

The Apparel Story

এ্যাপারেল স্টোরি

January-February 2023



**CIRCULAR
ECONOMY**
Framework for a Green Future



BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (BGMEA)

বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি

• বাংলাদেশ তৈরি •

Intelligent Connection, Total Solution, Making Garment Intelligently Made Infinite Possibilities

- | Consulting Planning
- | Equipment Supply
- | Management Coaching
- | Project Implementation
- | Integrated Software
- | Professional Team

Template machine series



New workers are easy to use



The cost of hiring workers is low, and the integrated process saves labor

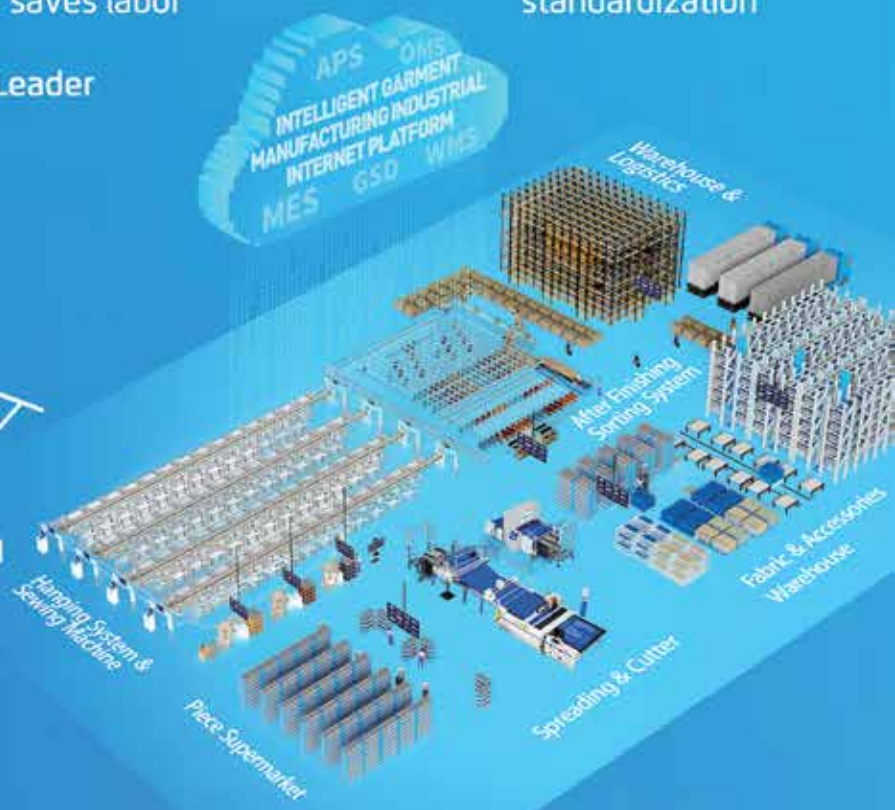


Simplification of critical processes Simple process standardization

JACK M5 series. In-line Template Machine Leader



All Size available.



Jack Wechat



Jack Facebook



YouTube

JACK TECHNOLOGY CO., LTD

TEL:0086-576-88177782

www.chinajack.com

PATENT PENDING

Tonello[®]
THE INSPIRING COMPANY

DYEMATE

THE FIRST **INDIGO GARMENT DYEING** TECHNOLOGY

DyeMate is the new Tonello technology that revolutionizes, reinterprets and industrialize the **traditional indigo garment dyeing process**, taking it to a new evolutionary stage and safeguarding its cultural heritage.



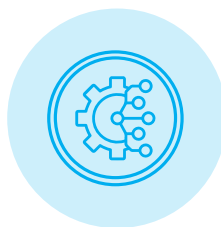
MAIN FEATURES



Reproducibility and productivity of the process



Low temperature process and less use of reducing agents



AOX - Automatic Oxidation System
HSS - Hermetic Sealing System



Easily retrofitted system



Also for sulfur and VAT dyes

WWW.TONELLO.COM



+390445343200 | tonello@tonello.com

OUR OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN BANGLADESH



+8801730034839 | info@smarttechbd.net

EDITORIAL

As global climate change is posing a formidable threat to the existence of the planet and people, the linear model of business “take-make-dispose” that has long been followed by the fashion industry is no longer viable because it has a considerable environmental toll. Given the huge impacts of the fashion industry in terms of pollution, water use, and carbon emissions, the need for a shift to sustainable fashion is evident. And circular fashion offers that solution. The massive environmental and social cost of the fashion industry requires us to rethink the way it operates and reinforces the need for more sustainable business models and practices. Globally the call for a more sustainable fashion industry is growing louder and stronger and consumers are increasingly becoming more conscious about the products they purchase, about where they are produced and about how they are manufactured. In alignment with the global demand buyers also aim to reduce emissions in the supply chain.

It’s heartening that Bangladesh, being the second largest apparel exporter in the world, has been making continuous strides towards sustainability and is now in a leading position with the highest number of green garment factories in the world. Already 195 garment factories have achieved LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Of the total green factories, 69 are Platinum rated and 110 are Gold rated while more than 500 factories are already in the process of achieving LEED certification. Also, 54 out of the world’s top 100 green garment factories are situated in Bangladesh. These green factories, equipped with energy-efficient technologies, are saving natural resources and minimizing carbon emission during industrial operations, thus contributing to protecting the planet. The strides are not only limited to green manufacturing but also in circular fashion.

As the apex trade body representing Bangladesh’s RMG industry, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Global Fashion Agenda (GFA), Reverse Resources, and P4G have partnered in an initiative “Circular Fashion Partnership”. The partnership aims to achieve a long-term, scalable transition to a circular fashion system. A research shows that in 2019 Bangladesh produced approximately 577,000 tonnes of waste just from the RMG and fabrics mills of which almost half was 100% pure cotton waste. If we can recycle the waste, it will not only breed not only environmental but also financial benefits for Bangladesh. So there is a huge opportunity to make Bangladesh a leader in circularity by scaling up our capacity in recycling. BGMEA is already in discussions with global recycling companies to have collaboration to build recycling capacity in Bangladesh. We strongly hope Bangladesh will be a leader in circular fashion in the coming years.

Editorial Board
The Apparel Story



Disclaimer:

The Apparel Story is published for private circulation by Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers & Exporters Association (BGMEA). BGMEA assumes no responsibility for the correctness of items quoted in the magazine although every effort is made to give information from sources believed to be reliable.



The Apparel Story

CONTENT

Editorial Board

Faruque Hassan

Md. Shahidullah Azim

Miran Ali

Barrister Shehrin Salam Oishee

Asif Ashraf

Md. Mohiuddin Rubel

Abdullah Hill Rakib

Shovon Islam (Shawn)

Editorial Staff

Nur Mohammad Amin Rasel

Nasim Uddin

Magazine Team

Fahmida Haq Majumder

Md. Shahriar Rahman

Chaity Ghosh

AK Tuhin

Zahid az mahmood (Argho)

Designer:

Sk. Yeahhia

BGMEA Head Office:

BGMEA Complex, House # 7/7A,

Sector # 17, Block # H-1, Uttara,



Dhaka - 1230, Bangladesh.

Tel: +880 9638012345

Email: info@bgmea.com.bd

Website: www.bgmea.com.bd

 [bgmea.official](https://www.facebook.com/bgmea.official)  [brandbgmea](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...)

 [brandbgmea](https://twitter.com/brandbgmea)  [brandbgmea](https://www.linkedin.com/company/brandbgmea)

 [brandbgmea](https://www.instagram.com/brandbgmea)

- 04. Cover Story**
Framework for a Green Future: Leapfrog of Bangladesh Apparel Industry
- 08. Special Feature**
Chattogram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology: Preparing next generation fashion leaders
- 12. Focus of the Month**
BGMEA collaborates with the AUW for empowering women RMG workers
- 14. Trade Review**
Apparel imports of EU and USA in 2022
- 19. Special Interview**
Ambassador of France to Bangladesh
- 22. Open Opinion**
Women Empowerment in RMG Sector
- 26. In Focus**
Move Towards Circularity- Closing the Loop for New Openings
- 29. Factory Feature**
Recover & Beximco: Strategic Alliance for Implementing a Circular System
- 33. Sector Diversification**
ISHO: A Promising Furniture and Lifestyle Brand
- 38. Unleashing Heritage**
- 40. Young Minds**
Ensuring environmental, social and economic balancing for long-term competitiveness
- 42. Legend**
Kangal Harinath – A Torchbearer of Humanism
- 44. Local Brand**
Texmart: Committed to Fashion, Quality, and Comfort
- 47. Market Brief**
Tapping the Emerging Market: Saudi Arabia
- 52. Spotlight**
BGMEA organized an Art Camp
- 55. News in Pictures**
- 60. Statistics**


FRAMEWORK FOR A GREEN FUTURE

Leapfrog of Bangladesh Apparel Industry

Fashion is an ever-changing thing and the global fashion industry is always taking different shapes, based on customer demand and universal trend. As for now, sustainability, particularly circularity and due diligence are buzz word. One of the main reasons behind it is, that the changing pattern of climate and huge amount of waste generated by the fashion industry has caused a serious concern among relevant stakeholders. Man-made effect of climate change is on the rise and 97% of the scientific studies concerning climate change endorsed the consensus that it is human-caused. And when it comes to the fashion industry, it is the 2nd Most polluting industry only after oil and gas. Not only that, this industry is responsible for 10% global GHG emission. Realizing the after effects, dozens of fashion brands have pledged to go carbon neutral by 2050.

The RMG industry of Bangladesh has been playing a major role in our economic growth and development for a long time. In the last fiscal year we exported 42.6 billion USD to 167 countries around the world. The industry alone employs around 4 million workers and contributes 11% to our GDP and 84% of our overall export. So, there is actually no need





to further describe how this industry is contributing to the overall economy. Now, when it comes to climate change, Bangladesh is a country which contributes the least to it but bears the most vulnerability. Extreme climatic conditions such as flood, storm, heavy rainfall and heat waves are becoming increasingly frequent recently, not only here but also across the globe. To what extent climate change will change the world is still unclear, but one thing is certain: businesses can no longer grow at the cost of the environment. The decisions taken now and in the coming years will affect the planet. The present level of carbon emissions will determine the severity of climate change in future. Green garment factories, therefore, could be the answer, the solution, to the problem of climate change. The rapid growth in the number of green garment factories in Bangladesh is a clear indication that the RMG industry is committed to a cleaner and brighter future. Bangladeshi factories are going through a period of transformation. Apparel makers are making bold and decisive decisions, like never before, to move towards environmental sustainability. As of today, the total number of Green Garment factories in Bangladesh stands at 195 and 69 of them are Platinum rated. More than 550 factories are in the process of getting the certification, which indicates the number will increase heavily in coming years. These buildings are climate and environment friendly, which reduce or eliminate negative impacts, create positive impacts and improve our quality of life.



The salient features Green Building are:

- Efficient use of energy, water and other resources
- Use of renewable energy, such as solar energy
- Pollution and waste reduction measures
- Re-use and recycling protocol
- Good indoor environmental air quality
- Use of non-toxic, ethical and sustainable materials

BGMEA, as the apex trade body of Apparel manufacturing in Bangladesh, is working in collaboration with several organizations, brands and development partners to ensure that industry moves towards becoming a more dynamic one. Such an initiative is- PaCT (Partnership for cleaner textile), a joint initiative between BGMEA and IFC. With every \$1 invested, savings of 26 m3 water/ year, 0.2 ton/ year GHG emission, 2 MWh/year energy and 23m3/ year has been ensured, as a result of this project. BGMEA has also published its own "Sustainability Report 2020", which is unique of its kind as it is the only sustainability report published by any such organization in Bangladesh. An SDG report, combining inputs from 47 factories have also been incorporated and been published which highlights

"This Initiative Reimagines The Production Chain From The Perspective Of Social Rights, The Circular Economy And Providing Longevity To The Apparel's Wearability. "There Is A Positive Social Impact By Employing Artisanal Weavers In The Villages To Support Their Livelihood. This Gives A Second Chance To Apparel That Would Have Otherwise Been Discarded. The Second Hand Or Vintage Resale Market Plays A Pivotal Role Circularity And I Believe We Are Contributing Towards That."

-Anadil Johnson
Bangladeshi-American Fashion Designer And Entrepreneur

Bangladesh has taken policy to shift towards green energy from coal-based energy. We believe in holistic development keeping the environment pollution free. Sustainability should be everywhere when we implement anything. We are also including ESGs in our curriculum. Young bureaucrats are also being trained about the sustainability agendas.

- Zuena Aziz
Principal Coordinator (SDG Affairs), Prime Minister's Office
At Dhaka Apparel Summit, 2022

the actions of private sector contributing to SDG financing in Bangladesh. Apart from these initiatives, BGMEA has partnered with the Ministry of Commerce, Government of Bangladesh to link local heritage materials like Jamdani, Khadi, Muslin etc. with the international export markets. Fusion clothes suitable for western and European markets will be designed through this project and local weavers, fashion designers and students will be trained up so that they can explore further in this arena. With only around 7% market share, the future holds immense potential for Bangladesh RMG industry. Through a comprehensive strategy, we can unlock that compartment. Academic involvement in terms of research in the arena of suitability and capacity building of our workers are two major pin point of that strategy. Moreover, we need to do the match making initiatives for availing funds for sustainable initiative, as it will incentivize more sustainable production. Along



GREEN TEXTILE LIMITED- WORLD'S HIGHEST RATED GREEN GARMENT FACTORY IS IN BANGLADESH NOW!

USGBC Score: 104/110
Location: Bhaluka, Maymensingh
Employment: Around 6,000
Highest score was achieved in nine criteria-
Sustainable Site: **10/10**
Water Efficiency: **11/11**
Energy and Atmosphere **32/33**
Material and Resources **11/13**
Indoor Environment quality **14/16**
Innovation **6/6**
Regional Priority Credits **4/4**
Location and Transportation **15/16**
Integrated Process Credits **1/1**

This factory is a sister concern of the Epic Group and Envoy Legacy.

Circular Fashion Economy




“Sustainability is always a series of compromises based on priorities and we need a lot of people doing some things better, rather than a few people doing everything perfectly.”

- Dr. Amanda Parkes
Chief Innovation Officer,
Pangaia

If we talk only one message from COP 26 it is that, sustainability is no longer be recognized by an aspiration to defend eco system in abstract future, rather it's an absolute necessary at this moment and required for climate vulnerable countries. One of these countries is Bangladesh, the seventh most climate change vulnerable country in the world. My recent trip to the country together with the Danish Minister for development and co-operation, Møller Mortensen gave me the opportunity to review both the stark reality of this as well as resilience and commitment of the people there. . Global Fashion Agenda's Circular Fashion Partnership has been carrying out in Bangladesh in association with Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and local authorities to support and realize domestic potential, and to accelerate the scale of recycling postindustrial textile waste. This has shown promising result indeed.

- Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, At Global Fashion Summit, Copenhagen Edition 2022

with that, there's no scope to forget that sustainable purchasing practice is a must. It is not only the manufacturers responsibility to ensure diligence in the whole process, rather it needs a joint and collaborative effort from everyone-brands, development partners, consumers and everyone associated with it. Bangladesh government is also very much committed to address the issue of climate change. The Government of Bangladesh has revised

the NDC (Nationally Determined Contribution) and declared to reduce carbon emissions by 21.85% by 2030. Currently, there are benefits for the Green factories in terms of reduced corporate tax rate of 10%, instead of 12%. However, additional assistance from the Government like deducted tax rate on importing machineries and raw materials necessary for running green factories will expedite the green revolution in our RMG industry. 

Chattogram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology

Preparing next generation fashion leaders



Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni, MP inaugurated CBUFT as the chief guest while Deputy Education Minister Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury, MP, BGMEA President Faruque Hassan, Chairman of the Board of Trustee of CBUFT Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, BGMEA First Vice President Syed Nazrul Islam, Vice President Rakibul Alam Chowdhury, BGMEA Directors, and faculties and staff of the university were also present.

When the ready-made garment (RMG) industry started its journey in Bangladesh more than four decades ago, it was a non-traditional export sector with only 12 thousand dollar worth of exports. Today the RMG industry is the mainstay of Bangladesh's economy having enormous contribution to the socio-economic development of the country. In this eventful and glorious journey of establishing Bangladesh as the second largest garment exporter in the world, the industry has undergone through myriad challenges and witnessed a lot of developments. Defying all obstacles

Bangladesh has come a long way to be globally recognized as a safe and sustainable apparel sourcing hub which is preferred by buyers across the world.

One of the key factors behind the success of this industry is its workforce. With the expansion of the industry, the demand for skilled workers has increased, especially at mid-level management. At the initial stage of the industry, workers from Bangladesh were sent abroad for training in garment manufacturing, and gradually the sector managed to develop its own workforce, especially at operator level, and the RMG sector had to

rely on foreign professionals at mid-level management as the trade was totally new in Bangladesh. As the industry has been growing, the demand for skilled professionals also has gone up.

In order to meet the growing demand for skilled and knowledgeable professionals in the RMG industry, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has set up a fashion university in Chattogram where a large number of export-oriented garment factories are situated. Chattogram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (CBUFT) has started



Chattogram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology

journey with an aim to develop human resources for the readymade garment and textile sectors of Bangladesh. The university has created higher education opportunities for students especially in textile engineering, clothing and fashion technologies and designs. The inaugural ceremony of CBUFT was held in Chattogram on 21 January 2023. Education Minister Dr. Dipu Moni, MP attended the inaugural ceremony of CBUFT as chief guest. Deputy Minister for Education Mohibul Hasan Chowdhury Nawfel, MP, and University Grants Commission Member Professor Biswajit Chanda were present at the program as special guests, which was chaired by Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, chairman of the Board of Trustees of CBUFT. BGMEA First Vice President Syed Nazrul Islam, UGC Director Md. Omar Faruque and



Students study at CBUFT Library

faculties and staff of the university were also present. Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA, who attended the inaugural ceremony as special guest, said, "Chattogram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (CBUFT) will play a crucial role in preparing qualified graduates with practical knowledge

and skills relevant to the industry. The university will help students to turn themselves into a technical asset to the industry and reduce dependency on foreign experts in the sector." "The demand for graduates with market-oriented knowledge and adequate skills are rising in Bangladesh as the country is



Sewing Lab at CBUFT

preparing for its next phase of development which would be knowledge based and hugely hinge upon industrial growth,” he said. Pointing to the golden era of demographic dividend in Bangladesh, Faruque Hassan said, “We have a huge vibrant population. If we can turn our young people into skilled and knowledgeable human resources, we will be able to seize the huge opportunities that lie ahead. It will help to make our industries more competitive and facilitate sustainable economic growth,” he added.

