sure if SMEs have access to all these information or not but your magazine can help by publicizing this information so that those companies can get aware of this fund. It will be a great contribution of Apparel Story and BGMEA.

Q: Costly reforms and regular maintenance of safety equipment in the RMG sector have increased production cost, making a dent to the competitive edge over its competitors who don't have the same level of safety standards. But for that Bangladesh is not getting extra prices. Do you think that same level of standards in safety should be maintained in other competing countries to ensure level-playing fields?

Pierre Mayaudon: My take is that most European buyers have the same expectation from suppliers worldwide whether they are from South-East Asia or South America or Northern Africa, and they are not ready to compromise as they know the importance of safety compliance at work. So when it comes to level playing field, I am confident for most buyers that the request or expectation for safety standards is very much the same. What is positive for Bangladesh, as discussed in the Sustainability Compact meetings in all its dimension, is that Bangladesh among the small world of RMG buyers and suppliers has made a name as a country which is now the forerunner in the field of safety at work and hopefully also in terms of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Social Dialogue. So altogether I think such determination and effort is already bearing fruit and more and more buyers will prefer to come to Bangladesh precisely for this reason as your country is pretty much ahead of its competitors, initially for a very tragic reason but today with a very positive outcome. The EU has highlighted Bangladesh RMG sector's progress in the high-level workshop that took place end of April in Brussels where we publicized the best practices in the RMG industry among prominent participants of this international conference which was also attended by Bangladesh's State Minister for Labor and Employment, who concluded the conference. In the conference Bangladesh has been acknowledged worldwide for their progress achieved.

Q: Are European consumers aware of the safety transformation Bangladesh RMG industry has undergone recently? How can they be made aware?

Pierre Mayaudon: I think the general perception is that consumers are more worried about price but a growing number is actually curious about the history behind the products. They will look at the tag from where it is made and the image of the country will possibly play an important role in the decision making process at individual level. Whether there is child labor in the country, whether there is dictatorship or democracy and whether human rights are respected, whether working conditions are safe, whether workers are exploited, all these factors come in play more and more with the purchase decision. Even where the awareness does not come from the individual consumers, it does come from the brands which build part of their image on the fact that they source their products from countries that meet the above-mentioned criteria.

Q: Any suggestion on how to make the general public aware?

Pierre Mayaudon: BGMEA has a very important role to play in building this awareness as it is very active in the public arena not only at home but also in the destination countries. We all know that 60% of your RMG exports are going to a single market of EU, so I would suggest your organization to be even more proactive into reaching out to the general public in Europe. We, from the level of EU institutions along with the European Parliament and relevant actors, can assist in this demarche. We will not only be happy in doing so but we have a

purpose as it serves as a promotion of the work of your people in the industry. Our mission here also promotes the betterment of the citizens of Bangladesh and in this case we are referring to the 4.4 million workers of RMG sector whose lives have been changed through this industry.

Q: You are aware that BGMEA has fixed the target of achieving 50 billion of RMG export in 2021. How challenging is the target you think and how Bangladesh can increase its export share in the European market?

Pierre Mayaudon: I was present at Dhaka Apparel Summit in December 2014 as a panelist speaker. It was a very good memory and as the new ambassador, it was an inspiring exposure since I could discuss important matters. There was announced this target of \$50 billion to be achieved by 2021. I consider it to be a very ambitious objective to be reached within the next six years, given that today we have an export of around \$26.6 billion. 2021 is not tomorrow but it is definitely day after tomorrow. The growing competition from other countries and economic difficulties in the destination countries are definitely some of the core challenges. As stated, \$50 billion can be the target but that does not necessarily mean that exactly this amount needs to be reached. Nonetheless the target is very important for motivation of the companies/suppliers and for public institutions around in order to create a conducive environment for everybody to mobilize and try to get as close as possible to this goal.

My assumption is that you will not be far from the target, given the modernization of tools and factories. Recently I attended an inauguration of a modern factory and witnessed some fantastic instruments that were there. What is considered "state of the art industries" worldwide in terms of RMG factories is what we are seeing now in Bangladesh.

Q: One way of achieving our target is through capturing additional market. Is there any suggestion on how to capture more markets in EU?

Pierre Mayaudon: You are already in a dominant position in the European market but of course there is always room for improvement. One thing that we already talked about is BGMEA and suppliers being more proactive in EU countries especially those that are not targeted or reached yet in terms of export. We have 28 member states and none is a small market. Every opportunity should be seized to increase awareness of the quality of the brand 'Made in Bangladesh'.

Q: Skill development and productivity improvement is one of the key challenges in achieving the \$50 billion target. Though Bangladesh has a big and vibrant population, there is still a shortage of skilled human resource in the country. How could the EU help Bangladesh in developing skills of the workforce?

Pierre Mayaudon: To continue its path toward becoming a middle-income country and reaching \$50 billion worth of export and to achieve other goals, Bangladesh has no alternative but to climb up the value chain. Obviously there are different parameters that play a role here. One of them is technology as it is important to be a more technologically-intensive industry and RMG is no exception. But along with that, skill development is a key factor and there I can tell you that EU has made it a specific component of its bilateral cooperation with Bangladesh. We are currently under what we call the Multi-annual Indicative Program (MIP) 2014-2020 of our development assistance for seven years and one of the three avenues of this MIP is precisely education and skills development. Budgetary allocation for this program is

around 700 million euros of grants of this 7 year period which is around 100 million euros per year, out of which one third will go to education and skills development. This means that EU has made it a priority and it is not just today, even before 2014 we had projects related to skills development as it is a priority for our action in Bangladesh.

Q: Anything else you would like to add?

Pierre Mayaudon: Every day the economy of Bangladesh is becoming more matured. Our mission is to develop, promote and establish between EU and Bangladesh full-fledged economic relationship. We are very glad that RMG industry has immensely benefitted from the Duty free and Quota free market access regime offered by EU. We are very proud to be a part of women empowerment in Bangladesh as more than 70% RMG workers are female. It has been a great satisfaction and we want to go further. We have launched together with the Ministry of Commerce the "EU-Bangladesh Business Climate Dialogue". We had our first session on the 12th of May. It was inspiring and very encouraging and before the end of this year we will meet again. What we want to see is more European investment in Bangladesh in all sectors. We want to see more European technologies in Bangladesh and for this to happen there are some technical matters to be addressed. But what we critically need is peace and a stable climate for investment. This is also the key element of our partnership in Bangladesh. We had the opportunity to discuss it with the Hon'ble Foreign Minister just few weeks ago. It is for this conducive- environment to be promoted at a time when it is so important for Bangladesh to remain stable in order to reach its economic and social objectives.

Q: Thanks for your valuable time.

Pierre Mayaudon: You are welcome.



ONCE GIVEN CHANCE THEY BECOME ASSET

By Nasim Uddin

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o many people disability is still synonymous with dependency and a burden on society. But Monika Tirkey, a physically challenged person, has proved this widespread notion wrong by establishing herself as a valued working member of society. She has showed that her physical limitation could not subdue her burning desire and abilities to become a productive member of the national workforce. Monika whose both legs went numb in her childhood is now self-reliant working as a Junior Admin Executive at Posmi Sweaters Limited. Not only that, with her income she supports her family. However, like Monika picture is not rosy for all. For people with disabilities, unemployment is still the overwhelming norm, regardless of the ability and desire to work. The number of such people with disabilities in Bangladesh is high enough to merit special attention. It

is estimated that around 9 percent of the total population in Bangladesh experience some form of disability. Research show that 80-90 percent of people with disability lead unemployed life in developing countries though they have adequate abilities to get employed.

There is a growing recognition that the exclusion of people with disabilities from the labor market is at a considerable cost to the economy. A 2009 ILO study of 10 low- and middle-income developing countries in Asia and Africa estimated the related economic losses at between 3 and 5 percent of a country's GDP. According the World Bank, Bangladesh faces a loss of around 5 percent of total GDP by excluding this large part of population.

However, things have started changing; the importance of involving this huge population in the mainstream of development is increasingly being felt both at public and private levels. Awareness is growing that people with disability are not disabled, rather they have abilities to become a productive members of the national workforce. This is paying off -- both public and private sectors are showing an increasing interest in financial inclusion of persons with disabilities. And the ready-made

(RMG) industry has been playing the leading role in creating employment for physically challenged people.

There are a good number of RMG factories where persons with disabilities are employed; among them Keya Knit Composite, Beximco Fashions, Posmi Sweaters, Onus Group, Fame Sweaters, Spectra Sweaters, Fakhruddin Textiles, Interstoff, Vintage Denim Studio, Abonti Colour Tex, Fakir Fashions, Pandora Sweaters, Tarasima Apparels, Givency Group, are to name a few. Keya Knit Composite Ltd. alone employs around 850 people with disabilities while the number is around 6 hundred in Beximco Fashions Ltd. Moshiul Azam Shajal, Managing Director of Posmi Sweaters Ltd, Spectra Sweaters Ltd and Fame Sweaters Ltd, thinks that it is a loss for society and country if a single person who has abilities to work remains unemployed. "Physically challenged people are never a burden to society, rather an asset if they are given proper opportunity," he said. Moshiul Azam has set a glaring example by introducing 5% quota for recruiting people with disabilities in his factories where currently around 4 hundred physically challenged people are



Onus Group, a leading RMG conglomerate, has created employment for persons with disabilities in the company. BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman is seen handing over appointment letters to the physically challenged persons in presence of Onus Group Managing Director and First Vice President of FBCCI Md. Shaful Islam (Mohiuddin), BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice President SM Mannan (Kochi) and Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir at BGMEA office.

working. He now aims to increase the quota to 10%. German development agency GIZ in collaboration with the government, the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralysed (CRP) and the Centre for Disability in Development (CDD) has been working to support employment of persons with disabilities in the RMG industry. GIZ runs the Inclusive Job Center (IJC) at CRP in Mirpur where job-seeking physically persons are assessed in terms of mental and physical health and provided with inclusive skills training. IJC prepares CVs of the trained job-seekers and with the support of BGMEA arranges interviews with the factories for their job

placement while the CDD visits factories and recommends amendments to create a disability-friendly environment. Individual factories at their own take initiatives to ensure congenial working conditions the physically challenged workers like installing a ramp, setting up attendance punch machine at lower height, tailored-made machines etc. Sarwat Ahmad, Senior Advisor, GIZ said: "It is very encouraging that people with disabilities are getting employment in the RMG sector. Our project Promotion of Social and Environmental Standards in the Industry (PSES) is trying to enhance skills of the persons with disabilities with proper training in the RMG sector to make them an asset for the industry." She said that persons with disabilities have some inherent qualities. "The majority of them is sincere about their job. They work very hard and focus on their tasks. With the proper training they can perform as good as every other worker. The most important quality is that they usually stay in one factory for a long period and rarely migrate from

one factory to another": shed added. Moshiul Azam said that the physically challenged workers of his companies are as efficient as any other worker and are very attentive to their work. However, experts think that more should be done to ensure participation of more persons with disabilities in the mainstream economy. Sarwat Ahmad thinks that social awareness must be created. "The print and electronic media can play a vital role by publishing the success stories of persons with disabilities working efficiently in different factories and offices. Another requirement is the availability of inclusive skills trainings in the RMG sector," she said. Increased recognition of the value of physically challenges people and their financial inclusion would add value to the economy and the country as a whole. Experts suggest reviewing policies, programs and services for people with disabilities with a view to promoting their inclusion in all sectors of society and enhancing opportunities for them to earn a decent living and contribute to the economy.



Monika Tirkey, a Junior Admin Executive at Posmi Sweaters, considers herself as a good example of how a person with disability can shine if she is given an opportunity.

BRIGHT BUTTERFLIES

Bangladesh is well known as the land of six seasons and scenic beauty. In the biggest delta of the world sweetly-scented flowers and green-fields are abound providing with the ideal habitat for butterflies to thrive and reproduce. A mass of brightly-colored butterflies, fluttering from flower to flower, remind us of the childhood days that we spent chasing them in gardens, fields, river banks and green fields. A butterfly is a symbol of fragility and restlessness. There is a belief that butterflies are the emblem of fortune too. The lovely little day-flying insect is also important in maintaining the ecological balance in many ways.

Photos: Hasan Masood





Hasan Masood, a popular Bangladeshi actor, was born on 16 December 1962 in Barisal. He was brought up in Dhaka. He joined the Bangladesh Army in 1983 as a cadet and retired as a Captain in 1992. He then worked at two national English dailies. He served BBC Bangla as its correspondent from 2004 to 2008. Mr. Hasan first played the role of an actor in the film *Bachelor* by Mostofa Sarwar Farooki. Later, he never has to look back and established himself as a popular name in the media landscape of Bangladesh. Photography is his hobby and he mostly takes photos of butterflies.



APPAREL-MAKERS COMPETE IN BGMEA CUP FOOTBALL

By Sameya Karim

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Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) organized the first-ever BGMEA Cup Football Tournament from 17 March to 1 April 2016. The inter-garments 7-a-side football tournament was arranged for the people working in the middle and upper managerial positions at the BGMEA Member factories. A total of 12 teams, split into two groups – Group A and Group B, participated in the tournament. Epyllion Group, Interstoff Group, Apparel Industry Ltd, Torque Fashions

Ltd, Ananta Garments Ltd and Envoy Group played in the Group A, while Bando Design Ltd, Versatile Group, Comfit Composite, Rayon Tex, Sterling Group and Tamanna Apparel were in the Group B.

In the group matches, each team battled their best on the field of International Turkish Hope School to take the trophy home. There were a total of 36 exciting matches played among the teams of Group-A and Group-B, all competed in 30-minute affairs.

Bando Design and Comfit Composite showing their mettle

Teams of Group A

Epyllion Group
Interstoff Group,
Apparel Industry Ltd,
Torque Fashions Ltd,
Ananta Garments Ltd
Envoy Group

Teams of Group B

Bando Design Ltd
Versatile Group
Comfit Composite
Rayon Tex
Sterling Group
Tamanna Apparel



Bando Design gave Comfit Composite a 4-1 goals drubbing. Shakil of Bando netted two goals in the 6th and 26th minutes and was named the Man of the Final. Mridul and Imran scored one goal each in the 2nd and 34th minutes to extend the winning margin. Comfit Captain Tanin, who became the Best Midfielder, reduced the margin scoring a consolation goal for his team in the 36th minute. Bando's Managing Director and captain Imran became the top scorer of the tournament with 12 goals. Mr. Imran said: "This is more than winning or losing. It is about spending time together, knowing each other better and performing together to attain a set common objective."

BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman handed over the Champion and Runner-up trophies and crests to the teams. He said: "The upper- and middle-managements of the RMG sector have come together for this tournament and have displayed excellent skills of coordination, planning, belief and trust on teammates to win the matches, just the same way we all are working together to achieve our \$50b export target by 2021." BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice

President SM Mannan (Kochi), Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Vice President Mahmud Hasan Khan (Babu), Vice President Ferdous Perves Bivon, former President Tipu Monshi, MP, former President and first Vice President of FBCCI Shafiul Islam (Mohiuddin) and BGMEA Directors and members were also present on the occasion.

BGMEA Vice President (Finance) and also the Chairman of the Committee for BGMEA Cup Football 2016 Mohammed Nasir and Bonna from Gazi TV conducted the grand finale as the masters of ceremony.

Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd, EXIM Bank Ltd, Manyavar, Sterling Stocks and Securities, AKH Group, Sonali Life Insurance Company Ltd, Rising Group, Porcelanosa by Nupami BD, Vertex Group, Tex Town, TAD Logistic, Oriental Real Estate Limited, BBS Cables, Amaze Power, Sailor by Epyllion, BUFT, and CBL Munchee sponsored the tournament while the Kabab Factory and California Fried Chicken were the food partners and Omiyo Juice was the beverage partner. The final match was telecast live on Gazi TV which was the media partner of the tournament.



in the group matches secured their positions for the Grand Finale which was held at the Army Stadium Dhaka. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP, attended the grand finale as the Chief guest. He congratulated BGMEA for organizing the tournament for the middle and upper management of the apparel manufacturing units who hardly get time for leisure as they sitting at the helm have to remain very busy to run the export business.

The whole Army Stadium took a festive look at the final. Workers and employees of Bando Design and Comfit Composite gathered at two opposite sides of the stadium and inspired their respective teams with drums, vuvuzela and yells. Though the group matches were very competitive, the grand finale was almost one-sided game where the

- **BGMEA for the 1st time arranged the tournament**
- **12 teams participated in the tournament**
- **Bando Design won the trophy**
- **Comfit Composite became the runner-up**
- **Imran, Captain of Bando Design, scored highest 12 goals**



The Government must strengthen the partnership with RMG business to improve both the image of Bangladesh RMG and connectivity with export markets

-Dr. Sadiq Ahmed



Bangladesh has envisioned being a middle-income country by 2021. To achieve the target we have to create more employment, bring more investment and accelerate industrial growth. How can investment-friendly environment be created and industrial growth is accelerated?

Dr. Sadiq Ahmed is a noted economist in Bangladesh. Beginning his career as a Lecturer in Economics at Dhaka University, he later worked at the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies and held several key positions in the World Bank in different countries. Currently he is the Vice Chairman at the Policy Research Institute (PRI). In an exclusive interview with the *Apparel Story*, Dr. Ahmed shares his opinions on the prospects and challenges of the apparel industry of Bangladesh and way forward.

Dr. Ahmed: Bangladesh has many favorable factors for private investment. Its biggest advantage is the abundant supply of low-cost labor. This labor supply is growing faster than

population because of demographic factors. So, the demographic dividend is going to last for a while. It is true that basic education and skills base of the labor force is low. Yet, the example from RMG shows that the labor force is very motivated and trainable on the job. With minimum investments in on-the-job training, a large part of the low-cost labor force can be used for expanding the growth of manufacturing and other commercial enterprises. Another natural advantage is the open access to sea. With supportive investments in port facilities Bangladesh can be a regional hub for international trade and commerce. On the policy front, a huge advantage is the prudent macro-policy. Inflation and interest rates are coming down and the exchange rate is stable. Supply of credit is plentiful.

As against these advantages, there are some daunting challenges. Supply of electricity and gas is a huge constraint; access to serviced land is limited; cost of doing business is high owing to many regulations and bureaucratic hurdles; trade policy still generates substantial bias against exports; and the corporate tax regime needs restructuring to improve the incentives for manufacturing. These constraints must be addressed speedily. Some efforts are underway. For example the government has taken a major initiative to establish special economic zones. Similarly, there is a strong effort to increase the supply of power and LNG/LPG. These efforts are commendable but need speedy implementation. Attention must also shift to addressing the other constraints.

Q: It is seen that interest rate in Bangladesh is higher than that of in our competing countries. But we know low-cost finance is important to attract investment. What would you say?

Dr. Ahmed: There has been a lot of debate on this. Interest rates are coming down in nominal and real terms. Indeed, the deposit rates are so low now that they have become negative in real terms. As we all know from international experience that negative real deposit rates may lead to financial disintermediation, which will be unfortunate and a hugely negative factor for Bangladesh. Our capital markets are shallow and confidence level is low. Banking sector remains the dominant source of supply of investible funds. Financial disintermediation can hurt our investment environment substantially. The lending rates are coming down and can come down further. There are two ways this can be achieved: First, the inflation rate can be brought down further to the 4-5 percent level that will support a further reduction in nominal interest rates. Secondly, the spread between average deposit and lending rates is too high. It is still hovering in the 5% range. This is needlessly high. In a competitive banking sector with strong supervision and adequate focus on quality of loan portfolio, the spread should come down to 2-3%. Inefficiencies in banking, reflected in large and growing non-performing loans (NPLs), is a primary reason for large spreads and the Bangladesh Bank must make a concerted effort to strengthen supervision and monitoring of loan portfolio. The Government on its part must radically reform the public banks, possibly by privatizing all but one bank that will be dedicated to doing Treasury functions.

Q: While currencies of our competing countries are becoming weaker against dollar, our Taka is getting stronger. In that case how our RMG sector can retain its competitive edge?

Dr. Ahmed: The growing appreciation of the Bangladesh Taka is indeed a matter of concern. Since we have a flexible exchange rate regime, the direct instruments of currency management are very limited. Bangladesh bank is doing some sterilization operations to protect against the appreciation of the exchange rate but this is of limited use because of adverse effects on money supply and the fiscal costs. So, we have to go to the source of the appreciation to understand what needs to be done.