CBUFT is currently located in BGMEA Bhaban at South Khulshi, a prime location in the Chittagong Metropolitan City. CBUFT offers 4 years B.Sc. (Hons.) and Bachelor programs: B.Sc. in Textile & Clothing Technology (TCT); B.Sc. in Fashion Design & Technology (FDT);



Students at the CBUFT laboratory

Bachelor of Apparel Merchandising & Management (AMM); Bachelor of Fashion Design (FD); B.Sc. in Textile Engineering (TE); and B.Sc. in Textile Engineering & Management (TEM).

The university has digital classrooms, well-equipped laboratories, enriched library, auditorium, student's common

room, students cafeteria and office rooms. The laboratories of CBUFT include computer lab, CAD lab, sewing lab, physics lab, chemistry lab, textile testing lab, dyeing & printing lab, pattern lab, weaving lab, fashion design studio & product development, etc. All laboratories are equipped with modern machinery. The classrooms are



Pattern Room at CBUFT

designed with overhead projectors, multimedia and other teaching aid materials.

Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of CBUFT, said, “CBUFT encourages excellence in all its activities while preserving high academic standards in order to generate knowledgeable, skilled based and excellent market oriented graduates for the fourth industrial revolution.”

“There is no doubt that we are working to build skilled human resources with the help of a committed teaching staff and a logistic support team in order to see that our country prospers and reaches the cherished goal of being a developed country. I firmly believe that our graduates will be able to effectively bring advancement to the apparel industry, textile and other allied sectors of our country to make our economy stronger,” he added.

CBUFT encourages excellence in all its activities while preserving high academic standards in order to generate knowledgeable, skilled based and excellent market oriented graduates for the fourth industrial revolution.

The RMG industry of Bangladesh is increasingly opting for manufacturing high-end products while garment factories are making investment in upgrading technologies and machinery to improve efficiency and productivity.

Skilled human resources having sound and updated knowledge in apparel manufacturing related fields are on high demand to perform these complex tasks.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan thinks the fourth industrial revolution is posing challenges as the industry is getting more and more automated and tech-dependent. “If we can impart the market-oriented knowledge and skills to our graduates considering the needs of the industry, these challenges will be opportunities for us,” he said.

Chattogram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (CBUFT) will play a crucial role in preparing qualified graduates with practical knowledge and skills relevant to the industry. The university will help students to turn themselves into a technical asset to the industry and reduce dependency on foreign experts in the sector. **A**

BGMEA Collaborates with AUW for Empowering Women RMG Workers



Being the country's largest export earning sector, the readymade garment (RMG) industry plays a significant role in the economy and social progress in Bangladesh. On one hand the industry has been contributing to the national GDP and exports, on the other hand it helps people significantly to come out from the poverty trap. One of the most significant contributions of this industry is empowerment of women by creating job opportunities and bringing them to the mainstream of the society. Currently, more than 4 million people are directly working in this sector, of which 60 percent are women.

Rapid expansion of the RMG industry encouraged social mobility of women with their entry in the formal labor market and their transition from private to male dominated public sphere. New productive roles in the society have helped them to become self-aware, independent and free within the society. As these young female labor force has become self-reliant, now they have access to communication as they use mobile phones, they have access to information, and they are now more conscious. As a result the rate of early marriage and early motherhood has dropped, and there has been significant

improvement in maternal and child health and nutrition. This process of industrialization led economic growth and employment has initiated a socio-economic change in Bangladesh.

Over the years the industry has ensured a better and congenial atmosphere for workers including occupational health and safety, industrial relations, and steps taken to tackle gender-based violence and discrimination. While safety at work, social and environmental sustainability are the supreme considerations, the industry is working to ensure the well-being of the workers, particularly their



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan and Vice Chancellor of Asian University for Women Dr. Rubana Huq sign an MOU on behalf of their respective sides.

education. Since the industry deals with a large number of working class people, there are many talented people who cannot utilize or explore their potential due to the lack of opportunities.

With the aim of empowering the workers particularly, women and fulfilling their dreams, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) started a collaboration with the Asian University for Women (AUW) to provide free education to women in the garment industry back in 2016. AUW is a leading international institution committed to providing superior quality higher education and leadership development to women in Asia, regardless of background, and creating a global network of female leaders. Under the “Pathways of Promise Program” of AUW, so far more than 1000 students have enrolled in AUW of which 100 are from the RMG industry. Among the 100 students, 40 students have already completed their graduation and most of them have joined the industry in different positions. Also 50 students from different RMG

factories are currently pursuing their study in AUW with support from their respective employers. Recently, BGMEA has signed an memorandum of understanding (MoU) with AUW where BGMEA will cooperate AUW to facilitate the enrolment of 500 qualified females working in RMG factories in Bangladesh for five-year university education under the “Pathways for Promise” program.

In every school year, AUW will select up to five women among the eligible workers from each BGMEA enlisted factory who meet certain merit-based admission criteria established by AUW at its sole discretion. Only women under the age of 30 who have completed higher secondary education and received average 60% marks are eligible to apply for the admission. BGMEA will circulate notice of enrolments, procedures and obligations at the beginning of intakes. The factory will nominate the candidates (maximum 5 women) for the assessment. The candidate who can pass the interview will be selected to enroll in the Pathways for Promise Program and get

admission to the university for higher education.

AUW will provide each student a financial aid package that fully covers all costs of room, tuition, books and supplies, primary health care and other basic needs throughout the entire duration of her participation in “the Pathways for Promise Program”. During the years of studying, the factory authorities will pay regular monthly salaries to the workers enrolled in AUW, so that their families do not face any hardship. It is a very unique practice in the sense that the workers are getting opportunities to fulfill their dream of higher studies while they are able to contribute to their families.

The Pathways for Promise is a glowing example of how the RMG industry contributes to women empowerment, realizing their dreams, and earning dignity in family and society with education and employment. It will not only help the female garment workers to take lead and boost their confidence level but also increase their participation in the higher level of management. **A**

Apparel imports of EU and USA in 2022



Recently we have completed another year 2022, the EUROSTAT and OTEXA have released the latest apparel import statistics of the European Union (EU) and United State (US) respectively for the year 2022. It is to be mentioned that EUROSTAT is the national statistical authorities of EU and Office of Textiles and Apparel (OTEXA) is an affiliation of the U.S. Department of Commerce. This feature will give a brief analysis of the EU and the USA's apparel imports from Bangladesh and other top sourcing countries in the world.

EU's apparel import from the world and Bangladesh

As per the data of EUROSTAT, the European Union imported USD 22.89 Billion worth of apparel from Bangladesh in 2022, while their import from the world was US\$ 103.09 billion. In the last 10 years, EU's import from Bangladesh has increased by 9.15% annually while their import from the world has increased by 3.17% in compound annual growth rate (CAGR).

Figure-1: EU's RMG Import from world

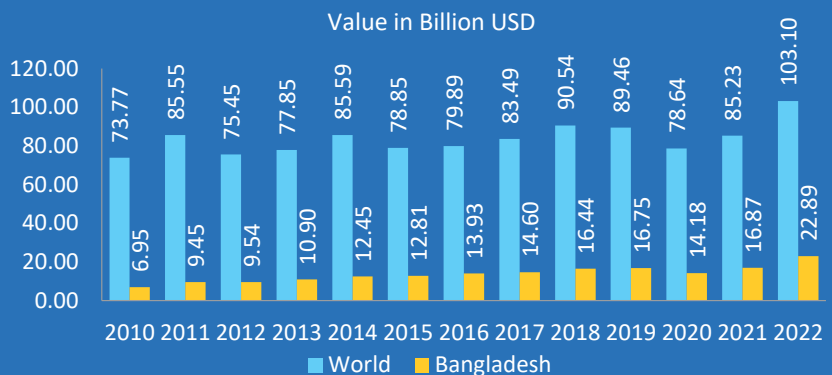
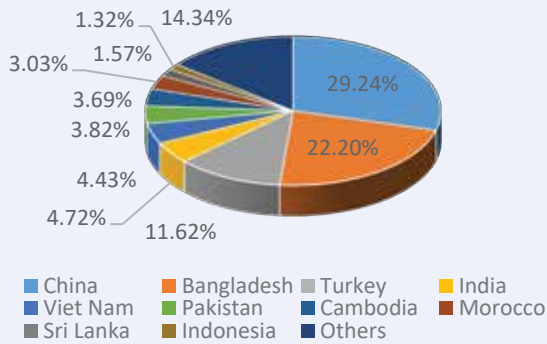


Figure-2: EU's major source of apparel imports in % in 2022



Share of the major sourcing countries in EU's apparel import

With 22.20% share of the EU's total RMG import, Bangladesh remains the second largest apparel import source for the EU after China, the largest apparel import source of the EU in 2022. The share of China in the EU's total apparel import was 29.24%. Turkey was the third largest source of apparel import for the EU with 11.62% shares followed by India and Vietnam the 4th and 5th largest apparel import source. The share of India and Vietnam in EU's apparel imports were 4.72% and 4.43% respectively.

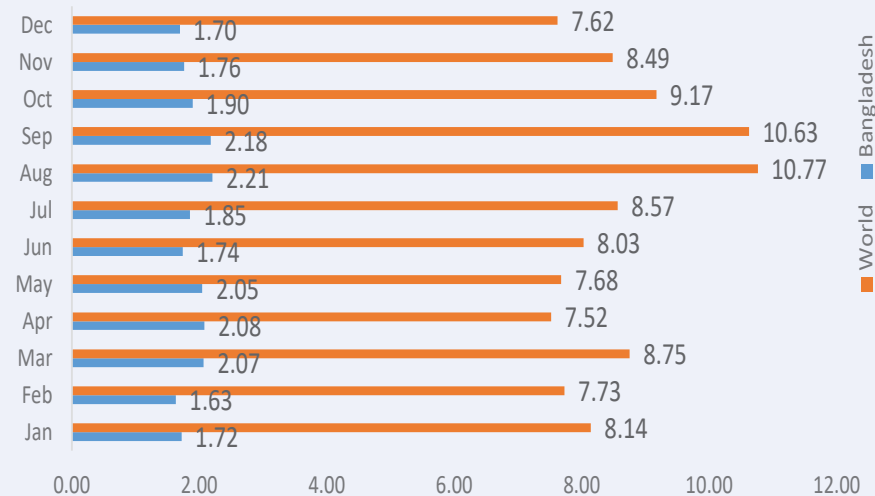
EU's apparel import from the top sourcing countries

The following table-1 shows apparel imports from the EU from the top sourcing countries in the world for the last five years. In 2022, EU's apparel imports from Bangladesh increased by 35.69% compared to 2021. If we look at the other countries in table-1, EU's imports from China stood at US\$ 30.15 billion in 2022 with 17.01% year-over-year. On the other hand, EU's imports from Turkey also increased by 10.09% and became USD 11.98 billion in 2022. At the same time, imports from India and Vietnam also reached USD 4.87 billion and USD 4.57 billion with 21.02% and 35.28% years-over-year growth respectively. EU's import from the other top sourcing countries such as Cambodia, Pakistan, Morocco, Sri Lanka and Indonesia grew by 35.39%, 27.99%, 6.73%, 14.87%, and 24.47% respectively during 2022.

Table-1: EU's last five years apparel import from the top sourcing countries (value in billion US\$)

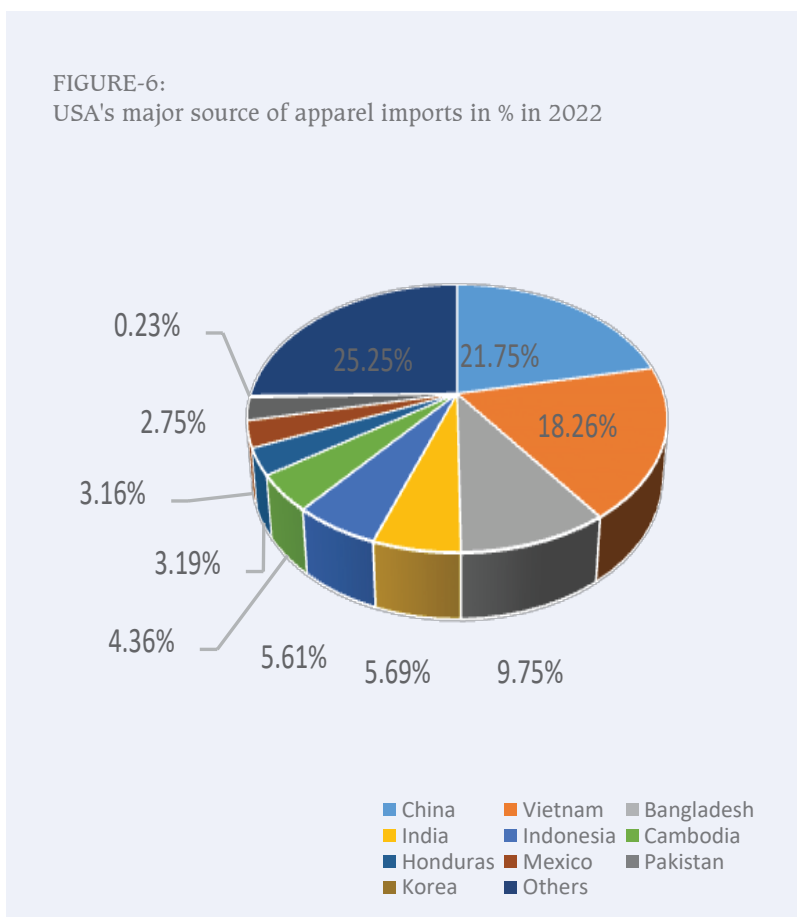
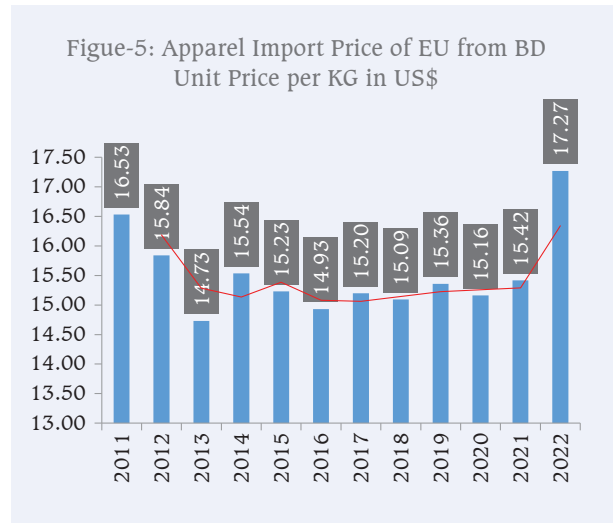
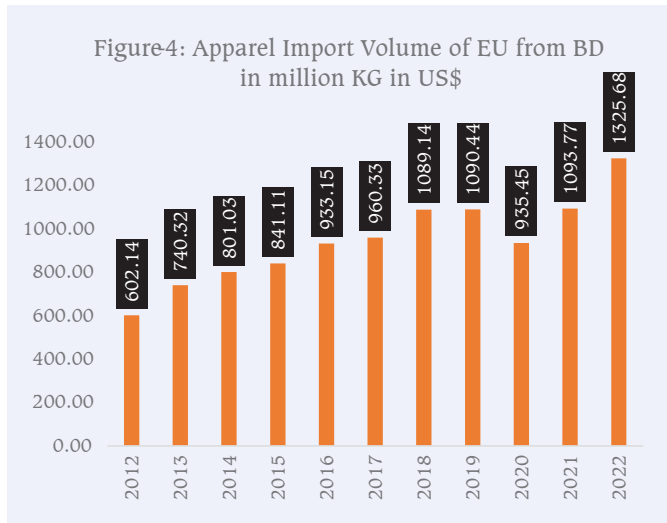
Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Growth in 2022
World	90.54	89.46	78.64	85.23	103.10	20.97%
China	27.30	25.87	23.60	25.76	30.15	17.01%
Bangladesh	16.44	16.75	14.18	16.87	22.89	35.69%
Turkey	9.93	9.86	9.30	10.88	11.98	10.09%
India	4.60	4.39	3.39	4.02	4.86	21.02%
Viet Nam	3.33	3.49	3.16	3.38	4.57	35.28%
Pakistan	2.55	2.73	2.45	3.08	3.94	27.99%
Cambodia	3.83	3.68	2.80	2.81	3.81	35.39%
Morocco	3.06	2.95	2.32	2.93	3.12	6.73%
Sri Lanka	1.25	1.35	1.19	1.41	1.62	14.87%
Indonesia	1.27	1.28	1.04	1.10	1.36	24.47%

Figure-3: EU's month wise apparel import from Bangladesh and the world in 2022 (value in billion US\$)



Apparel Import volume and price of EU from BD

Following figures- 4 and 5 show the volume and unit price apparel import of EU from Bangladesh. As per figure-4 in volume wise the import of EU from Bangladesh grew by 8.21% annually in the last 10 years (2012-2022). At the same time, the import price (unit/KG) of EU from Bangladesh increased by only 0.83% annually during the same period. In 2022, the unit price grew by 11.95% from USD 15.42 in 2021 to USD 17.27 in 2022. But if we look at the data, the price has declined by 0.75% annually during 2014-2021.



US apparel import

According to OTEXA, USA imported 9.74 billion dollars' worth of apparel from Bangladesh in 2022. Bangladesh remains the 3rd largest apparel source for USA with a 9.75% share of USA's total apparel import which was 8.76% in 2021. USA's import from Bangladesh has increased by 36.38% whereas their global import grew by 22.48% in 2022 compared to the previous year 2021.