The primary factor for currency appreciation is the faster growth in the supply of foreign exchange, owing to RMG exports growth and growth of remittances, compared with growth of imports. We should celebrate the rapid growth of foreign earnings, but the slow growth of imports is a matter of concern. There are four structural factors for this. First, world commodity prices have fallen that have lowered the amount of money we need to pay for our physical imports. This is a positive factor. What this means is that we are making terms of trade gains that is increasing our national income. The second factor is the stagnation of private investment in Bangladesh. This is a very worrisome factor and it needs to be addressed in a concerted manner as we discussed earlier. As investment rate increases, import will expand and the appreciation of the exchange rate will subside. A third factor is the cost of imports caused by trade protection. This is a great opportunity for Bangladesh to reduce trade protection that will increase the demand for imports, reduce cost of production and improve incentives for export. The policy is a win-win in most situations. A fourth factor is the excessive control over foreign currency transactions. Our foreign currency regulations were done at a time when we faced severe foreign currency constraints. That regime is no longer relevant to the present situation and also not relevant to a middle income Bangladesh. A thorough overall of this antiquated foreign currency regime based on an expert group analysis is urgently needed.

One final point on the exchange rate issue that needs to be noted concerns the rate of inflation. What matters for competitiveness is the real exchange rate and not nominal exchange rate. In addition to the economics of supply and demand for foreign exchange, the real appreciation of the Bangladesh taka against all currencies including the US dollar is happening because our inflation rate of 6% is much higher than the 1-2% inflation rate in our major trading partner countries in the OECD.

Q: China is moving away from labor-intensive manufacturing industries like apparel to high-tech industries, leaving scope for Bangladesh to grab more shares in the global apparel market. How do you think Bangladesh can avail of this opportunity?

Dr. Ahmed: Yes indeed. This is a huge opportunity and I believe the process is already underway and we need to take policy actions to do that. The policy measures I noted in my responses to questions 1-3 above are the same policies that will facilitate this transition. Two additional points I will make is first, the need to have more foreign investment in RMG sector. We need to attract the top brands in global RMG to invest in Bangladesh and FDI can be helpful. A second point is to continue to fight and dispel bad images about our RMG factories as being functioning as sweat houses with exploitative labor practices. I know there are efforts underway but more needs to be done.

Q: Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) is signed among 12 nations, including our competitor Vietnam which may get benefit in the TPP counties, particularly USA. What strategies or steps should Bangladesh take to counter any adverse effects of the trade deal on our exports?

Dr. Ahmed: The TPP has come under some pressure in the USA in the wake of domestic political backlash against trade liberalization. We obviously need to monitor that carefully. For the immediate future, the main issue is what the TPP does to RMG imports in USA. The garments lobby in USA is very strong and it is very unlikely that they will let RMG imports from leading exporters like Vietnam come into USA

at zero tariffs. If that happens, it will be a huge blow to Bangladesh. If RMG is not affected, then the issue is more longer term. Some 95% of our exports to USA are RMG related, the immediate loss to the other 5% is negligible. But for the longer term as we grow and our exports get diversified market penetration into USA could be a major issue. So, we must work hard to unlock our access to the blocked GSP benefits and also seek membership to the TPP.

Q: It has been observed that process of allocating soft loans from the funds received so far from international donors for factory remediation is lengthy and time-consuming. For that reason the factories which apply for such loans cannot get it on time. How this process can be made simpler?

Dr. Ahmed: I am not fully familiar with the specific concerns of the factory level disbursements but I am quite familiar with the macro issue of poor aid disbursement. I believe, all the constraints at the macro level also apply to the factory level. The latest data shows that the unused aid pipeline has surged to US\$23 billion as of March 2016. This is equivalent to a staggering 10% of the GDP or twice the level of our yearly public investment. This is mind boggling at a time when we are facing severe funding constraints in infrastructure that we have so much committed but unused foreign aid.

Many factors explain this. I have not seen a very recent analysis, but earlier reviews highlighted the following factors: lack of harmonization of donor and national disbursement policies and procedures; procurement disputes; lack of project implementation readiness; and slow responses from both donors and national agencies. Not surprisingly, most delays are related to procurement problems for both services and equipment. There have been many rounds of consultations between donors and Bangladesh on policy harmonization. But procurement remains the Achilles Heel for speedy disbursements. This is something the Government needs to address at the highest political level.

Q: Our garment sector eyes on moving towards high-end value added products. For that

technological upgradation is necessary. India has Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme for its textiles industry. Don't you think Bangladesh should provide support to its industry likewise?

Dr. Ahmed: Bangladesh is way behind on technology and strong concerted efforts are needed. First and foremost, the spending on research and development needs to be boosted at both the public and private sector. Since technology and knowledge are public goods, the funding should primarily come from the budget. This R&D fund can be used to support technological developments for priority activities like the textiles industry. At the same time, private investment in R&D must also be increased to take advantage of market opportunities. The RMG being a dynamic sector could take the lead in partnership with specialized research institutions. It must also be more open to FDI. The FDI is typically a major source of technology transfer and must be welcomed.

Q: What strategies should the government and BGMEA take to diversify and explore new markets for RMG industry?

Dr. Ahmed: There are already encouraging signs of RMG exports diversification in markets like Japan, Australia, Canada, Turkey, Ireland, China and Russia. Slowly Bangladesh is also making inroads in the Latin American and Middle Eastern markets. This effort must continue. The Government must use its embassies to promote the Bangladesh RMG prospects through information sharing and business level connectivity. Fortunately, our RMG entrepreneurs have increasingly become agile and are focusing on market diversification. Senior RMG managers, many of whom I know personally, are travelling much more frequently to new markets to explore opportunities.

As noted earlier, further efforts must also be made to improve the image of the RMG sector in terms of their social responsibilities. Incidents like the Rana Plaza Tragedy and allegations of exploitative labor practices have hurt the image of Bangladesh RMG. Correct or not, these perceptions have to be killed with evidence of positive developments and strong publicity to enhance the image of the RMG sector. Through the embassies, the

Government must strengthen the partnership with RMG business in both strengthening the image of Bangladesh RMG and connectivity with export markets.

Q: Bangladesh RMG industry has made tremendous progress in workplace safety. But the safety overhaul and its regular maintenance has resulted in rise production cost. How can our entrepreneurs cope up with this?

Dr. Ahmed: The workforce is the most important asset for any enterprise. International evidence shows that worker welfare and productivity are strongly correlated. From my own experience as a manager at the World Bank and now at the Policy Research Institute, I have found that a safe and comfortable work environment has been a key factor for success and growth. The expenses for worker safety, training, and other welfare measures should be seen as investments rather than as a cost factor. Over time, these investments will show up in higher productivity. If this does not happen then there may be other problems. In that case, an expert group review of cost, production, earnings and investment must be done to find out what is causing loss of profitability and proper restructuring undertaken. Cutting corners on worker safety is certainly a short-sighted and unsustainable business decision that has no place in a modern export-oriented enterprise.

Q: Bangladesh RMG industry has a set a vision of reaching US\$50 billion in RMG exports. What would be your suggestions for attaining the target?

Dr. Ahmed: This is certainly an achievable target. Despite all the progress, Bangladesh still accounts for a mere 5% of the global RMG market. Moving to \$50 billion will increase its global market share to 8-9%. This is huge challenge but not impossible. All the policies I have identified above and actions that RMG enterprises should take, as I noted, will help move us towards this goal. Two points I will particularly emphasize are: first, a strong concerted effort to increase labor training; and second to upgrade technology. Both are critical for enhancing labor productivity. Without faster labor productivity, competitiveness and greater market penetration will be very difficult.



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TRENDZ: A BLEND OF FASHION & QUALITY

By Tamanna Mahin

Trendz started their journey in 2004 as a brand bringing together a collection of Casual and Formal Shirts, Polo T-shirts and Punjabis for the men and Fatuas, Kurtis and Salwar – Kameezes for the women. The clothes reflect excitement, trendiness and fusion fashion. The purpose of every design that Trendz puts out is to satisfy the consumers' passion for fashion.





Abidur Rahman, Director, Babylon Group

However, Babylon, the parent company for Trendz, has been making shirts for the international market for a long time. They wanted to make good quality shirts for the people of the country, which were designed in parity with the international market. Their vision was to improve the local Bangladeshi market with an influx of international quality shirts which reflected the international style, fashion and make. Trendz began as a separate unit from its parent company. Every minute element related to production, be it the design or quality control, was critically monitored to yield the best quality products. When Trendz was launched the customers deemed it as a brand that delivers quality. Trendz wants to create awareness about the importance of quality.

Trendz's target customer group is the upper middle and middle income group. A large portion of this target market comprised of people who were shopping abroad for their clothing needs. Therefore, Trendz tried producing good quality clothes for these people and their target customer base understood and acknowledged their dedication towards creating a label which was able to match the International quality standards. A second customer segment was the younger generation. They launched a line of polo T-shirts for their younger consumer base. The Polo's quickly rose to popularity as they were meeting international standards and were designed with a Bangladeshi



and international fusion. The T-shirts are made to be trendy and comfortable. As the material for the T-shirts are made by Trendz, they can ensure superior products to the market.

Trendz does dream to set up internationally; however, it is a target they only want to set once they have fully conquered the local market. Over the years the consumers' mindset is changing. Today, they understand that quality and cost are positively related. Abidur Rahman, Director of Babylon Group, says: 'Consumers have acknowledged that they have to pay for the good things.' According to him, the changes in mindset of the consumers have come simultaneously with the increase in their purchasing power. There has been an increase in the level of affordability amongst the consumers. The younger generations are becoming more and more fashion conscious everyday and the local market is very challenging with designs fading out with seasons like in the international market. According to Mr. Rahman, the growth of both the international and local market over the last ten years is greatly commendable. Trendz has seen a lot of foreign consumers buying and appreciating their products based on their quality and design.

The local market is shaping up. Twelve years ago when Trendz started their journey, the Director of Babylon Group never expected a small one room business venture would just be the beginning of a new industry in itself. Babylon's background in garment manufacturing has been instrumental in shaping Trendz. Design and quality has been of utmost importance for

Trendz. People are comparing Trendz products with internationally produced apparel and they think that is a big accomplishment for them. However, today many brands are entering the market, increasing the competition and developing the internal market. Fabrics, design and quality control all become a challenge when the market is very diverse, and Trendz continuously tries to accommodate middle and upper income groups of consumer with assorted products.

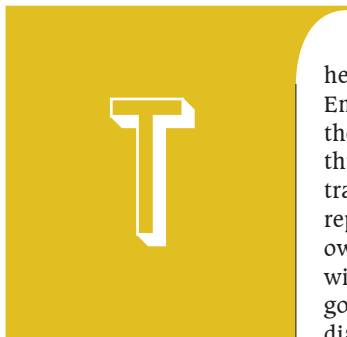
Trendz unique selling point is the exceptional fabrics they import to manufacture their shirts. Trendz acquires their fabrics from factories in China and Thailand. Though, compared to the quantity they produce for Trendz is much lower than their export quantity, they have built a relationship with international fabric manufacturing factories to cater to Trendz specific needs. Trendz has a team of very talented designers who are dedicated in creating designs specifically for the diverse local market. All of their designers have professional degrees in designing and long tenures of working in the design sector of the garment industry.

Trendz has seven outlets, five of which are in Dhaka, one in the port city Chittagong and one in Gazipur. In the next 5 years, Trendz wish to establish their stores in every prominent corner of the country. For the local market to grow more and more entrepreneurs need to shift their focus here. The competition which has increased in the last few years is praiseworthy at the same time is a challenge the entrepreneurs need to acknowledge.



TRAINING ON SOCIAL DIALOGUE, WORKPLACE SAFETY & SOCIAL INSURANCE HELD IN GERMANY

By Nabila Jamal Rusha



The Ministry of Labour and Employment in co-operation with the BMZ (German Government through GIZ) sent a batch of trainees to Germany consisting of representatives from factory owners and trade unions along with representatives from government for training on social dialogue, workplace safety and social insurance. This is the second time that such a training delegation has been sent to Dresden, Germany. The duration of the training was 21 days starting from 3rd April 2016.

Mohammed Nasir, Vice President (Finance), BGMEA was invited as the BGMEA representative to end

the program of the second study visit of the tripartite delegation from Bangladesh in Germany. The tripartite delegation consisted of 8 representatives from owners and 8 representatives from trade unions along with 8 representatives from government. The delegation was equally divided into male and female.

Mohammed Nasir participated in the first discussion as a distinguished panelist along with Dr. Anis Awwal, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labor and Employment and Mr. Roy Ramesh Chandra, President, IndustriALL Bangladesh Council from Bangladesh. There were also speakers from German

partners including representatives from German Trade Union Confederation (DGB), Confederation of German Employers' Associations (BDA) and from Confederation of the German Textile and Fashion Industry. The moderation was done by German Social Accident Insurance (DGUV).

Mohammed Nasir, in his speech, emphasized on the significant transformation that has taken place in Bangladesh RMG industry after Rana Plaza tragedy in terms of safety reform, administrative reform, workers empowerment and welfare and mostly among local and global coordination among stakeholders to bring about positive changes. He ensured that BGMEA as a facilitator is following a Zero Tolerance policy when it comes to safety and workers welfare.

He further talked about the Labor Law that was amended within 73 days of the Rana Plaza collapse. He mentioned that the amended Labor Law allows workers to form trade unions without taking any permission from the factory management, for which till now after the amendment 355 new trade unions have been registered as compared to last 30 years where only 138 were registered.

He further mentioned that BGMEA made the group insurance mandatory since 2002. The compensation amount was made double in the fiscal year 2013-14. In addition under the recently declared Labor Rules, according to Rule-214 the exporters have to provide 0.03% of the export price (FOB) to the Workers Welfare Fund which will be operated by a Central Board chaired by the Honorable State Minister for Labor & Employment Mujibul Haque Chunnu. The Rule clearly mentions how the fund will be used, and this covers health insurance including accident and rehabilitation in case of any accident.

After portraying all the progress made, he also talked about the challenges that the RMG industry is facing as they are trying to glide along the path of improvement. One of the biggest obstacles is the



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lack of low cost financing for remediation, especially for the small and medium factories that are not covered under the Accord and Alliance. Also as trade unions are flourishing in the industry, it is concerning that the lack of education, lack of awareness on the principles of trade union, and lack of motivation among the

workers may lead to misuse of trade union rights. He also mentioned that the buyers should come forward with fair price as it is not possible to produce socially fair clothes without a fair price. Productivity improvement of workers and a unified code-of-conduct of Social Audit are also essential for reducing cost & time.

At the end of the discussion he expressed his gratitude for this excellent initiative of Tripartite Exchange Program by DGUV. He also acknowledged the contribution of State Minister for Labor and Employment Mujibul Haque Chunnu and Mikail Shipper, Secretary of the Labor Ministry, for their extraordinary efforts and support to this industry as always. On the next and last day of the program, Mohammed Nasir along with other high level participants from Bangladesh attended the workshop to evaluate the study group on what they have learned in the visit and how they can implement that at home. Overall he believes that the visit was very fruitful and needs to be continued every year. He also believes that other international partners should come forward and offer more study tours and trainings like this on various issues important for the growth of Bangladesh's RMG industry.



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GREEN FINANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE RMG INDUSTRY

By Mohammad Monower Hossain

B

Bangladesh's economy is now at a transitional phase, shifting toward a more manufacturing based formal economy. The Government of Bangladesh has set a target of achieving \$60 billion in exports in the year 2021 when Bangladesh will celebrate her 50th anniversary of independence. Aligned with this vision Bangladesh RMG sector has also set a target of reaching US\$ 50 billion in exports by 2021 sustainably.

There is always a negative correlation between environment and economic development. Economic development requires huge industrialization which on

the other hand results in environmental pollution. The role of government is to facilitate trade and at the same time protect the environment. So reconciliation is required. Against this backdrop Bangladesh Bank (BB) has developed a green banking policy back in 2011. The green banking policy is considered as one of the effective tools that promotes investment in the environmental goods and services, ensures sustainable development and facilitate eco-friendly industrialization. The concept of green financing is relatively new in Bangladesh but has already gained a positive momentum. Bangladesh Bank has been playing a pivotal role in promoting sustainable industrialization through green financing. It has introduced three types of refinancing facility -- BB refinance scheme, Asian Development Bank (ADB) supported refinance scheme, and refinance scheme funded by Shari'ah based banks and financial institutes. Interest rate for these green loans varies from 6% to 9% depending on the banks capacity interest and relation with their clients. As per the decision of the central bank, all the banks and financial institutions have to disburse 5% of their total loan in green financing. However, industry leaders think the present rate is not encouraging for entrepreneurs. "Considering the prevailing interest rate of 10 to 11% in Bangladesh, green finance at a rate of 9% is no more attractive," said Mahmud Hasan Khan, Vice President, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). The central bank may revisit the green banking loan policy and

reduce it to around 4% to 6% to make it real green finance, he added. Mohammad Zahidullah, Head of Sustainability at DBL Group, also thinks interest rate of green finance should be set feasibly. "Green finance has already been identified by the industry but still mostly unrealized due to the fact that it is not realistically designed in line with the return on investment and payback period," he explains. "Solar PV panels usually have a payback period of around 8 to 12 years and some other eco-friendly technologies require longer payback times. So investors feel reluctant to invest in this areas. Moreover, investment effluent treatment plant has no incentives at all. In our neighboring country CETPs are constructed by PPP model and heavily subsidies (up to 75%). On these backdrop we feel green finance should not be more than 2% in Bangladesh," he added. In recent times Bangladesh's manufacturing sector, especially RMG and textile, is facing some growing challenges in the area of environmental sustainability with issues like groundwater depletion, energy inefficiency, severe gas and electricity crisis. But development of Bangladesh is and will be driven by these industries. Adopting environment-friendly and energy-efficient technologies can be the reconciliation of this dilemma. Bangladesh Bank is also offering loans under the Export Development Fund (EDF) at subsidized rates, which entrepreneurs can avail. The rates are normally 6-month LIBOR plus 2.5%, and at times further reduced on a time



bound basis. Bangladesh Bank charges the authorized dealers (normally commercial banks) at 6-month LIBOR plus 1.0%, and the difference is attributable to the margin charged by commercial banks for administering the loan. The maximum amount that can be borrowed by an individual borrower has been increased to \$20 million for manufacturer-exporters registered with BGMEA. The existing green finance opportunities are not becoming popular in the textile and RMG industry due to lack in dissemination of information to the potential clients. Besides, due to complex procedure most of the firms find it difficult to go for a green finance. Moreover, the banks and financial institutions have lack in knowledge of and competence in green finance. Green finance is a very complex kind of finance that requires energy audits and detailed engineering calculation and assessment of projects. There is limited expertise in the area of energy auditing and assessment in Bangladesh. Sustainable Renewable Energy

The concept of green financing is relatively new in Bangladesh but has already gained a positive momentum. Bangladesh Bank has been playing a pivotal role in promoting sustainable industrialization through green financing.

Authority (SREDA) in partnership with the GIZ is working to develop an energy audit regulation. Though already around 100 energy auditors were created through USAID's CCEB (Catalyzing Clean Energy for Bangladesh) initiative, it is very insufficient to meet the industry need. Meaningful collaboration between banks, industry and concern government agencies would maximize the potential.

OPPORTUNITIES IN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

By Nasim Uddin

F

From the time immemorial, apparel after food, is the most important consumer item without which not a single person in this earth can think of even a minute. This product of utmost necessity is now also an inseparable part of lifestyle. So, it is easy to assume how great is its demand and how big is its market size. The global apparel business is growing at a healthy rate driven by factors like short product life cycles, vast product differentiation, and great pace of demand change among customers.

Much of this growth is accelerated by the exploding buying power among consumers in emerging economies and also in Asia, who are migrating into the middle class and starting to view clothes as an extension and expression of their new lifestyle. As per McKinsey&Co.'s forecast, the worldwide apparel market is expected to generate double digit growth between now and 2020. The global apparel exports are predicted to be \$650 billion by 2020, indicating a further demand for \$200 billion dollars' worth apparel to be catered in the next few years.