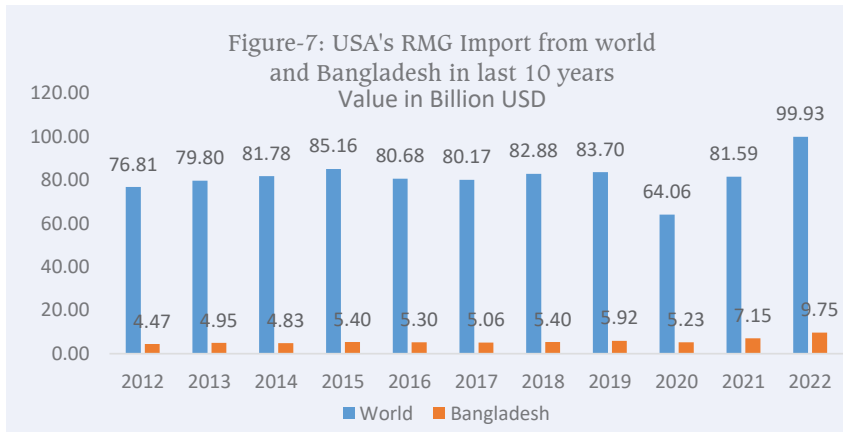
If we look at the other major competitive countries of Bangladesh, China, being the top apparel import source for the USA and having a 21.75% share, posted 10.83% year-over-year growth in 2021. USA's apparel imports from China reached 21.73 billion dollars. On the other hand, Vietnam is in the 2nd position where the USA imported 18.24 billion dollars' worth of clothing from Vietnam in the same period. USA's imports from Vietnam also grew by 26.97%. Other top countries having mentionable growth were India 35.50%, Indonesia 35.29%, Cambodia 28.46%, South Korea 25.08%, Pakistan 24%, Honduras 19.85%, and Mexico 11.50%.

Table-2: USA's last five years apparel import from the top sourcing countries (Value in billion US\$)

Country	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Growth in 2022
World	82.88	83.70	64.06	81.59	99.93	22.48%
China	27.37	24.91	15.15	19.61	21.73	10.83%
Vietnam	12.22	13.55	12.57	14.37	18.25	26.97%
Bangladesh	5.40	5.92	5.23	7.15	9.75	36.38%
India	3.81	4.06	3.02	4.20	5.68	35.50%
Indonesia	4.48	4.40	3.51	4.14	5.61	35.29%
Cambodia	2.41	2.68	2.82	3.39	4.35	28.46%
Honduras	2.57	2.79	1.83	2.66	3.19	19.85%
Mexico	3.36	3.12	2.20	2.84	3.16	11.50%
Pakistan	1.36	1.46	1.40	2.22	2.75	24.00%
Korea, South	0.22	0.20	0.15	0.18	0.23	25.08%

USA's RMG Import from world and Bangladesh

During the past 10 years (2012-2022), the value of USA apparel import from Bangladesh has increased by 8.11% CAGR whereas their import from the world has shown only 2.67% annual growth(Figure-7).



USA's month-wise apparel import from Bangladesh

Figure-8 illustrates the month-wise apparel import scenario of the USA from Bangladesh and the world in 2022.



Apparel Import Price of USA from BD

Following figure 9 & 10 show the volume and unit price apparel import of USA from Bangladesh. As per figure- in volume wise Square Meter Equivalent (SME) the import of USA from Bangladesh grew by 0.55% annually in the last 10 years (2012-2022). On the other hand, the import price (unit value/SME) of USA from Bangladesh increased by only 8.11% annually during the same period. In 2022, the unit price grew by 13.04% from USD 2.74 in 2021 to USD 3.10 in 2022 (figure-10) while volume wise it has shown 20.65% year-over-year growth(figure-9).

Figure-9: Apparel Import Volume of USA from BD

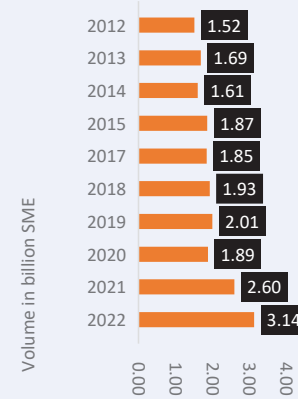
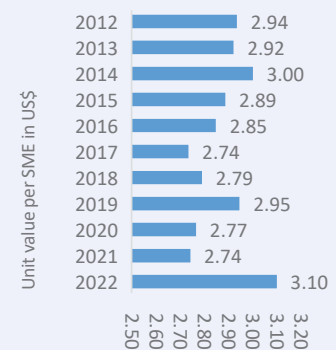


Figure-10: Apparel Import Price of USA from BD





The unit price in both the EU and the USA have increased for two reasons. Firstly, the global inflation which increased the price of fuel, freight and other commodities. As a result our cost of production also increased significantly. Secondly, in recent years, we have got significant investments in high-value added products. Now-a-days we are manufacturing products in higher FOB price particularly jackets, active wear and suits which also increased our unit price.

Government waived the US Cotton Fumigation test

The Ministry of Commerce government of Bangladesh issued a

gazette notification on February 19, 2023, by easing the rules of mandatory fumigation tests for importing cotton from Western Hemisphere countries or regions, particularly from the United States (US). As per the gazette, now we can import cotton from the USA only by showing SPS (Sanitary and Phytosanitary) certificate and paper certifying that the imported consignment is free from Boll Weevil (a cotton insect in USA) issued by the competent authorities in the USA.

Bangladesh is the second largest cotton-importing country in the world. Though most of the cotton is imported from India, CIS countries and Brazil, Bangladesh also imports a significant quantity from the USA. Last year Bangladesh imported 4080

million pounds of cotton from the world of which almost 409 million pounds were from the USA, which means around 12% of the total imported cotton was imported from the USA.

Previously, cotton fumigation test was compulsory for importing US cotton, which is complicated, costly and time-consuming. For this test, the importers have to wait for an extra 5-7 days to get their shipments cleared from the ports. The recent circular by the government will reduce time, hassles and cost of doing business of the importer in importing cotton from the USA. It will also increase cotton import of Bangladesh from the USA since the quality of US cotton is good and has wide acceptability. **A**



Bangladesh can carry on the diversification of product range, to cater to the different demands of the French market, and strengthen the supply chain

H. E. Marie Masdupuy, Ambassador of France to Bangladesh

Bangladesh and France have long been sharing friendly relations which have become stronger and warmer over time. France is one of the major trade partners for Bangladesh. In an exclusive interview with The Apparel Story, H. E. Marie Masdupuy, Ambassador of France to Bangladesh, shares her thoughts on the progress and prospects of trade between the two countries, particularly within the scope of textile and clothing.

France is the third largest importer of RMG in the Eurozone and our apparel exports share in France was 6% in the last year. What are the prospects of our RMG in the French market and what are your suggestions for grabbing more shares?

In 2022, apparel exports from Bangladesh to France amounted to 4,38 billion EUR. It should be stressed that your RMG is already performing very well in the French market. While BGMEA aims at reaching a 10% global market share, Bangladesh already reached a 16% market share in France, competing with China (24%) or Vietnam (5%). As the largest contributor to the growth of French global RMG imports between 2021 and 2022, the country is in a good trend and is gaining market share.

To maintain this pace, Bangladesh can continue its different initiatives taken through 4 different channels. Firstly, I believe that BGMEA could increase marketing efforts in France to raise awareness about the tremendous transformation that has taken place in Bangladesh over the last 10 years, in terms of safety, social and environmental compliance. Few French people know that Bangladesh is the first country for green RMG factories. To reach more buyers, Texworld Paris is a key event that gathers not only French but also European importers. My second suggestion is related to sustainability. The French market is increasingly concerned about sustainable and ethical production practices. Lastly, Bangladesh can carry on the diversification of

product range, to cater to the different demands of the French market, and strengthen the supply chain.

Do you think our safety standards would brand Bangladesh in a positive way and encourage both retailers and customers to buy 'Made in Bangladesh' apparel?

Definitely. Compliance with the international safety standards, such as those set by the International Labor Organization, can give Bangladesh a competitive advantage in the global apparel market. Moreover, providing a safe environment to the workers also improves working conditions. Many efforts have been done in export-oriented factories and I trust BGMEA to maintain vigilance in this regard. There is also room for improvement for some factories that are not supplying international brands.

But compliance itself is not enough to create a brand that would be attractive to the final customers.

I think that promoting high-end traditional fabrics and techniques to the world will be ultimately beneficial for the whole textile industry and for the "Made in Bangladesh" brand. Bangladesh is home to many under-recognized gems like jamdani, muslin or Rajshahi silk. Many steps have been taken recently to revive production by the Government of Bangladesh and private sector.

Active effort to enhance transparency and accountability as well as promotional activities are key to build trust. In this regard, safety is just one aspect of sustainability, and other factors such as environmental impact and social responsibility are also important considerations for retailers and customers.

Lastly, I think that promoting high-end traditional fabrics and techniques to the world will be ultimately beneficial for the whole textile industry and for the "Made in Bangladesh" brand. Bangladesh is home to many under-recognized gems like jamdani, muslin or Rajshahi silk. Many steps have been taken recently to revive production by the Government of Bangladesh and private sector. Some media recently invented the expression Jamdani diplomacy, as jamdani could be an ambassador of Bangladesh's know-how. In this particular sector, as well as in the RMG industry in general, there is room for more cooperation between French and Bangladeshi Fashion institutes.



Ambassador of France to Bangladesh H.E. Mrs. Marie Masdupuy is seen along with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan and Vice President Shahidullah Azim visiting an art camp organized by BGMEA in its premises to brand the RMG industry and the nation by projecting heritage, culture, and artisans through the artworks of renowned and upcoming artists of Bangladesh.

There is a huge potential for Bangladesh to enter the area of global circular fashion by adopting sustainable production methods, developing a circular supply chain, and partnering with circular fashion initiatives. Recycling textile scraps or waste cotton will also contribute to decrease the industry's reliance on raw material inputs and save foreign currencies.

At present time, the circular fashion has got a huge potential in the global fashion market space. As global consumers are getting more environmentally conscious, international brands are taking policies toward ZERO emission. How is the French consumers' attitude toward circular fashion and to what extent does it influence the purchasing decision of consumers? How can Bangladesh enter the area of global circular fashion?

Multiple surveys done in France show that consumers' attitudes towards circular fashion are generally positive, and many are willing to pay a premium for sustainable and eco-friendly products. There is a huge potential for Bangladesh to enter the area of global circular fashion by adopting sustainable production methods, developing a circular supply chain,

and partnering with circular fashion initiatives. Recycling textile scraps or waste cotton will also contribute to decrease the industry's reliance on raw material inputs and save foreign currencies.

When the world economy was just recovering from the impact of Covid, geopolitical tensions and other issues further worsened the situation. Also, the global economy and trade portray a depressing outlook ahead. Since France is one of major markets for Bangladesh, what would be your analysis of the whole issue and what are the issues we should keep in mind?

The global economic and trade outlook may remain challenging in the short term. In parallel, the French clothing retail market is still under consolidation following Covid and impacted by customers' new behaviours. I am confident that

Bangladesh will be able to navigate in this situation. The country has already taken various actions to adapt and thrive in the changing landscape through fostering innovation and sustainability, diversifying its export markets and strengthening supply chain resilience.

Anything else you would like to add?

As mentioned at the beginning of our conversation, the fact that France is the third largest EU country for apparel imports from Bangladesh speaks for itself. A lot has been already achieved to build trust with French brands. All of them are purchasing RMG from Bangladesh as they simply cannot not be here. One of the new challenges is now to extend this trust to reach French customers themselves. The success of Bangladesh took place at a very fast pace, but its image is still lagging a little behind. 

Women Empowerment in RMG Sector



Barrister Shehrin Salam Oishee



The wheel of economic growth in the post 1971 Bangladesh was greatly realised by the empowerment of the women in the country. The patriarchal society have always made the working of women, a taboo, one that was a miss for decades until late 1970s when the Ready-made Garment (RMG) sector sprouted and women begin their

most hopeful journey, where around seventy percent of workers of 4.0 million people, are women. Various push and pull factors in the 1980s and 1990s motivated women to challenge rural societal norms and migrate to urban areas. The push factors were mainly extreme poverty, household shocks like illness, disability or sudden loss of

male income earners, and unemployment, while paid employment, freedom, and improved living standards were the major pull factors. Employers also preferred female employees for their obedience and their expertise in the dainty art of stitching. Women empowerment is the precursor of poverty elimination and uplifting



human rights in Bangladesh. RMG industry has been swaggering in the country since long time as a catalyst for sustainable development. Educational qualification is directly and indirectly related with women's empowerment, where higher the education, the better are the chances of getting a decent job. But in RMG sector, this so-called barrier doesn't

apply. Widespread opportunities for unskilled employment in the RMG sector boosted the independent migration of women and girls from villages to cities. These factors resulted in the formal mass employment of women at the entry level across the industry. Hence, this sector facilitates the women empowerment in the most unbiased

manner. This process further led to women being aware of their rights, scope and gender inequality issues through their exposure in the job market. Whether paid employment in this sector is empowering women in Bangladesh remains hotly debated among feminist activists and scholars. Heath and Mobarak found

that it improved the welfare of young women and provided them with greater autonomy in delaying marriage and childbirth, ensuring continued independence of women. Rashid revealed that girls, women, and their children had better health as they had access to a balanced diet and nutrition. Women workers were found to have the ability to question the dowry system, participate in family planning, open a bank account, send their children to schools, buy health care services, afford basic purchases, and provide their parents with regular monetary aid. Souplet-Wilson also argues that it enhanced women's capacity to formulate choices and act upon them.

Women's employment in the RMG sector has challenged existing cultural norms (e.g., gender-based social exclusion of women). An empirical study suggests that it has strengthened women's value and bargaining power within the household because of their increased financial contribution. Similarly, based on a quantitative study conducted among female garment workers in Bangladesh, it was concluded that the sector has significantly contributed to women's societal empowerment. Increased access to public spaces and consciousness about their right to make life choices has boosted their self-esteem further.

The Apex trade body regulating the garment factories in the country, Bangladesh Garments Manufacturing and Exporters Association (BGMEA) is the flag bearer in ensuring the continued workplace safety and best practices for female worker's empowerment, hygiene, health safety, etc. Bangladesh has some of the safest and LEED certified green industries in the world certified by the USGBC. Currently the RMG Sustainability Council (RSC) in collaboration with the requisite ministry operates to promote, govern and oversee the implementation of Occupational Safety and Health standards and to verify the compliance with

Widespread opportunities for unskilled employment in the RMG sector boosted the independent migration of women and girls from villages to cities. These factors resulted in the formal mass employment of women at the entry level across the industry. Hence, this sector facilitates the women empowerment in the most unbiased manner. This process further led to women being aware of their rights, scope and gender inequality issues through their exposure in the job market.

applicable safety standard in the RMG and related industries in the country, specially in the areas of structural integrity, electrical safety, fire and life safety etc. Recent statistics show that the registration of trade unions is on the rise. To ensure the workers' grievances, rooting from gender issues or plainly work matter, a pre-application service desk was established in every office of the

Registrar of Trade Union (RTU) under Department of Labour in Jan 2021. Since then increasing numbers of complaints are filed and ample hearings are under process. Simultaneously, a helpline is being operated by DIFE and within 1 year of its operation by Feb 2022, 2788 complaints were received through website, helpline and emails, amongst which 2359 were resolved. To further facilitate the rights of the workers, specially the women workers, who are considered to be less represented, BGMEA's Conciliation-Cum-Arbitration Committee (CAC) has been in effect since April 1998.

On the other hand, under the Gender Equality and Returns (GEAR) program, 588 female sewing operators were trained of whom 371 had been promoted to supervisory roles. Our untrained female workers now resorted to take over a large portion of the mid-level management which was previously solely dominated by male workers. A crucial time in the lives of the female workers are when they are expecting. The Mothers At Work Project by UNICEF, in collaboration with BGMEA has been the ultimate ray of hope. They had started a web of programs to train the trainers, the selected representatives of nominated factories as to the requirements of an expecting mother and modes of caring for them. Starting from pre-birth caution about food to post delivery nutrition, training is given. These are add-ons for the female RMG workers where in their very workplace they are catered with the most specialised care at the time of pregnancy and even after. This program by far has been scaled up to 103 factories and the number is increasing by each passing day. BGMEA has also been implementing the Lactating mother Aid Fund Project, aiming to provide financial support to lactating mothers working in the factories. In the year 2020-21, a total of 16000 female garment workers from 390 factories were selected for financial support



under this project. The initiatives of BGMEA did not end there. The organisation runs 5 schools for workers' children and provides book and study material for free, further making it easy for the female workers to concentrate better at work while their kids are looked after. Besides this, the first batch of 90 women RMG workers are pursuing their higher studies in a multicultural global environment at the Asian University for Women for free. The university is providing full scholarship and the factories continue to pay the students' salaries during the 5 year study course. BGMEA aims to make upto 500 enrollments within next 2 years. Additionally, BRAC in collaboration with BGMEA has initiated a training program on "Safeguarding and Developing Complaint Mechanism: safe workplace for all" aiming to develop harassment free workplace

aiming to relief constant complains of women workers. More importantly, SNV initiated a project – "Ending gender-based violence in RMG sector", aiming to reduce gender-based violence in the RMG industry to address domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence against women commuting to/from work. A study revealed that despite gender-based disparities, female garment workers gained a greater level of empowerment than the women who engaged themselves in other sectors such as microfinance. Mary Wollstonecraft stated "I do not wish [women] to have power over men, but over themselves." Empowerment does not mean to dominate but instead to be able to have the right to decide and judge for oneself. The employment opportunities in the RMG similarly allow the golden chance for women to redefine, establish and reinstate

their worth in their own families and social circles. Employment in the RMG sector has a significant positive impact on the economic, social, and psychological empowerment of female workers. More emphasis should however be given on equal employment opportunity and ensure zero tolerance for sexual harassment and also create a victim support center for women in each factory, as part of the future plans. As we stand overlooking the 4th industrial revolution, we praise this sector as the sole initiator of women's empowerment in Bangladesh, portraying our talented female workers across the world as the makers of the products titled "Made in Bangladesh" with pride. **A**

Barrister Shehrin Salam Oishee is a Director of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), Director of Envoy Group and an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Bangladesh.