Expansion of the global apparel market has naturally paved the way of growth for the textile industry. Global textile market has been witnessing considerable growth over the past decade and this upward trend is expected to continue due to its widespread use in various end user industries, especially apparel sector. As per the statistics of WTO, global textile export size was around \$314 billion; of which China held the largest share with around \$111 billion followed by Europe

World Fiber Production 2014 (Million tons)		Growth (2014 vs 2013)
Cotton	26.1	-0.8%
Wool	1.1	-0.5%
Synthetic (Staple)	15.7	+3.9%
Synthetic (Filament)	33.0	+5.4%
MMF others	8.1	+1.0%
Cellulosic	4.9	+2.2%
Total MMF	61.2	+4.3%
Total fiber production	88.6	+2.7%

Source:
Japan Chemical Fiber Association (JCFA)

with \$74 billion in 2014. India, Korea, Japan, Pakistan, and Vietnam are other major players in the market.

The global fiber consumption of textile articles in 2014 was around 88.6 million tons, and is expected to reach 103 million tons by the year 2020. Per capita fiber consumption in the world in 2015 was 11.4 kg and is expected to increase to 12.3 kg in 2020 and 14.3 kg in 2030 (Source: PCI-Fibres Red Book). So it is clear that the demand for textiles in the global market is expanding.

Textiles can be classified as natural and synthetic or manmade textile fibers (MMF). Natural fibers are sourced from animals and plants such as cotton, wool and silk whereas MMF are derived from polymers such as polyester, nylon and acrylic among others. The global textile industry is increasingly moving toward MMF as consumers increasingly seek performance properties in fabrics.

The percentage of manmade fibers among total fiber production rose from 30% in 1980, to 69% in 2014. No matter whether they are used in functional athletic wear, curtains, carpets, tire cords, airbags or technical textiles for road construction and industry, manmade fibers have been a part of all areas of our lives for a long time now.

The chart shows that the clothing industry has been the biggest user of these fibers with a share of 54% in 2013. While cotton and manmade fibers continued to dominate world fiber markets, cotton has been rapidly losing its market share. Of the total global fiber consumption in the apparel industry, only 36% are cotton while most of the rest 64% are manmade. The rapid technological advances in the manmade fiber

industry, in particular the cotton like fibers, drove away demand for natural fibers. The earlier mentioned table also shows that demand for MMF is on the rise while cotton consumption witnessed negative growth.

As per the data from the International Textile Manufacturers Federation (ITMF), Asia is the hotspot for investments in textile industry. All the charts show that China tops the list in terms of investments in short-staple spindles, open-end rotors, shuttle-less loom, circular knitting machine and electrical flat knitting machines. India is next to China except in open-end rotors in which US is the second biggest investor whereas Bangladesh's position is second in electrical flat knitting machines, third in shuttle-less loom, and fifth in circular knitting machines. Vietnam, Turkey and Indonesia are also among the five biggest investors in textile machines.

Where is Bangladesh's position?

With the rapid growth of the RMG industry, the backward linkage industry has also grown quite significantly. Bangladesh has succeeded to increase the capacity of yarn production from 1.5 million kg in 1994 to more than 2100 million kg at present. Similarly, production of fabrics for domestic and export markets has increased from 702 million meters in 1972-73 to 2800 million meters at present. However, the knitwear sector became almost self-sufficient as the local sources are meeting up to 85%-90% of the demand for knitted fabrics for export oriented RMG industry, but growth of the

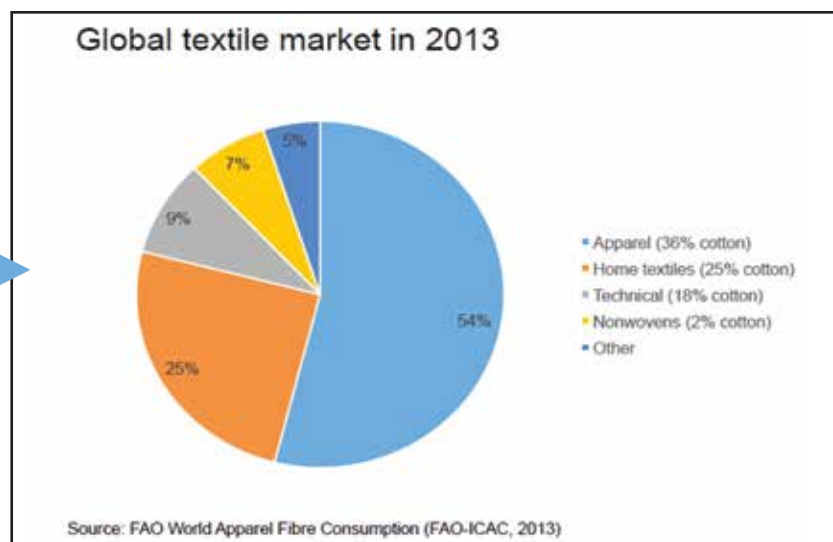
woven textile industry remains stagnant as it meets only 30%-35% of the demand.

As per data from the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), there are around 1430 textile mills in the country including dyeing-printing-finishing. Several estimates say that the local textile mills there could supply around 10 billion dollar worth of fabrics to the export oriented apparel industry at present of which \$7 billion knitted fabric, and still they have around 1 billion dollar worth of knitted fabrics to be imported every year.

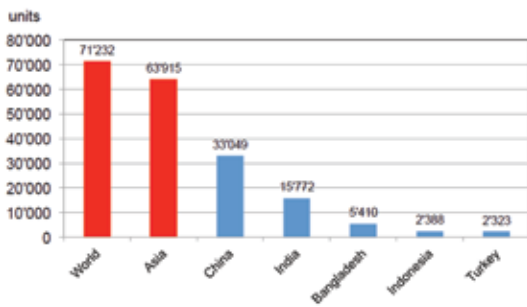
However, most of apparel items produced in Bangladesh are cotton based. It means the country has opportunities in manmade fiber based apparel, especially fabrics made of MMF like viscose, rayon, spandex, polyester, etc. where Bangladesh has a huge market, but production capacity is still insignificant. Of the total 407 yarn manufacturing mills, only 24 mills are producing MMF yarn (synthetic and acrylic). Around 56,000 tons of polyester staple fiber and 20,000 tons of viscose staple fiber are used in the mills while global consumption of the two types of MMF are 13.5 million tons and 3.9 million tons respectively (source ITMF & BTMA). Here lies the opportunities for investment in the textile industry of Bangladesh.

Why to invest in Bangladesh's textile sector?

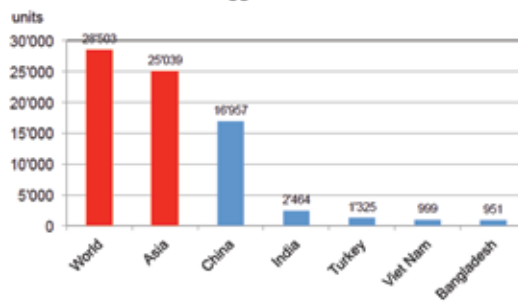
Bangladesh is the second largest apparel exporting country in the world, which means there is a huge demand for textiles. Moreover, the country has favorable trade status



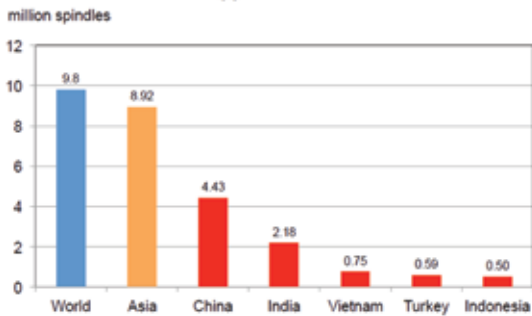
Investments in Shuttle-less Looms 2014
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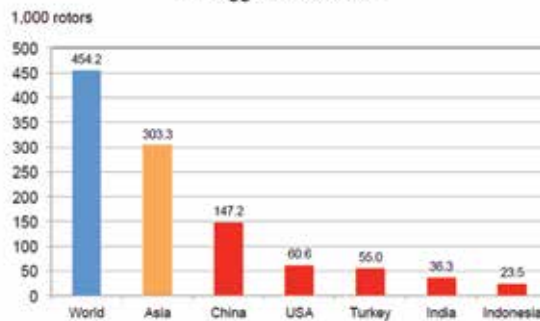
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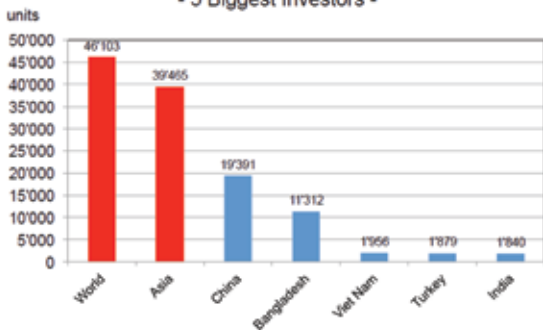
Investments in Short-staple Spindles 2014
- 5 Biggest Investors -



Investments in Open-end Rotors 2014
- 5 Biggest Investors -



Investments in electr. Flat Knitting Machines 2014
- 5 Biggest Investors -



Source:
The International Textile Manufacturers Federation (ITMF)

with the world. The country has duty-free market access to most of the developed countries, including EU and USA. Bangladesh has a 160-million population of which 76% are below 40 years of age that makes the country highly promising and vibrant. Besides, Bangladesh is gearing up to cater to the need of high-end and branded fashion segments. Though still majority (around 80%) of the export items are concentrated in five

basic products – trouser, t-shirt, sweater, shirts, and jackets mostly made of cotton, in recent years export is being expanded to other items like - suits/blazers, lingerie, jackets, swimwear, sportswear, uniform, raincoat, fishing wear, etc. which require MMF. Moreover, with the rising production cost in China and the shifting into higher-value goods and services, in recent years China has started to import finished textiles and garments from other countries. So investment in the textile industry of Bangladesh has a prospect of good returns. Mahmud Hasan Khan, Managing Director of Rising Group, a leading apparel, yarn and knit fabric manufacturer, thinks that due importance should be attached to infrastructure, especially gas and electricity, to bring investment in the textile sector of Bangladesh. “Power is a very important

factor for setting up a textile mill. For example, the minimum electricity requirement for a 30,000 spindles capacity spinning mill is around 3.5 MW to 4 MW. I think there will be a lot of investments in the textile industry if electricity and gas can be ensured”: he added. Besides, the proposed special economic zones should be established as quickly as possible to ensure planned industrialization, including textile sector, in the country, said Mahmud Hasan who is also the Vice President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). Industry insiders say that investment in textile sector means more employment, more export earnings and more contribution to the economy. Given its benefits for the country, they call for serious attention to the development of the textile industry.