Move Towards Circularity-Closing the Loop for New Openings

Bangladesh is the second largest apparel exporting country in the world. In the last fiscal year, USD 42.6 billion worth of ready-made garments have been exported to 167 countries around the world from Bangladesh. Employing around 4 million people, this industry plays the role of a sturdy pillar for Bangladesh's economy. The industry contributes around 11% to GDP and 83% of our overall export of the country, clearly showing how important the industry is for the overall socio-economic development of Bangladesh.

However, as there is other side of the coin, there always exists a negative correlation between economic growth and environmental quality. The Fast Fashion industry, as we know, is the second largest polluter in the world. It is responsible for around 10% of all GHG emissions of the world, consumes approximately 79 trillion

liters of water annually and accounts for almost 30% of all microplastics that flow into the ocean. In the case of Bangladesh, around 400,000 tonnes of pre-consumer textile waste are produced annually, of which only 5% is recycled locally. This post-industrial textile waste, popularly known as "Jhut", has posed a different challenge to overcome in the path toward achieving circularity in the textile industry in Bangladesh. According to Reverse Resources research, Bangladesh's current recycling

Outside view of a green factory in Bangladesh

capacity for apparel quality recycled yarns is estimated at 18,000 to 24,000 tonnes per year. In the majority of the cases, this waste remains an unsegregated, contaminated burden on the producers, who sell it at the lowest value to the stakeholders. Brands are increasingly becoming more demanding in terms of





sustainability, and for Bangladesh to keep competing in the global fashion market, it is imperative to develop a sustainable solution to this pre-consumer waste. Therefore, the only way forward is to incorporate circularity in our business models. The shift would potentially create an additional economy of USD 5 billion,

save 840 million m³ of water, 3 Mn tons of CO₂-eq and create a new hub of employment, amongst various other direct and indirect advantages. According to a recent report published Global Fashion Agenda and Mckinsey & Co., There is a 4.5 billion USD opportunity across six major textile manufacturing markets, i.e. Bangladesh, Vietnam,

Turkey, India, Malaysia, Indonesia. While we move towards a circular economy, the skills and efficiencies of our industries have to continue to improve, to be competitive in the global marketplace. Since this is relatively a new topic, not much is known about it yet. We need to raise awareness amongst ourselves regarding this topic, which will

eventually help us to understand the global value chain and develop market-based solutions for promoting sustainable production and consumption. In this case, developed countries who have already gained a footing in terms of sustainability, particularly circularity can help us a lot. By adopting a hand holding approach among development partners, entrepreneurs and developed countries; match making meetings are needed to set up, so that on one hand, new entrepreneurs who are willing to start up recycling plants can gather information and funds in the form of grants and loans. It will also open up multilateral scope to enhance the concept of circular economy within the country. This industry has always been blessed by the policy support from the government of Bangladesh and for exploring this new window of opportunity, Government assistance will take us a long way ahead. A proper legal framework that would work well for both manufacturers and the existing 'informal sector as well as access to funds at preferential rates will encourage new players to set up recycling plants in Bangladesh. Along with that, we will also be in need of the development of a national curriculum to be adopted amongst universities to increase the knowledge on circularity, funds for further R&D in the field of circularity and rehabilitation programs to cushion any loss of employment in the informal sector. Another very important point to be noted, that, for countries like Bangladesh, it is all about adaptation, not mitigation. Brands are pressing us for a net-zero road map in line with their own strategic targets of becoming climate neutral. When the brands are setting ambitious targets, it is their responsibility to make sure that no one is left behind in the supply chain. Brands must engage in longer time commitments with the manufacturers so that they can complete the process of recycling



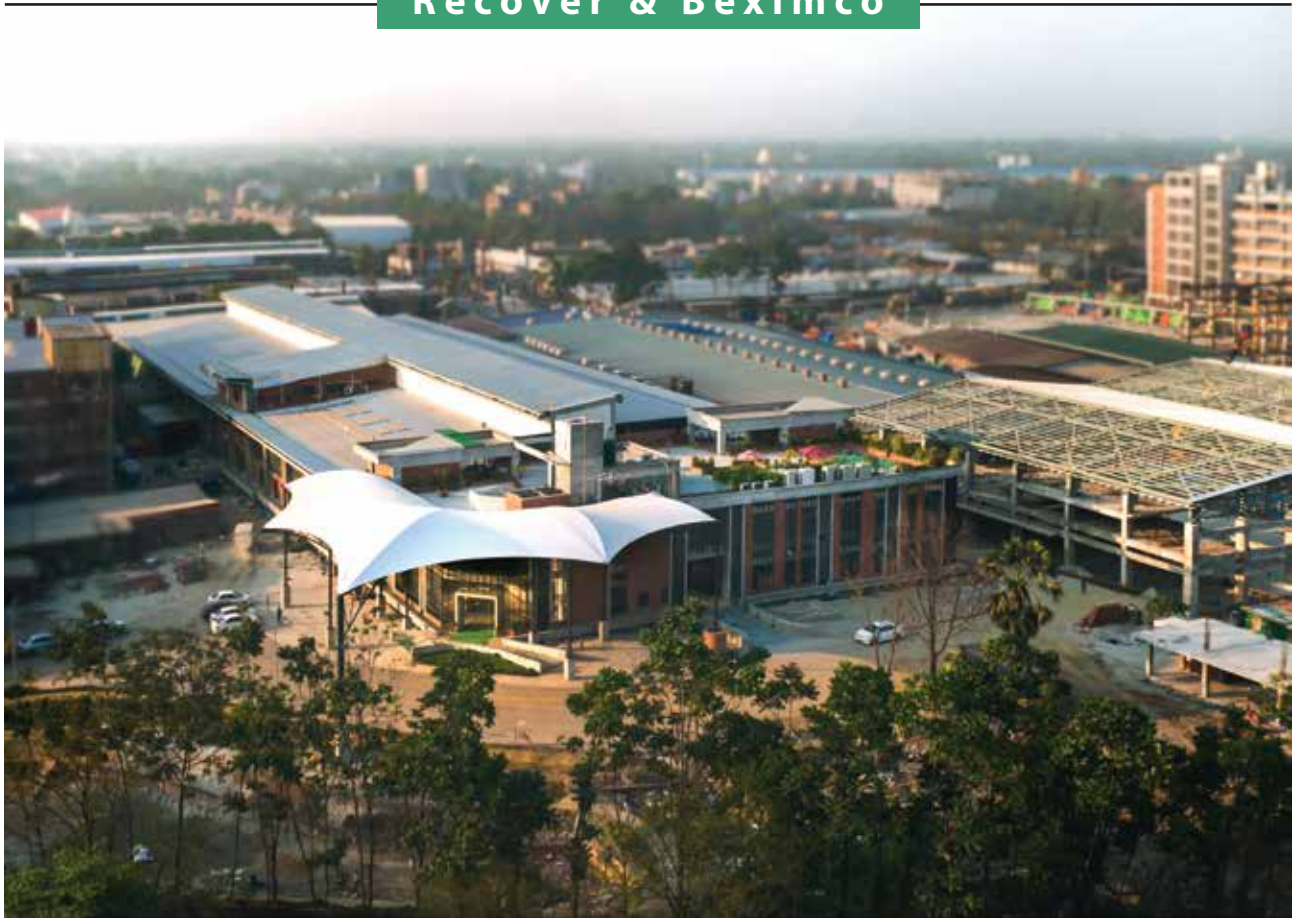
Circularity is at the core of Strategic Vision 2030, where we have pledged to increase sustainable material mix by 50%, in line with SDG 12. Not only that, we have incorporated “Circularity” as one of our core principles of doing business, the new BGMEA logo consists of 9 dots of which one DOT is about the circular economy.

and circularity. They must also develop more sustainable designs and use materials that are sourced from recycled materials. Most importantly, brands must be willing to pay higher prices for products made out of recycled materials. From the inception of the garment industry in Bangladesh in 1979, the business has followed a linear model of cradle to grave. But today, our industry is not only one of the

safest in the world, but also it is one of the most dynamic, ever adopting and green one. Bangladesh has by far the highest number of USGBC Certified LEED green garment factories in the world, with 195 LEED Green Factories of which 69 are Platinum rated, and with 550+ factories in the process of being certified, this number is on the rise. Circularity is at the core of Strategic Vision 2030, where we have pledged to increase sustainable material mix by 50%, in line with SDG 12. Not only that, we have incorporated “Circularity” as one of our core principles of doing business, the new BGMEA logo consists of 9 dots of which one DOT is about the circular economy. We are working with UNIDO, who has committed for a period of 3 years to fund a project to develop the capacity of BGMEA to enhance its capability to provide support to its member factories, develop a GIS map of the waste value chain, develop a b2b business platform to provide policy support to the industry to adopt circular economy within the industry. In conjunction with the Aalborg University Denmark, Copenhagen Business School, GFA, etc., we are running a research project named CREATE, through which we aim to investigate the circular economy transition in global garment value chains related to Bangladesh’s apparel industry and propose appropriate regulations. When it comes to climate change, Bangladesh is a country which contributes the least to it but bears the most vulnerability. In actual fact Bangladesh RMG industry’s march toward environmental sustainability is unprecedented and unmatched anywhere in the world. It is also a manifestation of Bangladeshi apparel makers’ commitment to take the sector forward and meet ESG standards throughout the manufacturing process. Only through a collaborative approach and commitment, we can reach that goal. **A**

Strategic Alliance for Implementing a Circular System

Recover & Beximco



Beximco Industrial Park

Bangladesh is the world's second-largest apparel exporter of ready-made garments. And due to the country's available infrastructure and new technology initiatives, the number of exports is expected to keep growing. In 2019, Bangladesh produced approximately 577,000 tons of waste from its ready-made garment factories and fabrics mills, according to an estimate from Circular Fashion Partnership (CFP). Of this, 250,000 tons was 100% pure cotton waste, making the country one of the

largest cotton waste-producing regions in the world. Not only is Bangladesh one of the primary producers of textile waste but is also one of the biggest importers of textile fiber. In 2019 alone, the country brought in 1.63 million tons of staple cotton fiber worth \$3.5 billion. One of the global leaders in sustainable fashion manufacturing, Beximco puts sustainability and circularity at the heart of its operations. The company has laid out a direct approach to solve the

growing quantity of waste through its 3 Ps: Planet, People and Profit. Some of its sustainable practices include:

- Using advanced manufacturing and supply chain management solutions
- Digitalizing design proposals to reduce waste of physical samples
- Employing environmentally-friendly practices to reduce water usage by up to 70%
- Reusing 30% of its water capacity for irrigation and farming

Beximco Textile Division

one of the largest spinning mills of the country- 122,000 spindles

40,000 Employees From Many Nationalities

Annual Turnover US\$ 500 Million

Full Vertical Infrastructure

Capacity of 100,000 yards of finished fabric per day



Syed Naved Hussain, Group Director & CEO of Beximco Ltd.

- Partnering with us at Recover™ on a new program by using recycled raw materials

On the other hand, Recover Textile Systems SL, A Spanish material science company is an expert in sustainability, particularly in the area of circular fashion. As a leading materials science company and global producer of low-impact, high-quality recycled cotton fiber and fiber blends, their goal is to expand the use of proprietary technology so the loop can be closed.

Recover and Beximco have teamed up, being two key players at different stages of the textile value and set up the largest recycling facility in Bangladesh.

- The facility comes equipped with Recover's proprietary machinery, as well as RColorBlend installation--Recover's innovative technology that provides fibre blends with colour, with a lower environmental impact.
- The partnership will also allow BEXIMCO to offer the market: the highest-quality denim, woven and knit fabrics made with 5-30% RCS/GRS verified recycled fibre; a completely transparent supply chain; and sustainable fabric production techniques in dyeing and finishing.

In conversation with Syed Naved Hussain, Group Director-BEXIMCO & CEO, BEXIMCO Ltd:

Why did the idea of setting up a recycling hub come into your mind?

Bangladesh is the world's 2nd largest textile and apparel hub. Importing recycle fiber or yarn from foreign countries takes too much lead time and increases import bill. On top of that, there is also a recycle fiber (garnetted stock) tax that textile businesses have to pay. By setting up a recycling hub, we thought it could make a lot of sense in securing our future. Recycling hubs can be a source of additional income for textile industry owners, as they can sell recyclable materials to other businesses or use them to create new products. Additionally, recycling hubs can create jobs and stimulate local economies. Since the textile industry is known

to be one of the biggest polluters in the country, recycling hubs can help reduce the amount of textile waste that ends up in landfills, rivers, or, other natural resources, thereby reducing the industry's carbon footprint and promoting sustainability.

What are the prospects of circular fashion in your perspective?

In the textile business, concerns about the environment and the next generation are becoming more significant every moment. In order to meet modern fashion demands while preserving the environment, we must secure the best for the next generations. This is why circular fashion is now being considered the way to the future. As, European Union is looking forward to putting an end to Fast Fashion to make Circular Fashion the sustainable solution for the future days to come, 24% of companies plan to make at least half of their product with recycled fibers by 2025. We intend to break new ground in this area and serve as a role model for Bangladesh's ever-growing textile sector.

The prospects of circular fashion are promising as it will reduce waste, conserve resources, create new jobs, save money and energy, and reduce our overall carbon footprint.

Please share the journey with us

Both BEXIMCO and RECOVER are two key players in the textile value chain for a certain time. After the Global Fashion Agenda research paper was published, BEXIMCO was looking for collaborating with a recycling technology to jointly work on a solution for the textile waste scenario in Bangladesh. At that time, material science company Recover™ appeared as the best choice due to their 70 years legacy & reputation of the company. BEXIMCO started having conversations with RECOVER in 2020 for collaborating as a strategic partner for research and development. Previously, we used to import the recycle yarn from Spain, but the higher tax rate and lead time resisted the growth of our production. In partnership with RECOVER, we agreed to receive their recycling technologies and set up the largest recycling facility in Bangladesh. We started working together and through research, we improved the quality of output through a joint effort.

We had managed to set up 4 plants by 2022. However, we are planning to have around 12 plants completely operational by the end of 2023.

Working together with Recover™ also allows BEXIMCO to offer the best quality denim, woven and knit fabrics made with 5% - 30% RCS/GRS certified recycled fiber, a completely transparent supply chain, and sustainable fabric production techniques in dyeing and finishing.

What kind of obstacles did you face in the beginning?

As we are the first organization to bring these recycling facilities in Bangladesh, there were a lot of



Recycling the fabric

obstacles. Initially, we found that there was a lack of proper policy frameworks regarding recycling technologies. There was also a lack of trained professionals as local people lacked knowledge in this field.

This is a joint venture. How has this helped you in terms of capital, knowledge transfer, etc.?

By utilizing RECOVER's technologies

there are significant environmental and economic advantages, including reduced energy and water consumption, decreased land usage, fewer pollutants, and lower CO2 emissions. We aspire to pass on our knowledge to upcoming generations who will continue our legacy.

Have you received any assistance from the Government regarding this?

Yes, we have received full support from BGMEA as well as the government. Currently, we are



Workers inside the facility

having conversations with the government regarding the import costs of recyclable materials and imposing a ban on the export of jhut (clips) as we are losing our own materials to recycle and reuse. We are hopeful of achieving a positive outcome.

What is your future plan?

Our goal is to represent Bangladesh as a circular economy hub and as previously said, being a pioneer of the textile industry in Bangladesh, we want to hold up to our standard by being a role model for other textile businesses and we look forward to serving as an icon for Bangladesh's ever-growing textile sector.

Why do you think Bangladeshi manufacturers are not into the recycling era yet? What is lacking?

Bangladeshi manufacturers are yet to have fully embraced the recycling era, for which one possible reason is a lack of awareness or

understanding of the benefits of recycling. Another possible reason is the lack of infrastructure and resources for recycling. Also, regulatory barriers or incentives may discourage or not promote recycling. We think that all these factors combined may be contributing to the slow adoption of recycling by Bangladeshi manufacturers.

How brands and development partners can help us in building Bangladesh as a recycling hub?

Brands and development partners can help by providing financial support, creating demand for recycled materials, and developing adequate recycling policies. Also, building awareness and supporting research and innovations will have a great impact.

What will be your suggestion/

recommendation to the entrepreneurs?

Entrepreneurs in Bangladesh can explore opportunities in recycling. They can also collaborate with other businesses, innovate and educate consumers about sustainability.

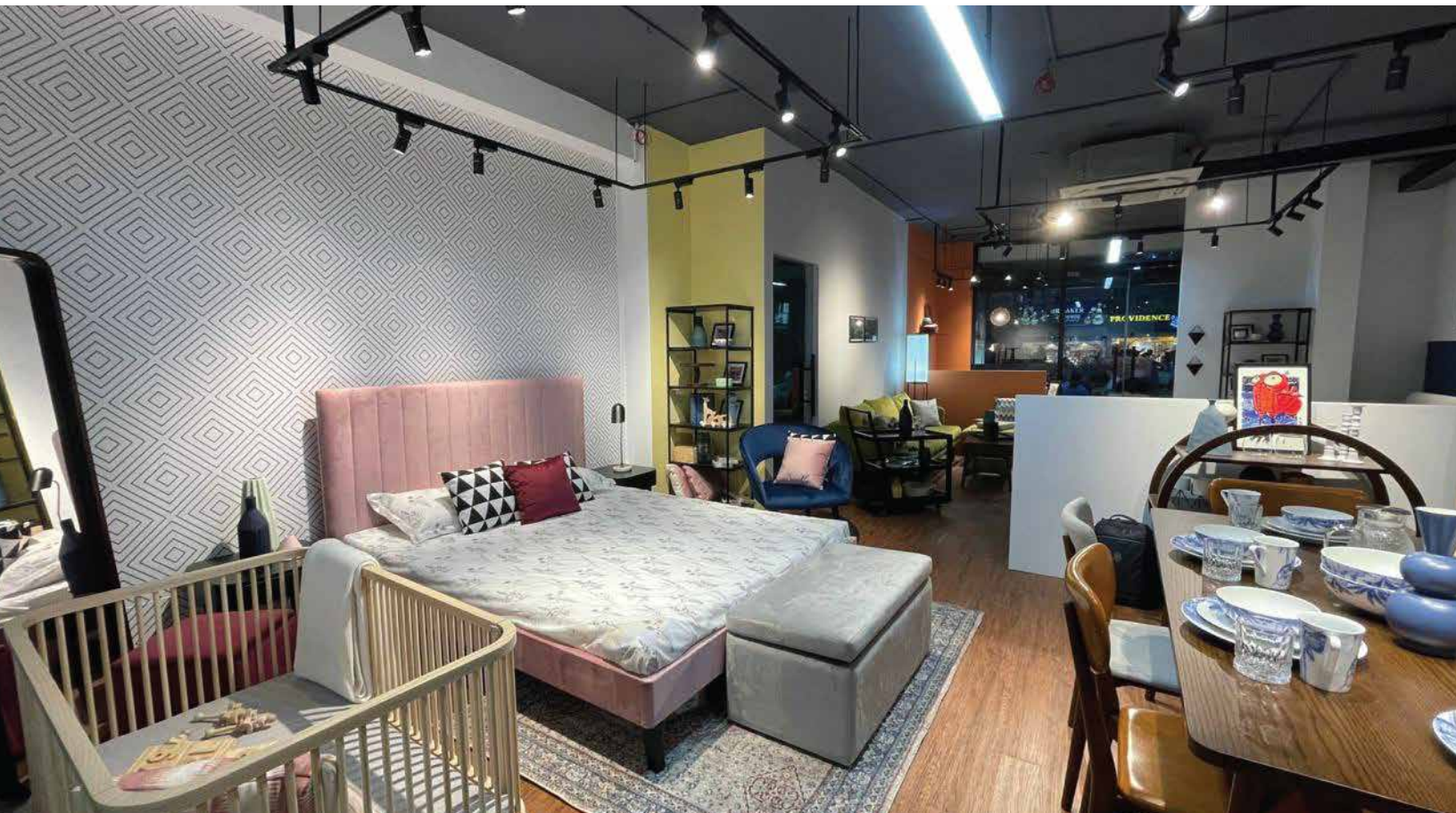
Why do you think Bangladesh should seriously consider exploring this untapped area?

Bangladesh should seriously consider this untapped area due to its environmental and economic benefits, growing international pressure, and the potential for a competitive advantage. By embracing recycling, Bangladesh can demonstrate its commitment to sustainability, create employment opportunities, and contribute to economic development. **A**

Content Source: Recover TM, Bangladesh Export Import Company (BEXIMCO) & others

A Promising Furniture and Lifestyle Brand

ISHO



Bangladesh's economy is moving forward at a stable pace. So far the readymade garments (RMG) industry has been a key driver of the economy in Bangladesh by contributing 11% of the national GDP and 83% to the country's total export. Over the four decades of journey, the achievements of this sector are remarkable. However, to sustain economic growth amidst the current global landscape, Bangladesh needs to improve the competitiveness of several other promising sectors. In recent years, few sectors other than garments are beginning to grow more quickly in Bangladesh. Furniture is one of them. The furniture industry of Bangladesh has developed significantly in the past decade by keeping pace with the evolving tastes and needs of the customers. After meeting the demand of local customers, manufacturers in this sector are also exporting to other countries, which has added value to Bangladesh's export basket. In this issue, the Apparel Story meets **Rayana Hossain**, founder and CEO of Dhaka's most progressive furniture and lifestyle brand, ISHO, which has achieved phenomenal growth within just 4 years. She shares her thoughts on the prospects of the furniture industry in Bangladesh, the challenges of the sector, and the way forward.



ISHO Furniture Store in Dhaka

Please tell us about the journey of ISHO.

ISHO came into being in 2019 after I moved back to Bangladesh. I spent a significant amount of time researching the market needs, individual tastes and preferences, and feasible and scalable concepts that would appeal to the local market. We conducted surveys, had focus group discussions, and analyzed various data points before moving forward - which is how we streamline our designs into 4 different design languages. We wanted to build a brand that

resonates with our audience as we stick to our belief in reinventing the use of spaces and creating unforgettable experiences for people in their daily lives.

For affordability and to take the concept of contextualization a step further, it is important to be able to manufacture locally. This is how we manufacture with a factory with 300 workers.

ISHO's journey began as an online platform on May 25th, 2019, and launched our flagship store in November 2019, just prior to Covid 19. Despite the challenges of COVID, in the middle of the pandemic, we



Rayana Hossain
Founder and CEO
ISHO

achieved 450% growth. The world witnessed an overnight change impacting lifestyle businesses, in terms of people's buying patterns, consumer behaviors, and tastes, and we were listening and offering to our customers that led to our growth and brought about a positive impact on our company.

Within a short period of time, we've established an omnichannel presence that aims to create a seamless shopping experience through our eCommerce website, social platforms and flagship store, and experience centers, as we continue to grow with an ambition to change the trajectory of Bangladesh's furniture market.

What was your motivation behind entering the furniture business?

With my background in architecture and art and interest in design and innovation, I was motivated to start my own Home & Furniture brand that combines functionality with aesthetics, a brand that is global



with contextual designs, based on data and people's needs, wants, and aspirations.

The gap in the market is evident as I realized that people are not well-acquainted with products of international standards or those who are exposed are not finding the modern products that they desire. As the tastes and preferences of the new-age customer are constantly evolving, it is imperative to add more options to the market to fulfill such demand. We aim to offer high-quality products to customers at reasonable prices and help them transition into a modern and global aesthetic lifestyle.

There are several local furniture brands in Bangladesh right

now. What makes ISHO stand out from those brands and what makes it unique?

ISHO has always sought to revolutionize the industry by coming up with fresh designs, concepts, and products that haven't been experienced before. We're always working towards setting new benchmarks through our initiatives and campaigns in Bangladesh. With fully-mechanized, end-to-end processes that begin from locally sourcing fully-aged hardwood to crafting every component of the product, to producing a fully-finished, ready-to-use product that's delivered within just 7 days, our brand has revolutionized the

industry with its design philosophy and brought a shift in the way people buy furniture.

With our design philosophy merging the past, present, and future, ISHO's approach unites cultural-historic influence, contemporary trends, and innovation to create furniture for the wider community that minimizes its impact on the environment.

Our omnichannel strategy has allowed the brand to offer a cohesive and consistent brand experience across all channels. It is about connecting the dots across digital and physical presence for the purpose of providing interactive experiences to the consumer.

Can you please tell us a bit about the products of ISHO? Who are the target customers?

All furniture and products at ISHO are meticulously researched to offer world-class quality at affordable prices. A company that started with a presence online with only 22 collections and 380 products, ISHO presently boasts a total of 50+ furniture collections with over 4500+ products, offering a wide range of modern designs that match global standards like no other. Presenting a wide array of colours in its choice of fabrics, faux leather, and solid wood, ISHO's furniture is crafted with clean lines and a sleek finish. So, you can make every corner and every day wonderful by shopping from our collections ranging across home, lifestyle, office, and many other categories. ISHO's target consumers are modern shoppers who are up to date with the evolving market trends. Also, those who are looking to shop for designs with minimal and sleek aesthetics that match international standards. Our customer segment comprises people who desire a modern lifestyle, as we envision catering to mass-premium audiences.



Can you please describe the Business Process of your company? How do you manage your supply chain?

The concept of supply chain management deals with the entire business process. Being at the center of an organization, it has correspondence with each of its departments. Our proficient supply chain team accurately prepares and executes business needs, which means looking after sales demand, planning, procurement from local and international sources, production, and logistics. Stringent long-term planning backed with the prioritization of quality materials helps us to stay ahead of the curve. Added to this is our resolve to stay relevant by constantly reinventing ourselves with our unique collections and designs. The success of our supply chain management lies in its resilience and ability to source high-quality materials to meet the demands of the business. At ISHO, investing in sustainable and

eco-friendly raw materials is of prime importance and so is the need to maintain an integrated and data-driven supply chain system. Keeping up with modern times, demand planning, procurement, production, logistics, and other relevant business functions have come under the remit of the Supply Chain, adding more value to it. This integrated supply chain is more data-centric and helps businesses visualize the bottlenecks of business processes with proper logic and analysis.

Does ISHO use local designers on their design team? What inspires the product designs and innovations of ISHO?

We have our own in-house design team that focuses on design coupled with data-driven research and techniques which help in addressing the unique needs of the changing society. What also sets us apart

from the rest is our ability to in-house design and launch the products within a week due to vertical integration from manufacturing to marketing and sales.

The design of each one of our products is backed by solid R&D and derives inspiration from prominent design movements and architectural features observed in different parts of the world.

What are the main scopes of your business? What market prospects of local furniture brands do you see in Bangladesh? What are your suggestions for future entrepreneurs in this sector?

I want ISHO to have an impact rather than necessarily last long in terms of its current model. One of the primary things I want ISHO to achieve is to be adaptable because



the world is constantly changing. Having stated that my short- and long-term goals are for it to become a recognized global brand and a household name.

Bangladesh has been concentrating on producing goods for international companies for many years. For domestic multinational brands, there is a sizable market, particularly with apparel and furniture. Our Bangladeshi teams handle everything, from design to sourcing to production. I firmly believe that local companies can actually use their advantages and scale to new heights if they have the correct goal, narrative, and long-term perspective.

I want to encourage aspiring business owners to never give up on their goals. Also, there is no rigid formula for success. The most valuable resource a company will have is its employees, so for all founders, that must be where their journey begins. You must exercise patience and believe in both the process and your own vision.

Do you export or see any possibility of exporting?

This is not something that we're looking at the moment as we're focusing on expanding further in Dhaka and aiming for a top spot in the B2C & B2B sector.

Future plans for ISHO furniture?

This year was a big one for us, having achieved a major milestone with the successful launch of our ISHO Beachclub | A Pop-Up in Mawa. The choice of location, the curated menu and the overall vibe of the pop-up have been very well-received by people from Dhaka and we'll continue to delight our customers with global flavors with a local touch. We also collaborated with the eminent and highly-awarded Kanak Chanpa Chakma to launch our limited-edition Char Nari home collection which was also

Bangladesh has been concentrating on producing goods for international companies for many years. For domestic multinational brands, there is a sizable market, particularly with apparel and furniture. Our Bangladeshi teams handle everything, from design to sourcing to production. I firmly believe that local companies can actually use their advantages and scale to new heights if they have the correct goal, narrative, and long-term perspective.

appreciated by many.

As a company, we aim to collaborate with like-minded brands and entities and reach out to a larger captive audience through our innovative products and campaigns.

What type of policy support do you expect from the Bangladesh government?

The furniture being imported from China is one of the pressure factors for ISHO. The government has imposed significant import taxes to protect the local industry, which is really good. Unfortunately, the government has also imposed exceptionally high taxes on the raw materials used to make furniture. Nobody obtains a good product, in this case, reasonably priced good quality furniture, if you impose excessive taxes on both the raw materials and the finished goods. I believe the policies in this sector need to be similar to the RMG sector to get a chance to flourish as well. 

Bandarban: A heaven on earth

Bandarban is an enchanting area and every site in this magical hill district is as beautiful as it gets! This is the place where lofty mountains embrace a heavenly mist and countless waterfalls, streams and brooks cascade gently down the rich green hills in melodious harmony. The undulating landscape offers eye-soothing greenery in blissful silence. The infinite natural beauty and the warm, welcoming reception the 11 tribal communities, who live in the hills, offer unforgettable experiences for travellers of all ages.



Golden Temple of Bandarban

Perched atop a 200 feet-high hill in Bandarban, Buddha Dhatu Jadi, more widely known as 'The Golden Temple', is a sacred Buddhist religious site. Construction of the Golden Temple was initiated in 1995, and it took five years to complete.

The aesthetic beauty of the temple, fashioned on architectural designs in Myanmar and Thailand, is so impressive that it has become a popular tourist spot for followers of all beliefs. This is a place of worship where sanity, serenity and aestheticism prevail for believers and non-believers alike.



Bayazid Bostami Shrine

Bayazid Bostami shrine, situated on a hillock at Nasirabad in Chattogram city, is a historic place and an integral part of the country's spiritual heritage. Built in commemoration of Sultanul Arefin Baizid Bostami, a famous Persian Sufi (saint) born in Bostam region of Iran, the history of the shrine goes back around 1200 years. It was built in the eighth century where the saint stayed during his sojourn in Chattogram. The shrine area comprises of a tomb surrounded by a brick structure together with a mosque and a large pond. Legend has it the saint caught genies, turned them into turtles and released them into the pond in front of the shrine.



Old Dhaka's Iftar extravaganza

The old part of Dhaka is renowned for its traditional culinary delights that emerge in all their glory and kaleidoscopic colors during the month of Ramadan. The city streets become like one gigantic open buffet, offering a vast selection of various mouth-watering dishes. Just being there is a delightful experience. Chawkbazar lies at the heart of this iftar carnival with more than 200 makeshift shops and foldaway stalls selling a wide variety of delicious iftar items, many home-made and rare most of the year. If you don't mind the hustle and bustle, having iftar there would be highly rewarding and a totally unforgettable experience. **A**

Ensuring Environmental, Social and Economic Balancing for Long-term Competitiveness



The environmental cost of the fashion industry forces us to rethink the way it is operating, and underlines the need for more sustainable business models and practices. But manufacturers cannot ensure them for a long time without upholding economic sustainability. The Apparel Story meets young entrepreneur **Fakir Rafsanuzzaman**, Director, Fakir Apparels Ltd. to hear his thoughts on how the apparel industry in Bangladesh should proceed to ensure environmental, social and economic balancing in the business process to remain competitive in the long run.



FAKIR RAFSANUZZAMAN

The evolution of the fashion industry over the last decade has been largely associated with fast-paced trends, throw-away culture and overconsumption. The industry is responsible for a wide range of environmental issues and the need to address these issues has never been more pressing. Now more than ever, ensuring sustainability across the fashion industry has not only become a moral obligation to our future generations, but also an

economic imperative. In reality, economic and environmental sustainability are not mutually exclusive, but is in-fact often very closely linked.

The fashion industry is a major contributor to the global economy that employs millions of people worldwide and generates billions of dollars annually. Manufacturers cannot be expected to adopt more sustainable business models and practices unless they can remain economically viable; making it very challenging and important to find the right balance. The rising environmental cost of fashion is clearly apparent and there are a number of ways many companies have taken initiatives to achieve this balance. This includes using more sustainable materials, reducing waste, adopting renewable energy, harnessing technology and AI to improve efficiencies, exploring innovations and most importantly, promoting circularity. It is essential to make the shift in mindset from short-term thinking to long-term planning to adopt more sustainable business practices and models based on impact and viability. The BGMEA and other governing bodies around the world have taken comprehensive initiatives to promote environmental sustainability in the industry; however, the mindset shift starts from a micro-level and the shift is already happening. It is important to set clear and comprehensive sustainability goals that align

manufacturers with their business objectives and strategies while promoting innovation across the organization.

Key collaborations in the fashion industry has enabled brands to share critical knowledge and data while leveraging collective influence to make strides towards true sustainability and avoid “greenwashing.” Collaborative projects also facilitate joint research and development of sustainable materials, technologies and processes that can prove to be very valuable for both brands and suppliers. At Fakir Apparels, we have on-going collaborations with governmental and non-governmental organizations to compile knowledge and data to make more informed decisions for real impact – for example, we have been working with PACT-STWI (Sustainable Textile Water Initiative) since 2014 to focus on water and energy efficiencies across the value chain to reduce water usage and wastage. Through joint efforts, we were able to significantly and consistently reduce our water consumption in wet processing plants year-on-year to beyond industry benchmark levels. We also continuously work with brands to develop more sustainable materials to substitute conventional materials without compromising quality and performance – this kind of hands-on collaborative projects have allowed us to grow our use of

more sustainable fibers, moving away from virgin fibers while building long term partnerships with brands based on our collective goal.

Fakir Apparels have recently collaborated with Smartex AI, a technology company, to implement advanced, traceable and sustainable systems for our circular knitting machines to detect quality defects in real time. In the pilot project, we aim to reduce knitting overproduction and waste by minimizing quality defects through high-definition cameras and machine learning algorithms, while optimizing knitting production. We are able to leverage real time quality data to identify and prioritize high impact areas to improve quality and consistency of fabrics while reducing the carbon footprints from the same knitting machines. Brands are also increasingly known to leverage AI to significantly reduce optimum inventory levels and efficiently source materials, so it is important for manufacturers to understand how they can add value to the brands by using advanced tools to become more transparent and offer services beyond products to our customers.

Renewable energy is a key driver to reduce our industry carbon footprint and it is evident that manufacturers in Bangladesh are now implementing rooftop solar projects at a larger scale where the collective impact will be massive in few years' time. Based on our goal to reduce 50% of our carbon emissions by 2030, Fakir Apparels has installed a total rooftop solar power project of a total capacity of around 3MW, of which close to 1.0MW is now operational; this plays a key role in incrementally achieving that goal.

It is not news that RMG manufacturers are increasingly facing the pressure of rising costs, slow demand and price competition, now more than ever. Therefore, although finding the right balance between environmental, social and economic sustainability can be a major challenge for manufacturers

Renewable energy is a key driver to reduce our industry carbon footprint and it is evident that manufacturers in Bangladesh are now implementing rooftop solar projects at a larger scale where the collective impact will be massive in few years' time. Based on our goal to reduce 50% of our carbon emissions by 2030

in the short run, it is essential for long term success.