Tapping the Russian Market

By Omar Gias



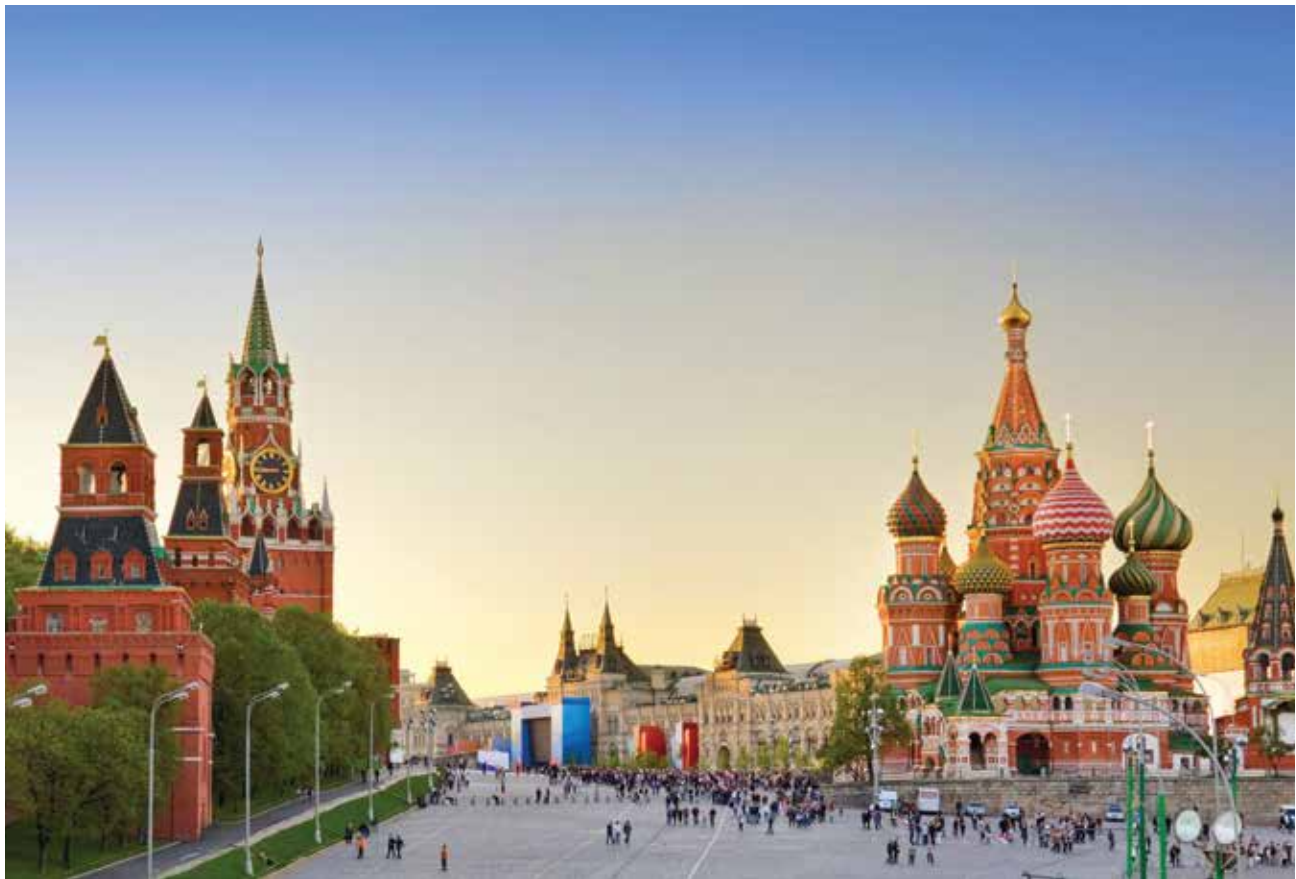
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Russia is one of the major players in the world market. Russian economy is the sixth largest in the world. Russia has \$4.96 billion apparel market. Russia is one of the five emerging (BRICS) economies in the world. It is one of the new emerging markets for Bangladesh.

Bilateral Trade between Bangladesh and Russia:

Bangladesh's export to Russia in 2014 – 15	: US\$ 294.57
Bangladesh's import from Russia in 2014 – 15	: US\$ 225.78

Source: EPB & Bangladesh Bank; Value in million US \$



Russia's Clothing Import from the World:

Product Code	Product Label	Value in US\$ million				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
61	Knit	3271.39	4099.76	4066.35	3724.66	2363.36
62	Woven	3470.07	4097.25	4124.91	4023.99	2592.47
Total (61+62)		6741.47	8197.01	8191.26	7748.65	4955.83
Growth		21.42%	21.59%	-0.07%	-5.40%	-36.04%

Source: ITC

Russia's Clothing Import from Bangladesh:

Product Code	Product Label	Value in US\$ million				
		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
61	Knit	183.23	207.14	283.32	313.09	257.45
62	Woven	86.58	147.97	207.56	231.32	212.64
Total (61+62)		269.81	355.11	490.88	544.41	470.10
Growth %		85.27	31.62	38.23	10.91	-13.65
% of Russia's total apparel import		4.00	4.33	5.99	7.03	9.49

Source: ITC

From the tables, it can be seen that import of apparel products from Bangladesh by Russia radically increased from 2011. It was USD 269.81 million in 2011 and reached USD 470.10 million in 2015. In 2013 and 2014, the import increased by 38.23% and 10.91% respectively. Though in 2015 the import decreased by 13.65%, it was 9.49% of Russia's total apparel import from the world.

Top 10 Knitwear and Woven Garment Exporting Countries to Russia in 2015

Knitwear (61)				Woven (62)			
Imported value in US\$ million			Market Share %	Imported value in US\$ million			Market Share %
Rank	Exporters	2015	2015	Rank	Exporters	2015	2015
	World	2,363.36			World	2,592.47	
1	China	951.59	40.26	1	China	1,205.93	46.52
2	Bangladesh	257.45	10.89	2	Bangladesh	212.64	8.20
3	Turkey	157.31	6.66	3	Turkey	171.70	6.62
4	Uzbekistan	120.90	5.12	4	Italy	166.09	6.41
5	Italy	101.75	4.31	5	Viet Nam	144.37	5.57
6	Belarus	91.92	3.89	6	India	101.11	3.90
7	India	85.68	3.63	7	Belarus	76.69	2.96
8	Serbia	77.10	3.26	8	Morocco	55.94	2.16
9	Cambodia	55.52	2.35	9	Romania	47.51	1.83
10	Vietnam	52.61	2.23	10	Pakistan	46.41	1.79

Source: ITC

Bangladesh's Top 10 Knitwear Products Export to Russia

Product Code	Product Label	Value in US\$ million		
		2013	2014	2015
6109	T-shirts, singlets and other vests, knitted or crocheted	102.05	119.18	93.96
6110	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans etc, knitted or crocheted	94.82	97.58	73.68
6104	Women's suits, dresses, skirts etc & short, knit/croch	26.10	29.04	23.90
6105	Men's shirts, knitted or crocheted	15.99	15.46	11.85
6103	Men's suits, jackets, trousers etc & shorts, knit/croch	9.95	12.05	11.76
6111	Babies' garments, knitted or crocheted	8.98	10.35	10.63
6108	Women's slips, panties, pyjamas, bathrobes etc, knitted/crocheted	6.22	6.95	6.87
6106	Women's blouses & shirts, knitted or crocheted	8.98	8.69	6.23
6101	Men's overcoats, capes etc, knitted/crocheted	1.54	2.93	5.68
6107	Men's underpants, pyjamas, bathrobes etc, knit/croch	3.80	4.29	4.49

Source: ITC

Bangladesh's Top 10 Woven Items Export to Russia

Product Code	Product Label	Russia imports from Bangladesh		
		Value in US\$ million		
		2013	2014	2015
6203	Men's suits, jackets, trousers etc & shorts	63.18	67.45	65.83
6204	Women's suits, jackets, dresses, skirts etc & shorts	64.47	72.37	65.21
6205	Men's shirts	27.60	28.23	26.40
6201	Men's overcoats, capes, wind-jackets etc	21.68	23.28	17.97
6206	Women's blouses & shirts	11.72	14.78	15.87
6202	Women's overcoats, capes, wind-jackets etc	9.72	13.40	10.30
6209	Babies' garments and clothing accessories	3.48	3.73	4.38
6212	Brassieres, girdles, corsets, braces, suspenders etc	1.45	2.11	2.63
6211	Track suits, ski suits and swimwear; other garments	2.35	2.70	2.31

Source: ITC



Major Apparel Retailers of Russia:

Sportmaster



Ostin



Zolla



Detsky Mir



Gulliver



Button Blue



Challenges in Export to Russia:

- Import duty on apparel in Russia is very high which goes up to 20% and in addition to the import duty, 18% VAT also needs to be paid on apparel exported to Russia.
- Most of the apparel customers of Russia work in differed LC which ranges from 90 to 120 days.
- Interest rate in Russian Bank is very high which is 18-20%.
- Frequent fluctuation of the Russian currency Ruble in recent years.
- Russian retailers usually order small quantities.
- Most of the retailers want PP samples.

Prospects:

- Russia is the 9th largest economy in the world and the size of its population is 142 million (July 2014 est.).
- China plus opportunity.
- The prices average Russian retailers offer are like that of the good European buyers.
- Factory approval and compliance requirements of the Russian retailers are also not complicated.
- Buyers' inspection and quality check is also easier.
- By availing EDF from the Bangladesh Bank the challenge of differed payment term can be overcome.

The Government Initiatives to Explore Russian Market:

The State Minister for Foreign Affairs Md. Shahriar Alam, MP, told the Apparel Story that the Bangladesh government is working to get duty-free access to the Russian Market. “Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina during her visits to Russia in 2010 and 2012 discussed the duty-free access issue and the Russian government also assured her that they would consider it seriously”, the State Minister said. “Now we are working on drafting a Framework Agreement which will be hopefully signed at a meeting in Russia at the end of this year. The Framework Agreement will usher the doors of duty-free export to Russia”, the Minister said.