It is important to look at the bigger picture and the vision of the company. Manifesting this vision helps form a framework to prioritize tasks and act on the goal based on impact. Setting specific, measurable and incrementally attainable goals can enable manufacturers to identify areas for improvement, prioritize goals and develop strategies to achieve them while meeting performance targets as well. Furthermore, collaborations with NGOs and other welfare bodies can also allow manufacturers to further identify high impact areas and execute focused initiatives at grassroots level – this helps narrow the focus down to potentially impactful and improvement areas in order to prioritize investments accordingly.

One of the ways many companies have been able to balance environmental, social and economic sustainability is by encouraging accountability and transparency across the supply chain.

Manufacturers must begin to enforce all tier suppliers to disclose key data pertaining to environment and social impacts of their business

activities and products to build trust between customers and other stakeholders. This ensures that manufacturers are aware and accountable for their actions by maintaining transparency from fiber to customer. This also enables manufacturers to identify specific shortcomings in the value chain and take action swiftly to work towards the goal.

Encouraging innovations across the organization is key to remain competitive in terms of price and value in the long run. Social innovations that promote training, inclusion and empowerment are abundant across many RMG factories in Bangladesh and has helped change lives and livelihoods of people, families, and local communities. Fakir Apparels offers fundamental financial literacy programs to our employees, particularly women so they are able to take more informed decision to save, plan, budget and invest their earnings wisely. Our studies have shown that these programs have built financial resilience and independence among people, especially women spanning across local communities. Beyond our employees, the result of these programs has been far-reaching and impactful and has translated to better productivity in the workplace and better relationships between stakeholders across all tiers. The global RMG industry is at a crossroads today. It is at a point where innovative thinking and a holistic approach that considers business impact on people, planet and profits is required to break boundaries of conventional norms for its own survival. By strategically prioritizing goals for environmental sustainability and social welfare, manufacturers can balance their goals while considering economic viability and begin to make long strides towards true sustainability. Over time, manufacturers will be able to reap the benefits of a more resilient and sustainable supply chain, new brand identity with purpose, improved profitability – and most importantly, a more sustainable world. 🌱

A Torchbearer of Humanism

Kangal Harinath

One of the significant personalities of his time, **Harinath Majumdar**, better known as Kangal Harinath (1833-1896) was a famous Baul, journalist, teacher, philanthropist and spiritualist of the 19th century. Through the power of music and writing, he provoked people to nurture humanity, patriotism and engage in social welfare. He also played a colossal role as a rebel against British colonial rulers. Besides, he is fondly remembered as the editor of Grambarta Prakashika, an influential nineteenth-century periodical magazine, and founder of one of the earliest printing machines in Bangladesh.



Born on 22 July 1833 (5 Shraavan in Bengali 1240) in a poor family at Kumarkhali in Kushtia, Kangal Harinath struggled all his life for the welfare of the common people and to protect them from oppression. Under his active role and influence, the people of Kumarkhali and the villages adjacent to it had played a famous role in the anti-Nil-Chaash (indigo cultivation) and anti-tax movement.

Initially, Harinath used to work as a teacher and a bill collector at Nil Kuthi (indigo storage) to earn a living. But after witnessing the cruelty involved in indigo cultivation, he gave up his job as a bill collector and played a vehement role in the indigo resistance movement. After quitting his job at Nil Kuthi, he started writing in Ishwar Gupta's "Songbad Provakor" magazine. Then in April 1863, he brought out his own magazine – the "Grambarta Prokashika", which took a direct and strong stance against indigo cultivation. At first, he used to write down the whole magazine or sometimes get it printed from Kolkata, but when its popularity rose, he set up a printing press at his own house in Kumarkhali in 1873. The printing press was confiscated and sold at auction by British Rulers to silence Kangal Harinath's voice against indigo cultivation. However, a businessman named Muthuranath Babu had bought the printing press from the auction and later handed it over to Kangal Harinath. Since then, the printing press at Kangal Kuthi came to be known as MN Press.



kangalharinath.org.bd

Despite various adversities, Kungal Harinath kept publishing 'Grambarta Prakashika' for 22 years. Initially it was published monthly, then fortnightly and then weekly. However, eventually he had to stop publication of the paper due to lack of finance and because of the strict printing regulations of the government.

However, Kungal and his "Grambarta Prokashika" is still remembered as a pioneer of rural journalism, while the ancient printing press and the metal letters used for printing are still preserved in Kungal Kutir in Kumarkhali as a witness to our history and glorious resistance movement against the British Raj.

In 1854, Kungal Harinath had established a girls' school at Kumarkhali—which is still spreading the light of education and knowledge.

Here it needs to be mentioned that Harinath Fakir was a disciple of Lalon and immensely contributed to the proliferation of Baul songs. Baul king Lalon was born in a village near Kumarkhali called "Bharara". Kungal and Lalon had a great degree

of closeness. Inspired by Lalon, Kungal's disciples formed a Baul group.

Kungal wrote about 1000 Baul songs. His lyrics and tunes were very simple but his thoughts were profound. In his songs Harinath introduced himself as kungal (fakir or beggar) and the word became part of his name. One of his famous songs is 'Hari din to gelo sandhya halo, par karo amare' (O Lord, the day is done, evening has come, help me across safely).

Thus he played a remarkable role to keep harmony in ethnicity and society. With humor and thought provoking lyrics, he tried to remove the painful scars of ethnic tension in society. Therefore, he wrote:

"Blinded by different religions, brothers are fighting with their eyes shut, Open your eyes and see the difference, all are misguided differently; God is one, think for once – think in a different mood".

Harinath wrote 18 books, among them, Vijaybasanta (1859), Charucharitra (1863), Kavitaikumudi (1866), Vijaya (1869), Kavikalpa (1870), Akrur Sangbad (1873), Sabitri Natika

(1874), Chittachapala (1876), Kangaler Brahmandaved (1887-95) and Matrmahima (1896).

Besides, travel writer Roy Jolodhor Sen, historian Akshay Kumar Maitreya, Mir Mosharraf Hossein of the famous Bishad Shindhu, Tantrik devotee Shibchandra Biddyanath and Dinendra Kumar Roy are amongst the many intellectuals who were influenced by Kungal Harinath. Harinath Majumdar died on 16 April 1896. After death he was buried in a room of his own house.

Under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, a magnificent Kungal Harinath Memorial Museum was established in Kumarkhali town near Kungal Kuthi in 2017. Built at a cost of around 8 crore taka, the two-storied museum houses a museum, pictures of Harinath Majumdar and various poets and writers, exact copies of printing machines, metal types used in the printing press etc.

Kungal's works, especially his songs can be a great catalyst in opening our inner eyes, thus bringing back humanity in society. **A**

Committed to Fashion, Quality, and Comfort

TEXMART



When it comes to the fashion industry, Bangladesh has long been known for its role as a manufacturing hub for global brands. However, in recent years, there has been a growing focus on local fashion brands that are not only made in Bangladesh but also designed and marketed for the Bangladeshi market. One such brand is “Texmart”, which has been making waves in the local fashion scene since its inception in 1998. Texmart is a clothing brand that offers a wide range of products including but not limited to t-shirts,



shirts, pants, dresses, and accessories for both men, women, and children of all ages. The brand prides itself on using high-quality materials and producing garments that are both stylish and comfortable to wear. With the expertise of their team of Bangladeshi designers, the brand features fusion ware which has been fine-tuned over the last two and half decades.

With its long history in the market, Texmart has already established itself as a major player in the Bangladeshi fashion industry. The



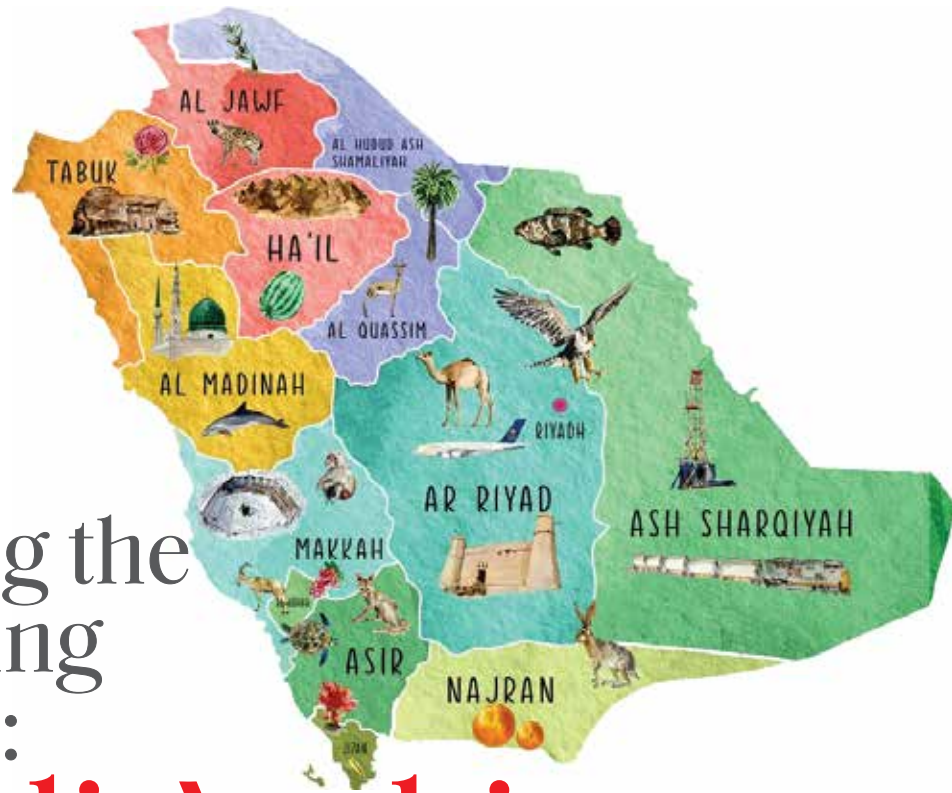
brand has a growing network of stores across the capital city, and also sells its products online through its website and various e-commerce platforms. Texmart has also gained a loyal following on social media, where it regularly posts updates about its latest collections and sustainability initiatives. Texmart has also placed a strong emphasis on marketing and branding. The brand's marketing efforts are focused on promoting its ethical and sustainable practices, as well as its commitment to local culture and traditions.

So what is it about Texmart that has resonated so strongly with Bangladeshi consumers? For one thing, Texmart offers a fresh and modern take on traditional Bangladeshi fashion. Texmart's designs are inspired by local culture and traditions, but are also infused with a contemporary flair that appeals to younger consumers. As a Bangladeshi brand, Texmart has a



deep understanding of local culture and traditions, and incorporates these elements into its product design. This localized approach towards fashion has helped the brand appeal to Bangladeshi consumers who appreciate products that reflect their cultural identity. Another factor that sets Texmart apart is its focus on inclusivity. The brand offers a wide range of sizes and styles to cater to customers of all shapes and preferences, and has also featured models from diverse backgrounds in its marketing campaigns. By doing so, Texmart has positioned itself as a brand that is accessible and welcoming to all. The brand has continued to innovate and evolve in response to changing trends and customer preferences, and is constantly seeking new ways to differentiate itself in the market. With its strong focus on sustainability, ethics, and social responsibility, Texmart is well-positioned to capture a growing segment of Bangladeshi consumers who are looking for more than just trendy clothing - they are looking for brands that align with their values and beliefs. **A**

Tapping the Emerging Market: Saudi Arabia



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is the largest economy of the Middle East. It is one of the funder members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) established in 1981. Currently, Saudi Arabia is the 2nd leading trading partner and a major source of investment for Bangladesh in the Middle East. The bilateral trade and investment between Bangladesh and

Saudi Arabia is gradually growing and the diplomatic relationship between the two countries also developed in recent years. In fiscal year 2021-22, the total trade between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia was worth US\$1.98 billion. Bangladesh mostly export edible vegetables & certain root to Saudi Arabia while the share of apparel item was almost 50% in the mentioned year.


Demographic and Economic Overview of Saudi Arabia



Population:
35.94
Billion



GDP per capita
(current US\$) :
23,185.9



GNI per capita
(current US\$):
21,540



Capital:
Riyadh



Major Sea Ports:
Ad Dammam, Al Jubayl, Jeddah, King Abdulla, Yanbu'

Source: The World Factbook – CIA & World Bank



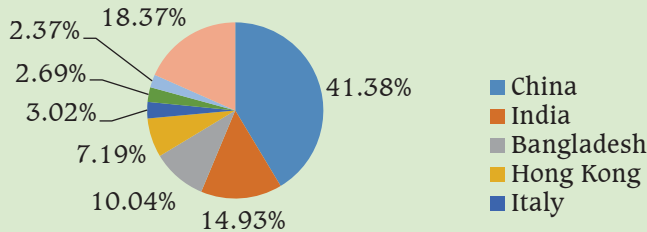
Bilateral Trade

Table -1: Bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Saudi Arabia (Value in million USD)

Year	BD's Export to Saudi Arabia	BD's Import from Saudi Arabia	Trade Balance
2017-18	205.32	807.00	-601.68
2018-19	249.73	996.72	-746.98
2019-20	262.88	1091.18	-828.30
2020-21	261.12	979.53	-718.40
2021-22	290.64	1693.26	-1402.62

Source: Bangladesh Bank and Export Promotion Bureau (EPB)

Figure 1: Saudi Arabia's major source of apparel imports in % in 2021



Saudi Arabia's Clothing Import from the World

The apparel import of Saudi from the world was USD 3.91 billion in 2021 whilst the share of Bangladesh was 10.04%. China holds the top position where Bangladesh was in the 3rd position after China and India.

Bangladesh's Clothing Export to Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia is one of the non-traditional apparel export markets for Bangladesh. In last 10 year (2012-22), Bangladesh's export to Saudi Arabia has increased by 14.22% annually. In FY 2021-22, Bangladesh's total Garments export to Saudi was USD 143.71million with 12.26%. Though in FY 2020-21, it has shown 47.76% year-over-year growth. The export value of knit and woven items was USD 85.73 million and USD 57.98m respectively. The export growth shows a fluctuating trend in the past years.

Table -2: Saudi Arabia's Clothing Import from the World and share in 2021 (Value in million USD)

Exporters	2019	2020	2021	Share in 2021
World	3860.16	3019.07	3908.79	
China	1790.48	1336.71	1617.38	41.38%
India	577.65	462.88	583.68	14.93%
Bangladesh	292.57	244.03	392.54	10.04%
Hong Kong	14.64	97.25	281.15	7.19%
Italy	79.72	65.49	117.89	3.02%
Pakistan	105.88	102.51	105.22	2.69%
Viet Nam	90.22	90.37	92.77	2.37%
Others	909.01	619.83	718.15	18.37%

Source: ITC Trademap

Table 3: BD's Knit, Woven and Total apparel Export to Saudi Arabia (Value in million USD)*

Year	Knit	Woven	Total	Growth
2012-13	22.39	24.24	46.63	22.58%
2013-14	24.51	22.68	47.18	1.19%
2014-15	25.98	29.65	55.62	17.88%
2015-16	33.87	41.97	75.85	36.36%
2016-17	25.98	46.84	72.83	-3.98%
2017-18	46.26	29.35	75.61	3.82%
2018-19	49.85	38.33	88.19	16.63%
2019-20	47.28	39.36	86.64	-1.76%
2020-21	65.32	62.70	128.02	47.76%
2021-22	85.73	57.98	143.71	12.26%

* Data may differ between EPB and ITC | Source: Export Promotion Bureau (EPB)





Saudi Arabia's cotton & non-cotton clothing import share in 2021

Saudi Arabia imported USD 3.90 billion worth of apparel from the world where the share of cotton made and non-cotton made items was about 50:50. On the other hand, the share of non-cotton items by Saudi Arabia from Bangladesh was 34.27% only of total apparel imports while the share of cotton items was almost 66%.

Figure-2: Share of Saudi Arabia's cotton & non-cotton clothing import from world

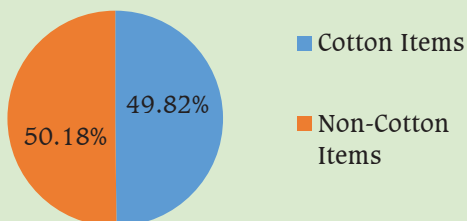
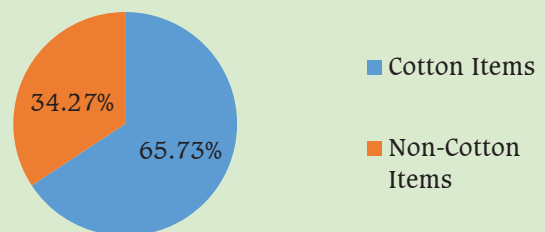


Figure-3: Share of Saudi Arabia's cotton & non-cotton clothing import from BD



Source: ITC Trademap (Data differs between ITC and EPB)



Saudi Arabia's Major Clothing Items Import from Different Countries in the World

Following Table-4 shows the top 20 clothing items imported by Saudi Arabia from Bangladesh and competitor countries of Bangladesh in 2021 and the Compound Average Growth Rate (CAGR) of those clothing import by Saudi Arabia from the world during 2016-2021.

Table -4: Saudi Arabia's top 20 imported items from the world and major countries in 2021 (Value in MN USD)										
HS Code	Items	World	China	India	BD	Hong Kong	Italy	Pakistan	Viet Nam	CAGR of SA's import from world (2016-2021)
620442	W/G cotton woven dresses	483.24	58.67	19.93	4.61	240.33	30.25	4.12	6.30	81.37%
610910	Cotton knitted T-shirts	305.29	74.27	95.55	77.27	0.04	4.53	3.14	4.39	9.19%
610832	W/G MMF knitted nightdresses & pyjamas	125.73	107.73	11.73	2.94	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.16	52.67%
620443	W/G synthetic woven dresses	124.39	58.61	15.55	2.51	1.59	9.78	0.16	1.67	20.08%
611120	Cotton knitted Babies' garments	113.18	27.30	56.47	11.15	0.01	1.31	0.92	1.16	-8.01%
620342	M/B cotton woven trousers	95.53	13.15	11.87	37.22	0.01	0.53	22.73	0.78	18.97%
621490	Non cotton woven Shawls, scarves & mufflers	91.37	32.28	41.74	7.72	0.00	0.13	5.31	1.00	64.46%
611490	Non cotton knitted Special garments for professional, sporting	86.00	31.57	12.78	18.04	0.00	0.14	3.20	5.32	9.89%
610990	Non cotton knitted T-shirts	85.66	57.53	6.02	5.71	0.03	0.51	0.62	2.85	-2.99%
611020	Cotton knitted Jerseys, pullovers & cardigans	78.69	21.13	11.50	15.27	0.05	2.22	6.78	3.05	10.67%
611420	Cotton knitted Special garments	73.62	6.83	4.50	3.79	37.52	1.25	1.29	2.99	87.34%
610342	M/B cotton knitted trousers	72.71	13.80	21.03	17.61	0.01	0.64	7.98	1.65	47.71%
621142	W/G cotton woven tracksuits	67.21	15.04	11.05	7.46	0.01	0.38	2.68	13.12	43.68%
620449	W/G non cotton woven dresses	65.75	45.83	7.35	2.04	0.00	1.80	0.30	0.37	-7.64%
610711	M/B cotton knitted underpants & briefs	60.87	47.31	5.72	3.71	0.00	0.03	0.66	0.28	34.44%
620462	W/G cotton woven trousers & bib	59.35	11.24	6.55	16.54	0.07	0.30	10.73	1.07	-8.58%
621133	M/B MMF woven tracksuits	55.58	40.29	1.34	0.12	0.00	0.12	0.00	6.26	-12.68%
621710	Non cotton woven Made-up clothing accessories	54.98	17.45	0.34	0.46	0.20	17.23	0.47	0.98	14.56%
611030	MMF knitted Jerseys, pullovers & cardigans	54.29	35.24	0.53	8.07	0.01	0.54	0.83	0.70	1.97%
621210	Non cotton woven Brassieres	54.22	37.92	0.59	8.00	0.00	0.07	0.00	2.25	12.80%

Source: ITC Trademap

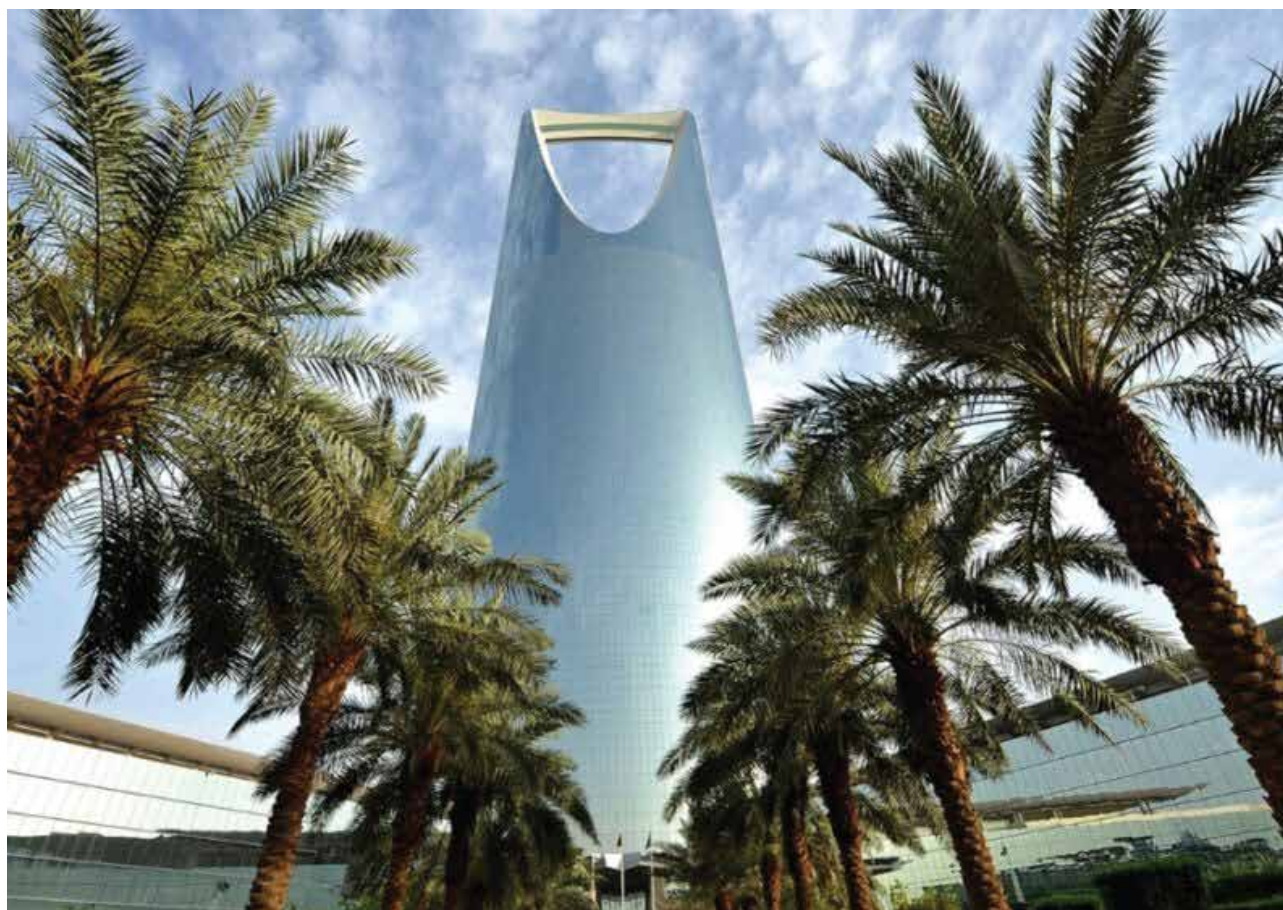


Table-5 shows the major apparel items imported by Saudi Arabia from the world which has had positive annual growth in the last 5 years (from 2016-2021) before Covid. But the shares of Bangladesh in these items are comparatively less. So Bangladesh has the potential to export those items to Saudi Arabia as they have high demands for those products.

Table -5: Major apparel items imported by Saudi Arabia in 2021 with positive CAGR & the share of BD

HS code	Items	Saudi Arabia's import from world	Saudi Arabia's import from BD	BD's share in Saudi Arabia's total import	CAGR of Saudi Arabia's import from world during 2016 -21*
620442	W/G cotton woven dresses	46.17	4.61	0.95%	81.37%
620343	M/B synthetic woven trousers	52.23	4.36	9.44%	9.49%
610443	W/G synthetic knitted dresses	73.62	4.25	8.14%	27.24%
611420	Cotton knitted Special garments for professional, sporting	60.87	3.79	5.15%	87.34%
610711	M/B cotton knitted underpants & briefs	48.42	3.71	6.09%	34.44%
610831	W/G cotton knitted nightdresses & pyjamas	37.14	3.14	6.48%	26.79%
620822	W/G MMF woven nightdresses & pyjamas	125.73	3.11	8.38%	53.63%
610832	W/G MMF knitted nightdresses & pyjamas	124.39	2.94	2.34%	52.67%
620443	W/G synthetic woven dresses	41.65	2.51	2.02%	20.08%
620463	W/G synthetic woven trousers	0.00	2.44	5.87%	8.90%

Market Access

The Saudi Arabia has adopted the GCC common tariff, and customs duties are fixed at 5% of the CIF value of most products. Currently, Bangladesh has to face a 5% duty for exporting garments to the Saudi Arabia. **A**

BGMEA Organizes an Art Camp



Artists signing on the board

With an aim to promote the culture and heritage of Bangladesh, BGMEA organized an art camp titled “Made in Bangladesh with Pride Art camp 2023” on 30th January, 2023 at its premise. BGMEA has been taking several initiatives for branding the RMG industry and the overall nation and it was a part of that initiative. A total of 62 renowned artists of the country including Monirul Islam, Shahabuddin Ahmed, Hashem Khan, Abul Barq Alvi, Abdus Shakoor Shah, Abdul Mannan, Mohammad Eunus, Jamal



Participants of the BGMEA Art Camp 2023



Renowned Artists participated in the camp

Ahmed, Shishir Bhattacharjee, Farida Zaman, Hamiduzzaman Khan, Naima Haque, Rokeya Sultana, Dhali Al Mamoon, Shahid Kabir, Ahmed Shamsuddoha, Hossain Sheikh Afzal, Mohammad Iqbal, Mostafizul Haque, Mostafa Zaman Mithu, Afrozaa Jamil Konka, Sohana Shahreen were some of those who joined the art camp with spontaneity and great enthusiasm while painting their artworks throughout the day at the BGMEA Complex. The art camp also aimed to celebrate and recognize the contribution of artists, both renowned and upcoming, to making Bangladesh better known internationally through contemporary art. BGMEA recently opened the art gallery in its newly built

headquarters located at Uttara in Dhaka and the paintings will be put on display at the BGMEA Art Gallery for visitors, including foreign dignitaries, ministers, ambassadors, international buyers, and others who often visit BGMEA. The gallery contains art works of eminent artists of Bangladesh and also photos showcasing the beauty of Bangladesh through its rich heritage, culture and abundant natural resources.

Managing Director of World Bank Pays Visit to BGMEA

A high-level delegation of the World Bank led by Axel van Trotsenburg, Managing Director of Operations,

called on BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex in Uttara, Dhaka on January 23. The delegation included Martin Raiser, Vice President, South Asia Region, Abdoulaye Seck, Country Director for Bangladesh and Bhutan; Dandan Chen, Operations Manager for Bangladesh and Bhutan; Yutaka Yoshino, Lead Economist/Program Leader, Martin Holtmann, Country Manager, IFC Bangladesh; Elena Karaban, Manager, External Communication; Barbara Weber, Senior Operation Officer, Country Director's Office; Mehrin Mahbub, Senior External Affairs Officer; Kimberly Versak, Senior External Affairs Officer; Ewa Sobczynska, Senior Operations Officer, Vice President's Office; Hosna Ferdous Sumi, Private Sector



In frame, the whole delegation team with the BGMEA management



Axel van Trotsenburg, Managing Director of Operations, WB posed with Made in Bangladesh Garment



The delegation team planted tree at BGMEA premise

Specialist, TTL Export Competitive for Jobs Project; Suhail Kassim, Senior Economist.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan apprised the World Bank delegation about the future priorities of Bangladesh's RMG industry, including increased focus on moving up the value chain through innovation, product diversification, technology upgradation, and up-killing and re-skilling of the workforce to remain sustainable and cost competitive. He spotlighted the importance of financing SMEs to support their development and as they often cannot avail regular financing schemes due to stringent due diligence. He also sought the support of the World Bank for the RMG industry in the areas of sustainability, skills development, technological upgradation, innovations. ^A

News in Pictures



Her Majesty Mathilde, Queen of Belgium, visited a garment factory in Naraynganj to witness the progress of Bangladesh's RMG industry in social, environmental and economic fronts and its contribution to women empowerment and their welfare. BGMEA President Faruque Hassan accompanied Queen Mathilde during her visit to Fakir Apparels Limited and apprised her of how the apparel industry had been making a difference to millions of people, especially women by creating job opportunities for them, thus paving the way for their inclusion in mainstream economy.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan addressed a stakeholders' roundtable on a topic titled "SWITCH to circular economy for textile value chain, Bangladesh" held in Dhaka. Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh H. E. Charles Whiteley attended the event as chief guest.



A high-level delegation comprising members of the Netherlands Parliament paid a visit to BGMEA and held a meeting with President of the association Faruque Hassan to discuss opportunities of increased collaboration to drive development of Bangladesh's RMG industry in a more sustainable way. BGMEA Vice President Miran Ali was also present in the occasion.



Artists, both renowned and upcoming, participated in an art camp titled, the 'Made in Bangladesh with Pride Art Camp 2023' organized by BGMEA at its headquarters in Uttara, Dhaka as part of its Brand Bangladesh initiative, in addition to its core focus to promote the RMG industry in Bangladesh.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan spoke at a national dialogue on green transition organized by Oxfam in Dhaka where he stressed the need for creating easily-accessible fund and due diligence for the RMG industry, especially SMEs to support in making transition towards green growth. Saber Hossain Chowdhury, MP, Chairman, Parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, attended the event as chief guest.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan spoke at a stakeholder engagement session of "RESPECT" program organized by Tesco, a UK-based retail company, in Dhaka. In his speech he mentioned that global buyers felt more confident and interested in sourcing garments with "Made in Bangladesh" tag because they know their products are manufactured in factories which are safe and environmentally sustainable where workers are empowered and have convenient working atmosphere.



Ambassador of Vietnam to Bangladesh, H. E. Pham Viet Chien, called on BGMEA Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex at Uttara in Dhaka. They had discussions about various issues pertaining to the apparel industry of both countries.



A delegation of Primark and Associated British Foods (ABF) led by Primark CEO Paul Marchant met with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex in Uttara, Dhaka to discuss various issues including the prospects and challenges of Bangladesh's RMG industry, and collaboration to achieve common goals in the area of sustainability. The meeting was also attended by BGMEA Vice President Miran Ali and Director Faisal Samad.

A meeting was held between Mark Green, Executive Vice President, Global Supply Chain, PVH and Faruque Hassan, President, BGMEA, in Dhaka. The meeting was also attended by BGMEA Vice-President Miran Ali, Director Asif Ashraf and Country Manager for PVH Bangladesh Najeeb Sayed.





BGMEA President Faruque Hassan spoke at a winter clothes distribution program in Dhaka where he called on affluent people to extend their generous support to poor people who had been suffering from the bitterly cold winter. Former Commerce Minister Col (retd) Faruk Khan, MP attended the program which was organized at the initiative of former President of BGMEA Md. Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin, MP.

Hajime Suzuki, Chief Director of International Sales and Marketing at RX Japan Ltd. paid a call on BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex in Uttara, Dhaka. They discussed possible collaboration between BGMEA and RX Japan to initiate trade communication between businessmen in Bangladesh and Japan, particularly those who are involved in fashion industry.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan spoke at a program organized by Zeeman textielSupers, a Netherlands-based clothing brand, in Dhaka. In his speech Faruque Hassan said Bangladesh had been developing its capacity to cater to the diversified demands of global buyers, especially value-added products.



A delegation comprising high officials of different ministries of the Nigerian government paid a visit to BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex at Uttara in Dhaka. The delegation included Abubakar Aliyu Aziz, Director General, National Identity Management Commission and Engr. MaskaUbale Ahmed Shehi, Executive Commissioner, Nigerian Communications Commission and others. They had discussions about possible areas of collaboration between Bangladesh and Nigeria to derive bilateral trade benefits, particularly in the apparel and textile industry. BGMEA Director Barrister Vidiya Amrit Khan was also present on the occasion.

A delegation of the Southern Gujarat Chamber Of Commerce and Industry (SGCCI) led by its President Himanshu H. Bodawala called on BGMEA President Faruque Hassan in Dhaka. They discussed possible collaboration between BGMEA and SGCCI to bring business communities of Bangladesh and India closer in order to explore trade opportunities and seize them.



BGMEA and the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN) signed a MoU with an aim to work together to improve the health status of garment workers in Bangladesh, positively impacting their lives. Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA, and Dr. Rudaba Khondker, Country Director of GAIN inked the MoU on behalf of their respective organizations. BGMEA First Vice President Syed Nazrul Islam, Vice President Rakibul Alam Chowdhury, Directors Abdullah Hil Rakib, Md. Imranur Rahman, A.M. Shafiqul Karim (Khokon), and Mohammed Meraj-E-Mostafa (Kaisar) were also present on the occasion. [Ⓐ]

Statistics

Bangladesh's RMG export to world

Value in Million USD

Month	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2022-23 VS 2021-22	2022-23 VS 2020-21
July	3244.94	2887.22	3366.91	16.61%	3.76%
August	2468.02	2753.38	3745.76	36.04%	51.77%
September	2413.42	3418.84	3161.67	-7.52%	31.00%
October	2323.72	3561.71	3678.00	3.27%	58.28%
November	2444.59	3235.05	4378.94	35.36%	79.13%
December	2650.87	4044.50	4665.41	15.35%	76.00%
January	2862.16	4084.58	4421.33	8.24%	54.48%
February	2625.29	3511.72	3943.87	12.31%	50.23%
March					
April					
May					
June					
Total	21033.01	27497.00	31361.89	14.06%	49.11%

Source: EPB

Knitwear

Value in Million USD

Month	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2022-23 VS 2021-22	2022-23 VS 2020-21
July	1750.28	1658.45	1854.15	11.80%	5.93%
August	1364.50	1600.44	2061.53	28.81%	51.08%
September	1348.88	1905.29	1733.78	-9.00%	28.53%
October	1338.22	2045.89	2075.66	1.46%	55.11%
November	1334.47	1775.50	2388.53	34.53%	78.99%
December	1389.82	2176.06	2546.03	17.00%	83.19%
January	1462.94	2112.41	2300.70	8.91%	57.27%
February	1352.64	1795.68	2099.95	16.94%	55.25%
March					
April					
May					
June					
Total	11341.75	15069.72	17060.33	13.21%	50.42%

Source: EPB

Wovenwear

Value in Million USD

Month	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2022-23 VS 2021-22	2022-23 VS 2020-21
July	1494.66	1228.77	1512.76	23.11%	1.21%
August	1103.52	1152.94	1684.23	46.08%	52.62%
September	1064.54	1513.55	1427.89	-5.66%	34.13%
October	985.50	1515.82	1602.34	5.71%	62.59%
November	1110.12	1459.55	1990.41	36.37%	79.30%
December	1261.05	1868.44	2119.38	13.43%	68.06%
January	1399.22	1972.17	2120.63	7.53%	51.56%
February	1272.65	1716.04	1843.92	7.45%	44.89%
March					
April					
May					
June					
Total	9691.26	12427.28	14301.56	15.08%	47.57%

Source: EPB

Bangladesh's RMG Export to World

(July-February 2021-22 & 2022-23)