The Dos before Exporting to Russia:

Md. Modasser Pasha, Marketing Director of Renaissance Group, one of the apparel conglomerates which closely works with Russian customers, suggested that one should check the background of any importer or retailer before they start export to Russia. They should also check the work procedure of the importer/retailer and go through the clauses of the contract usually the Russian retailers make with manufacturers when they start business. “Reading the clauses is very important as the Russian retailers more often than not insert many penalty clauses in the contract mainly to avoid air shipment as the air shipment is very much costly for Russia”, said Md.

Modasser Pasha. “Moreover, the exporters should also have a thorough idea about the customs procedure in Russia. Unlike the EU and US, Russia has some stringent customs rules. For example, packing accuracy is very important to ship the goods in Russia. The Russian Customs forfeit huge amount even if they find little inaccuracy between packing lists and exported goods”, he added.

Major Apparel Fairs in Russia:

CPM Moscow

Exhibition Date: 31/08 – 03/09/2016
& 20/02 – 23/02/2017

Website: www.cpm-moscow.com

CJF

Exhibition Date: 26/09 – 29/09/2016

Website: www.cjf-expo.ru/en

Fashion Industry International Trade Fair

Exhibition Date: 06/10 – 09/10/2016

Website: <http://en.fi-expo.ru/>



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BGMEA accorded warm reception to five dignitaries of the country for their outstanding contribution to their respective fields. Honorable Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP, handed over crests to the dignitaries -- Annisul Huq, Mayor, Dhaka North City Corporation; Shafiul Islam (Mohiuddin), First Vice President, FBCCI; Abdus Salam Murshedy, Senior Vice President, Bangladesh Football Federation; AK Azad, President, Dhaka University Alumni Association; and Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Director, Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. and President, BGMEA. Senior Vice President of BGMEA Faruque Hassan, Vice President SM Mannan (Kochi), Vice President Mahmud Hasan Khan (Babu), Vice President Ferdous Perves Bivon and Directors of BGMEA were present at the program which was conducted by Mohammed Nasir, Vice President (Finance).

The Board of BGMEA congratulated its President Md. Siddiqur Rahman with a bouquet for being selected a Director of Biman Bangladesh Airlines Ltd. BGMEA First Vice President Moinuddin Ahmed, Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice President S.M. Mannan (Kochi), Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Vice President Ferdous Perves Bivon, Vice President Md. Ferdous and Directors of BGMEA were present on the occasion.



The final preparatory meeting on “Bangladesh Investment Seminar Japan-2016” and “2nd Japan-Bangladesh Public-Private Joint Economic Dialogue” was held at BGMEA office. Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Affairs Adviser to the Prime Minister Dr. Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury, BB, BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Vice President SM Mannan (Kochi), Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Vice President Mahmud Hasan Khan (Babu), First Vice President of FBCCI Shafiul Islam (Mohiuddin), and senior government officials were present at the meeting. Principal Secretary of the Prime Minister’s Office Md. Abul Kalam Azad presided over the meeting.



Indian Minister of State (I/C) for Petroleum and Natural Gas Shri Dharmendra Pradhan visited a garment factory of Babylon Group to have a glimpse into the apparel industry of Bangladesh. BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman greeted the Indian Minister at the factory and thanked him for the visit. BGMEA Vice President SM Mannan (Kochi), Director Miran Ali, Director of Babylon Group Abidur Rahman, Indian High Commissioner Harsh Vardhan Shringla were also present on the occasion.

BGMEA leaders held a meeting with H. E. Pierre Mayaudon, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, at the latter's residence in Dhaka. BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman, Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, and Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir had a discussion with the EU Ambassador on different RMG related issues, including safety and sustainability and further cooperation between Bangladesh and the EU for development of the industry.



BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman speaking at a seminar on "Role of social movement in preventing and fighting corruption" at the head office of the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) in Dhaka. Dr. Anisuzzaman, Professor Emeritus at the University of Dhaka, attended the seminar as the chief guest while ACC Chairman Iqbal Mahmud presided over the program.



BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman paid a courtesy call on H.E. Morgan Johansson, Minister for Justice and Migration of Sweden, at a luncheon program hosted in honor of the Swedish Minister at Sonargaon Hotel. FBCCI President Abdul Matlub Ahmad was also present on the occasion.

State Minister of Labour and Employment Md. Mujibul Haque, MP, Labour and Employment Secretary Mikail Shipar and CDA Chairman Abdus Salam are seen at a view exchange meeting held in Chittagong. BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman chaired the meeting where safety related issues being faced by garment factories in Chittagong were discussed. BGMEA First Vice President Moinuddin Ahmed (Mintu), Vice President Ferdous Perves Bivon, Vice President Md. Ferdous, and Inspector General of the DIFE Syed Ahmed, among others, were present.



BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman is seen addressing the BizTech B2B Conference held at Hotel Sonargaon where he stressed the need for skilled IT professionals to meet the demand in the RMG industry of Bangladesh. The ICT Division of the Government, and the Bangladesh Association of Software and Information Services (BASIS) jointly organized the conference.



BGMEA hosted an Iftar Mahfil for its valued Members and other dignitaries at Army Golf Club. Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, MP and State Minister for Labour and Employment Md. Mujibul Haque, MP, Labour and Employment Secretary Mikail Shipar, the Office Bearers of BGMEA, former Presidents of the trade association, diplomats, civil society members, journalists, labour leaders, and other guests attended the Iftar Mahfil where prayers were offered seeking peace and prosperity for Bangladesh and the world.

BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir is seen addressing the launching program of UNICEF's Children's Rights and the Garment Industry in Bangladesh Initiative at a city hotel. The UN agency's initiative aims to improve the lives of garment workers and their children. Khondoker Mostan Hossain, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment; Rofiq, Executive Director, Karmojibi Nari; Edouard Beigbeder, Representative, UNICEF Bangladesh; Andres Fanco, Deputy Director, Private Sector Engagement, UNICEF also attended the program.



A delegation of BGMEA leaders headed by its First Vice President Moinuddin Ahmed (Mintu) paid a courtesy call on newly appointed Police Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP) Md. Iqbal Bahar, ppm, at the latter's office. BGMEA Directors Amzad Hossain Chowdhury, A.N.M. Saifuddin, Md. Shaif Ullah, Kazi Mahabub Uddin (Jewel) and high officials of the Chittagong Metropolitan Police were present there.



Leaders of BGMEA headed by its President Md. Siddiqur Rahman paid a courtesy visit to Inspector General of Police (IGP) A K M Shahidul Hoque. BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice President SM Mannan (Kochi), Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, BGMEA Directors Md. Shahidul Haque Mukul, Md. Ashikur Rahman (Tuhin), Md. Munir Hossain, and Md. Atiqul Karim Khan were also present on the occasion.

Leaders of BGMEA led by its President Md. Siddiqur Rahman paid a courtesy visit to Director General of Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) Benazir Ahmed. BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan, Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Directors Iqbal Hamid Quraishi (Adnan), Md. Atiqul Karim Khan, Md. Nasir Uddin and RAB Additional Director General Colonel Ziaul Ahsan were also present on the occasion.



Leaders of BGMEA led by its President Md. Siddiqur Rahman paid a courtesy visit to Managing Director of Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited Engr. Mir Moshir Rahman at the latter's office. Former Director of BGMEA Arshad Jamal (Dipu) and Chairman of BGMEA's Standing Committee on Gas and Electricity Syed Abu Yousuf Abdullah (Tuhin) were also present on the occasion.

Roundtable on physically challenged persons in RMG held

A roundtable on “Congenial working conditions for persons with disabilities in the RMG industry” was organized by the Daily Prothom Alo at the newspaper’s office on 12 May. BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Labour and Employment Secretary Mikail Shipar and other stakeholders took part in the discussion.

Mohammed Nasir said that the RMG sector has been playing a crucial role in creating employment for persons with disabilities. To help people with disabilities a number of RMG



factories have come forward -- Keya Knit Composite Ltd., Fakhruddin Textile Mills Ltd, Interstoff Apparels Ltd, Abanti Colour Tex. Ltd, Interfab Shirt Manufacturing Ltd, Onus Group, Tarasima Apparels Ltd, Givensee Group to name a few.

Among them Keya Knit Composite has employed 850 and Beximco Fashions has 576 workers with disabilities.

He also said that the RMG factories have taken special steps on the factories premises to create congenial working atmosphere for the workers with disabilities. These steps include building ramp instead of stairs, installing attendance punch machine at lower position, separate toilets, modified machines, providing necessary tools like wheel chair etc.

Besides, BGMEA signed a MoU with Suchona Foundation to create employment and enhance skills of the persons with disabilities, BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir said, adding that BGMEA in association with GIZ is running a project named Inclusive Job Centre for training and job placement of the persons with disabilities.



Workshop on Solar PV and LED Lighting held

A workshop on “Solar PV and LED Lighting” was held in Dhaka.

The Partnership for Cleaner Textile (PaCT) and the Textile Technology Business Center (TTBC) organized the program to discuss feasibility of solar PV, health impact of LED lighting system, tariff structure and finance policy to promote these means of renewable and sustainable energy.

BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman attended the seminar as chief guest while BGMEA Senior Vice President Faruque Hassan was present as special guest.

In his speech the BGMEA President said: “The RMG industry has gone through huge transformation in recent years. After addressing the safety concerns, our factories are now proactively working to ensure environmental sustainability and enhance energy efficiency.”

He also said: “Already we have 28 green garment factories in the country LEED certified by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). About 120 more factories have already registered in the USGBC for going green. We have six Platinum rated green factories and two of the factories are highest rated green factory in the whole world. Moreover, there has been a change in the mindset of our entrepreneurs and our garment factories are using energy-efficient technologies more than any time before.”

Siddique Zobair, Member, SREDA; Chandrasekar Govindarajalu, Senior Energy Specialist, IFC; Jeremy Levin, Senior Energy Specialist, IFC; Dr. Mohammad Tamim, Professor, Department of Petroleum and Mineral Resources Engineering, BUET; and Mohandas Seneviratne, Program Manager, PaCT, IFC were also present at the workshop.

TIB lauds revolutionary changes in RMG sector

Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) has termed the safety improvements in the RMG sector in terms of fire, electrical and structural safety as “revolutionary”.

“Revolutionary progress has been made in the safety systems in the country’s RMG industry. There has been remarkable improvement in the safety infrastructure. These progresses deserve praise from home and abroad,” TIB Executive Director Iftekharuzzaman told reporters at a press conference.

TIB launched a report titled “Good Governance in the Ready-made Garments Sector: Achievements, Challenges and Way forward” at its office in Dhaka. The study looked into the progress made in the last year by garment industry stakeholders and the government to ensure good governance in RMG sector, in particular the plans that were adopted since the Rana Plaza disaster in 2013. It also identified implementation challenges and provided several recommendations. “The safety standards of the RMG sector has reached a level we can be proud of and it needs to be retained,” Iftekharuzzaman said. To make it more effective, factors like strong monitoring and accountable implementation were the key, the anti-graft watchdog’s chief said.

According to the study findings, since the collapse of Rana Plaza, 41% initiatives taken to improve the safety standards in the RMG sector had been implemented fully, 36% had made satisfactory progress, 10% were in slow motion and 13% of the plans were stagnant. The apparel industry had made significant progress in workers’ rights in terms of trade union registration, Iftekharuzzaman said. “But changes in mindset will make a remarkable difference,” he said.



BGMEA signs MoU to facilitate digital issuance of Certificate of Origin

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between BGMEA and Supreme Solutions Services to facilitate digital issuance of Certificate of Origin (COO) for exports of goods produced in Bangladesh.

The MoU aims to make online issuance of COO easier and faster for the BGMEA member factories.

BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman and Managing Director of Supreme Solutions Services Md. Mizanur Rahman inked the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations at BGMEA office.

BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mohammed Nasir, Vice President Ferdous Pervez Bivon and Director Anwar Kamal Pasha were also present at the MoU signing ceremony.



Seminar on ‘STeP by OEKO-TEX for Made in Green’ held

A seminar on ‘STeP by OEKO-TEX for Made in Green’ was at Le Meridien Hotel in Dhaka.

Ambassador of Germany to Bangladesh Dr. Thomas Prinz attended the seminar as chief guest while BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman and Second Vice President of BKMEA Md. Mansoor Ahmed were present as special guests.

President and CEO of Hohenstein Textile Testing Institutes Prof. Dr. Stefan Meecheels, Managing Director-Dr. Stefan Droste, and Director Jorg Diekmann were speakers of the seminar which was organized by Hohenstein Institutes.

In his address BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman said that after addressing the safety concerns, garment factories are now focusing on sustainable production.

He said: “Already we have 28 green garment factories in the country LEED certified by the United States Green Building Council (USGBC). About 120 more factories have already registered in the USGBC for going green. We have six Platinum rated green factories and two of the factories are highest rated green factory in the whole world.”

The Oeko-Tex Association provides Sustainable Textile Production (STeP) certification to textile chain. It aims to ensure environment-friendly and socially responsible production. Four RMG factories in Bangladesh have achieved STeP certification from Oeko-tex Association.



BGMEA President for policy support for RMG industry

BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman urged the government to pay special attention to the RMG industry in the national budget. He made the call at a pre-budget discussion organized by private television channel NTV and the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI) at the Sonargoan Hotel in Dhaka.

Honorable Finance Minister AMA Muhith attended program as chief guest while Honorable Commerce Minister Tofail Ahmed, FBCCI President Abdul Matlub Ahmad, former Caretaker Government Adviser AB Mirza Azizul Islam, economist Wahiduddin Mahmud and other business leaders were present. BGMEA President Md. Siddiqur Rahman proposed for reducing source and corporate taxes for the RMG industry to attract investment and help sustain competitiveness. He urged the government to keep import of all the safety equipment duty free. The BGMEA President also laid emphasis on employment generation along with achieving higher economic growth. Besides, he sought policy support from the government for other emerging sectors, including leather, pharmaceuticals and plastic industries of the country.

Seminar on green factory held in Chittagong

A seminar on “LEED Certified Green Factory Building Opportunity in Chittagong, Detail Step by Step Process” was held in the port city. BGMEA and US Green Building Council (USGBC) jointly organized the seminar at the BGMEA office in Chittagong



to shed light on the importance of building green factories to address future challenges in the RMG industry. In his address BGMEA Vice President Md. Ferdous stressed the need for building green garment factories in Bangladesh. He urged the RMG entrepreneurs to set up Leed certified green factories. BGMEA Directors Amzad Hossain Chowdhury, Syed Mohammed Tanvir, Md. Shaifullah (Mansur), Kazi Mahabub Uddin (Jewel), and former Directors of BGMEA were present at the program. Owners of different RMG factories in Chittagong also took part in the seminar. USGBC Consultant Ananta Ahmed presented the keynote speech at the seminar.



BGMEA and Lions Club International lunch project to provide eye care to RMG workers in Ctg

A project jointly taken by the BGMEA and the Lions Club International District 315 B4, Bangladesh was inaugurated to provide eye care to around 50 thousand workers of garment factories in Chittagong.

Governor of Lions Club International District 315 B4, Bangladesh Lions Md. Mustak Ahmed launched the project “Vision for Precision” at a program held in Chittagong, which was chaired by Nasir Uddin, Chairman and Managing Director of Pacific Jeans and former Director, BGMEA.

BGMEA Vice President Md. Ferdous attended the inaugural ceremony as chief guest while BGMEA Directors Amzad Hossain Chowdhury and Md. Shaif Ullah were present.

Earlier, BGMEA and the Lions Club International District 315 B4, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to launch the Vision for Precision project

BGMEA First Vice President Moinuddin Ahmed (Mintu) and Governor of Lions Club International District 315 B4, Bangladesh Lions Md. Mustak Ahmed inked the agreement on behalf of their respective organizations.

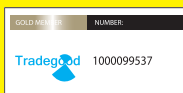
As per the MoU, the Lions Club International District 315 B4, Bangladesh will provide eye treatment, including medicine and surgery, to the garment workers at affordable rates.

BGMEA Directors A.M. Mahub Chowdhury, Salim Rahman, Amzad Hossain Chowdhury, A.N.M. Saifuddin, Md. Shaif Ullah, and K. Mahabub Uddin (Jewel) and former First Vice President of BGMEA Nasir Uddin Chowdhury were also present on the MoU signing ceremony.

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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	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
Total:	11757.21	13163.42	11.96	11167.53	11920.20	6.74	22924.74	25083.63	9.42

BANGLADESH'S RMG EXPORTS TO WORLD, FY 2013-14 & 2014-15

Month	ALL COUNTRIES								
	Woven		Growth Rate	Knit		Growth Rate	Total (Woven+Knit)		Growth Rate
	Year			Year			2013/14	2014/15	
2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15	2013/14	2014/15		
July	1262.38	1210.08	-4.14	1253.76	1307.90	4.32	2516.14	2517.98	0.07
August	796.05	815.34	2.42	848.15	898.44	5.93	1644.20	1713.78	4.23
September	985.26	937.29	-4.87	1058.29	1064.12	0.55	2043.55	2001.41	-2.06
October	820.49	731.53	-10.84	862.01	787.96	-8.59	1682.50	1519.49	-9.69
November	889.35	999.23	12.36	877.61	939.36	7.04	1766.96	1938.59	9.71
December	1229.98	1269.23	3.19	1048.87	1063.8	1.42	2278.85	2333.03	2.38
January	1195.20	1303.77	9.08	1045.83	1116.10	6.72	2241.03	2419.87	7.98
February	1049.64	1146.72	9.25	915.76	960.62	4.90	1965.40	2107.34	7.22
March	993.37	1144.21	15.18	920.69	930.58	1.07	1914.06	2074.79	8.40
April	944.95	1000.54	5.88	972.38	938.94	-3.44	1917.33	1939.48	1.16
May	1092.26	1199.27	9.80	1115.72	1159.71	3.94	2207.98	2358.98	6.84
June	1183.14	1307.40	10.50	1130.74	1259.26	11.37	2313.88	2566.66	10.92
Total:	12442.07	13064.61	5.00	12049.81	12426.79	3.13	24491.88	25491.40	4.08

Source: EPB

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এমন একটি সৌর প্যানেল স্থাপনে
এককালীন খরচ হবে প্রায়
৬৪,২১,৪৪৪ টাকা। কিন্তু এর
মাধ্যমে প্রতিবছর প্রায় ৯,৫৭,৯৭১
টাকা সাশ্রয় করা সম্ভব। এছাড়াও
এর মাধ্যমে খনিজ জ্বালানীর উপর
নির্ভরতা কমবে পাশাপাশি কার্বন
নিঃসরণও হ্রাস পাবে প্রায় ৭০ টন।

একটি সুচিন্তিত উদ্যোগ আপনার ব্যবসাকে দীর্ঘ মেয়াদে টেকসই ও লাভজনক করবে।



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Training Topics

Training Date

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| 1. Training on Efficiency improvement: Lean Management | 11th July |
| 2. Evening Training on Time Management | 12th July |
| 3. Neuroscience of Leadership by Ayesha Bibha | 15th July |
| 4. CPI Certified Trained CSR Auditor | 18-21st July |
| 5. Training of Efficiency improvement: Lean Management (Chittagong) | 22nd July |
| 6. ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management System IRCA Lead Auditor Course | 24-28th July |
| 7. Social Compliance: What We Look for? | 31st July |
| 8. Certified Quality Engineer-Garments inspection (CQE) | 3-5th August |
| 9. Supplier Qualification Program (SQP) Auditor Course | 8-10th August |
| 10. Certification Training on Fire and Electrical Safety | 22-23rd August |



Testing



Inspection



Intertek
Certification



Auditing



Outsourcing



Advisory



Training



Quality Assurance

iAcademy Training Calendar

Other Training Programs

- ISO 9001:2015 Internal Auditor Training
- Leadership and People Management
- Chemical Management Training (RSL)
- Fiber Regulation Labeling & Care Label
- Problem Solving Methodologies
- Techniques for Production Management and Control

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PAY 1 & FLY 2 PERSONS

**Dhaka- Saidpur/ Rajshahi/ Barisal
Saidpur/Rajshahi/Barisal - Dhaka**

(16 July- 31 August)

* Conditions Apply

MONSOON SPECIAL PROMOTION



(20 June -14 September 2016)

CHITTAGONG @ 3,200
COX'S BAZAR @ 4,500
SYLHET @ 2,700
JESSORE @ 2,700

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