Export Value in Million USD

	Woven			Knit			Total		
	July-Feb 2021-22	July-Feb 2022-23	Growth %	July-Feb 2021-22	July-Feb 2022-23	Growth %	July-Feb 2021-22	July-Feb 2022-23	Growth %
EU Countries									
Austria	8.34	8.34	0.02	22.04	30.53	38.52	30.38	38.87	27.95
Belgium	149.71	153.98	2.85	317.77	359.58	13.16	467.49	513.57	9.86
Bulgaria	0.16	0.03	-81.94	0.79	0.44	-44.90	0.96	0.47	-51.21
Denmark	258.50	293.55	13.56	499.45	550.81	10.28	757.95	844.35	11.40
Finland	3.01	5.49	82.35	18.16	29.82	64.21	21.17	35.31	66.78
France	516.75	667.77	29.23	966.84	1,226.03	26.81	1483.59	1893.80	27.65
Germany	1,975.30	1,855.54	-6.06	2,702.61	2,774.17	2.65	4677.91	4629.71	-1.03
Greece	7.09	13.49	90.29	27.34	38.50	40.84	34.42	51.99	51.02
Italy	304.67	532.10	74.65	686.61	1,015.74	47.93	991.29	1547.84	56.14
Ireland	46.92	58.16	23.94	90.92	95.41	4.94	137.84	153.57	11.41
Netherlands	400.11	503.50	25.84	555.48	749.46	34.92	955.59	1252.96	31.12
Portugal	16.09	26.56	65.11	36.50	61.85	69.45	52.59	88.41	68.12
Romania	2.25	3.01	33.89	12.10	16.88	39.52	14.35	19.89	38.64
Spain	830.84	938.47	12.95	1,149.09	1,413.59	23.02	1979.94	2352.06	18.79
Sweden	155.78	227.69	46.17	329.97	387.18	17.34	485.75	614.87	26.58
Cyprus	0.16	0.37	136.70	0.69	1.61	133.94	0.85	1.99	134.46
Czech Republic	84.75	133.70	57.76	88.52	121.87	37.67	173.27	255.57	47.50
Estonia	0.05	0.05	-6.79	0.67	1.06	57.61	0.72	1.11	52.99
Hungary	19.10	35.27	84.7	65.25	114.26	75.10	84.35	149.53	77.26
Latvia	0.12	0.29	138.1	0.59	0.59	-0.75	0.71	0.88	22.93
Lithuania	0.15	0.17	11.65	0.06	0.11	93.04	0.21	0.28	34.25
Malta	0.02	0.08	363.87	0.08	0.29	260.41	0.10	0.38	278.95
Poland	483.06	407.39	-15.66	800.73	683.01	-14.70	1283.79	1090.40	-15.06
Slovakia	12.65	18.37	45.25	36.34	50.81	39.81	48.99	69.18	41.21
Slovenia	13.82	19.98	44.59	50.47	60.21	19.29	64.29	80.20	24.73
Croatia	2.87	13.16	359.02	7.28	23.43	221.80	10.15	36.58	260.57
Luxembourg	0.12	0.36	188.97	0.94	1.85	97.82	1.06	2.21	108.50
Sub-Total (EU)	5,292.41	5,916.89	11.80	8,467.31	9,809.07	15.85	13,759.71	15,725.96	14.29
<i>EU % of World</i>	<i>42.59</i>	<i>41.37</i>		<i>56.19</i>	<i>57.50</i>		<i>50.04</i>	<i>50.14</i>	
USA	3,736.63	3,910.67	4.66	2,038.34	1,698.32	-16.68	5,774.97	5,608.99	-2.87
<i>% of USA</i>	<i>30.07</i>	<i>27.34</i>		<i>13.53</i>	<i>9.95</i>		<i>21.00</i>	<i>17.88</i>	
U.K.	1,134.64	1,343.70	18.43	1,799.40	2,016.46	12.06	2,934.04	3,360.16	14.52
<i>% of U.K.</i>	<i>9.13</i>	<i>9.40</i>		<i>11.94</i>	<i>11.82</i>		<i>10.67</i>	<i>10.71</i>	
Canada	397.46	551.02	38.63	419.64	429.94	2.46	817.10	980.96	20.05
<i>% of Canada</i>	<i>3.20</i>	<i>3.85</i>		<i>2.78</i>	<i>2.52</i>		<i>2.97</i>	<i>3.13</i>	
Non-Traditional Markets									
Japan	332.94	510.04	53.19	395.72	565.81	42.98	728.65	1075.85	47.65
Australia	216.99	258.59	19.17	338.61	509.16	50.37	555.60	767.75	38.18
Russia	176.38	92.53	-47.54	304.86	173.04	-43.24	481.23	265.57	-44.81
India	263.17	416.37	58.21	203.44	337.55	65.92	466.61	753.92	61.57
Korea Rep.	114.33	178.62	56.23	162.92	209.01	28.29	277.25	387.63	39.81
China	88.56	95.13	7.42	62.23	71.88	15.52	150.79	167.02	10.76
United Arab Emirates	97.78	84.04	-14.05	76.94	122.83	59.65	174.71	206.87	18.40
Mexico	79.21	132.59	67.38	90.02	106.46	18.26	169.24	239.05	41.25
Malaysia	33.87	62.33	84.05	85.38	158.77	85.96	119.25	221.11	85.42
Saudi Arabia	41.85	48.53	15.95	57.42	97.49	69.78	99.28	146.02	47.08
Turkey	47.46	96.25	102.82	40.07	69.43	73.29	87.53	165.69	89.30
South Africa	36.09	35.81	-0.77	45.47	49.40	8.66	81.56	85.21	4.49
New Zealand	24.55	24.91	1.47	53.41	61.26	14.70	77.96	86.17	10.53
Chile	48.64	51.59	6.07	63.07	52.86	-16.18	111.70	104.45	-6.49
Brazil	26.36	40.29	52.81	39.40	74.73	89.66	65.76	115.01	74.89
Other Countries	237.97	451.67	89.80	326.07	446.81	37.03	564.04	898.49	59.29
Total (Non-Trad. Markets)	1,866.13	2,579.29	38.22	2,345.03	3,106.52	32.47	4,211.17	5,685.82	35.02
<i>% of Non-Traditional</i>	<i>15.02</i>	<i>18.04</i>		<i>15.56</i>	<i>18.21</i>		<i>15.32</i>	<i>18.13</i>	
GRAND TOTAL	12,427.28	14,301.56	15.08	15,069.72	17,060.33	13.21	27,497.00	31,361.89	14.06

Source: EPB

Bangladesh's top 30 apparel items export to world

Value in Million USD

SL	HS Code	Products Description	Jul-Feb 2021-22	Jul-Feb 2022-23	Growth
1	610910	Cotton knitted T-shirts	5390.91	5893.08	9.32%
2	620342	M/B cotton woven trousers	3592.35	3967.74	10.45%
3	611020	Cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	2122.56	2326.06	9.59%
4	620462	W/G cotton woven trousers	2333.26	2315.84	-0.75%
5	611030	MMF knitted Jerseys & pullovers	1362.14	1311.79	-3.70%
6	620520	M/B cotton woven shirts	947.52	1274.33	34.49%
7	610462	W/G cotton knitted trousers	1047.46	1127.64	7.66%
8	620343	M/B synthetic woven trousers	1065.79	1048.87	-1.59%
9	610510	M/B cotton shirts	513.66	946.17	84.20%
10	610342	M/B cotton knitted trousers	447.31	586.87	31.20%
11	611120	Cotton knitted Babies' garments	420.19	546.69	30.11%
12	610821	W/G cotton knitted briefs & panties	444.07	438.10	-1.34%
13	610711	M/B cotton knitted underpants	401.27	419.64	4.58%
14	621210	Non cotton woven Brassieres	413.08	403.23	-2.39%
15	610990	Non cotton T-shirts	277.92	399.23	43.65%
16	620463	W/G synthetic woven trousers	232.55	372.48	60.17%
17	610442	Cotton knitted Dresses	266.91	317.43	18.93%
18	620530	M/B MMF woven shirts	135.61	274.59	102.48%
19	611090	Non cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	233.17	252.25	8.18%
20	610831	W/G cotton knitted nighties	214.61	225.73	5.19%
21	620333	M/B synthetic woven jackets & blazers	94.03	215.50	129.17%
22	620630	W/G cotton woven blouses	170.87	202.45	18.48%
23	620469	W/G non cotton woven trousers	142.02	200.68	41.31%
24	610463	W/G synthetic knitted trousers	180.13	195.76	8.67%
25	620640	W/G MMF woven blouses	143.82	190.96	32.78%
26	620920	Cotton woven Babies' garments	161.93	185.03	14.26%
27	620590	M/B non cotton woven shirts	99.72	164.03	64.48%
28	620442	Cotton woven Dresses	159.56	158.70	-0.54%
29	620332	M/B cotton woven jackets & blazers	84.12	157.55	87.30%
30	610610	W/G cotton knitted blouses	90.88	153.96	69.42%

Source: EPB

Note: M/B= Men's or boys
W/G= Women's or girls

Bangladesh's top 30 apparel items export to world

Value in Million USD

SL	HS Code	Products Description	CY 2020	CY 2021	CY 2022	Growth CY 2021 VS CY 2022
1	610910	Cotton knitted T-shirts	5318.12	7115.60	8937.33	25.60%
2	620342	M/B cotton woven trousers	4024.00	4834.97	5943.18	22.92%
3	620462	W/G cotton woven trousers	2436.96	3051.23	3633.97	19.10%
4	611020	Cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	1964.70	2721.33	3418.72	25.63%
5	611030	MMF knitted Jerseys & pullovers	1136.82	1625.34	1967.19	21.03%
6	620520	M/B cotton woven shirts	1234.90	1193.41	1796.18	50.51%
7	610462	W/G cotton knitted trousers	966.04	1413.98	1673.21	18.33%
8	620343	M/B synthetic woven trousers	724.48	1296.87	1649.23	27.17%
9	610510	M/B cotton knitted shirts	533.59	651.66	1127.80	73.07%
10	610342	M/B cotton knitted trousers	363.53	584.47	797.88	36.51%
11	611120	Cotton knitted Babies' garments	406.78	565.45	725.68	28.34%
12	610821	W/G cotton knitted briefs & panties	403.64	602.88	668.46	10.88%
13	621210	Non cotton woven Brassires	436.93	559.69	642.17	14.74%
14	610711	M/B cotton knitted underpants	398.42	544.99	601.74	10.41%
15	610990	Non cotton knitted T-shirts	311.33	399.13	521.14	30.57%
16	620463	W/G synthetic woven trousers	167.62	243.04	501.32	106.27%
17	610442	Cotton knitted Dresses	248.11	361.30	440.59	21.95%
18	620193	M/B MMF woven anoraks	472.60	627.02	376.56	-39.94%
19	611090	Non cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	312.97	296.38	361.55	21.99%
20	620530	M/B MMF woven shirts	126.52	175.17	330.84	88.87%
21	610831	W/G cotton knitted nighties	166.77	264.68	314.49	18.82%
22	620630	W/G cotton woven blouses	177.37	225.26	298.34	32.44%
23	620469	W/G non cotton woven trousers	180.52	198.57	288.53	45.31%
24	610463	W/G synthetic knitted trousers	120.86	209.65	282.63	34.81%
25	620920	Cotton woven Babies' garments	183.77	208.95	268.21	28.36%
26	620640	W/G MMF woven blouses	198.07	195.24	262.51	34.46%
27	620442	Cotton woven Dresses	172.07	216.44	260.28	20.25%
28	620333	M/B synthetic woven jackets & blazers	102.36	112.59	245.95	118.45%
29	621040	M/B woven of rubberised or coated fabrics	142.35	189.06	235.86	24.75%
30	620293	W/G MMF woven anoraks	396.19	488.22	233.85	-52.10%

Source: EPB

Note: M/B= Men's or boys

W/G= Women's or girls

EU Apparel Import Growth

Growth: 2022 VS 2021

Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	24.92%	20.74%	23.40%	19.53%	35.99%	29.42%	22.92%	37.07%	20.40%	15.86%	5.63%	-2.05%	20.97%
China	21.57%	23.22%	17.37%	17.07%	23.89%	29.14%	32.08%	38.47%	18.75%	5.12%	-5.04%	-6.96%	17.01%
Bangladesh	47.21%	28.62%	52.72%	34.57%	62.09%	43.56%	37.20%	54.96%	30.77%	32.48%	9.05%	8.57%	35.69%
Turkey	17.43%	23.52%	20.83%	17.48%	28.40%	20.55%	1.24%	10.59%	-0.52%	2.78%	-2.38%	-9.26%	10.09%
India	23.38%	2.72%	19.02%	14.23%	57.80%	42.79%	40.36%	43.56%	4.46%	-0.89%	-0.58%	11.95%	21.02%
Vietnam	25.92%	21.59%	18.67%	18.99%	33.18%	30.13%	16.70%	47.66%	52.61%	65.61%	56.27%	28.58%	35.28%
Pakistan	30.50%	24.85%	29.09%	25.87%	59.32%	52.39%	3.77%	48.13%	28.16%	14.02%	26.17%	22.11%	27.99%
Cambodia	15.97%	33.94%	34.80%	33.06%	48.71%	95.30%	51.35%	51.74%	31.76%	29.87%	17.96%	14.04%	35.39%
Morocco	28.26%	22.33%	20.34%	3.78%	31.94%	24.67%	-5.80%	8.63%	-12.37%	-1.99%	-10.33%	-14.25%	6.73%
Sri Lanka	17.90%	18.01%	11.61%	1.60%	22.26%	31.54%	1.38%	38.91%	20.71%	26.01%	18.87%	-16.35%	14.87%
Indonesia	31.33%	35.91%	22.14%	3.77%	39.54%	49.79%	42.06%	62.76%	25.11%	19.25%	2.37%	-15.62%	24.47%

Growth: 2022 VS 2020

Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	-0.14%	17.58%	45.17%	93.81%	98.99%	56.46%	14.68%	26.75%	21.81%	19.28%	36.47%	23.19%	31.48%
China	3.00%	28.17%	98.08%	70.12%	19.91%	14.68%	7.15%	31.42%	32.15%	24.62%	39.58%	20.16%	27.67%
Bangladesh	14.33%	24.74%	34.34%	91.20%	235.26%	195.03%	66.56%	47.34%	52.13%	42.09%	74.28%	65.04%	62.78%
Turkey	11.37%	33.10%	66.50%	176.11%	122.00%	71.27%	3.21%	15.26%	-2.54%	6.18%	17.09%	6.59%	30.04%
India	-3.26%	0.16%	38.55%	111.20%	262.31%	130.40%	45.13%	38.72%	11.02%	4.07%	43.15%	57.66%	45.01%
Vietnam	1.54%	19.42%	57.87%	103.24%	121.04%	66.38%	24.86%	39.54%	41.02%	48.28%	60.99%	31.71%	44.73%
Pakistan	17.14%	41.31%	32.97%	109.64%	217.55%	123.60%	44.68%	61.76%	62.71%	34.37%	85.64%	56.50%	61.89%
Cambodia	-7.36%	14.40%	24.57%	58.14%	89.76%	58.89%	9.58%	13.41%	55.02%	55.54%	81.23%	47.85%	36.50%
Morocco	3.53%	26.97%	47.03%	854.05%	572.84%	94.83%	-11.16%	36.59%	-20.47%	7.11%	28.71%	8.84%	36.90%
Sri Lanka	4.52%	38.83%	32.48%	74.38%	275.34%	101.47%	3.58%	24.77%	19.34%	12.19%	27.96%	25.43%	35.95%
Indonesia	-10.39%	26.76%	14.70%	44.17%	88.46%	40.47%	27.73%	52.68%	18.74%	29.89%	49.10%	10.21%	29.87%

Growth: 2022 VS 2019

Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	-5.08%	7.70%	20.94%	14.53%	20.91%	28.65%	-6.21%	20.89%	27.90%	14.82%	27.43%	21.20%	15.27%
China	-5.00%	9.80%	38.14%	30.54%	18.60%	19.67%	10.31%	19.39%	33.01%	16.36%	33.67%	20.11%	16.65%
Bangladesh	7.09%	13.72%	27.35%	33.99%	56.97%	50.09%	17.21%	48.35%	49.68%	47.24%	51.40%	55.41%	36.61%
Turkey	10.10%	30.76%	33.08%	17.19%	17.84%	66.84%	-2.35%	23.00%	20.73%	13.66%	22.24%	22.77%	21.55%
India	-10.21%	-6.91%	9.59%	1.22%	30.77%	28.14%	-3.19%	21.73%	20.77%	12.24%	17.43%	28.11%	10.65%
Vietnam	-2.64%	15.77%	42.81%	26.47%	35.94%	42.30%	6.00%	34.48%	51.58%	33.80%	52.30%	42.16%	31.08%
Pakistan	24.44%	30.60%	27.19%	52.55%	33.84%	51.76%	16.47%	68.12%	62.44%	50.26%	65.04%	61.15%	44.60%
Cambodia	-16.10%	-9.55%	0.69%	-0.75%	18.99%	22.09%	-8.67%	-1.47%	9.25%	0.18%	24.29%	18.33%	3.60%
Morocco	-4.12%	12.13%	20.11%	-13.31%	-1.29%	68.58%	24.79%	25.23%	15.50%	-0.42%	5.58%	-3.13%	5.83%
Sri Lanka	11.29%	44.99%	16.09%	7.54%	39.93%	21.46%	5.66%	25.80%	30.82%	6.24%	35.20%	5.21%	19.90%
Indonesia	-20.44%	4.84%	6.77%	-12.61%	26.54%	31.53%	5.88%	21.32%	6.00%	5.63%	17.40%	1.55%	6.82%

Source: eurostat



Common Counterfeit Products:



DISCOURAGING COUNTERFEIT PRODUCTS

- a) Encouraging all not to buy counterfeit ones.
- b) Purchase products from trustworthy suppliers
- c) Ensure careful inspection before purchasing products.
- d) Establishment of highly secure IP (intellectual property) to prevent the copy of other's inventions, artwork, design, trademark etc.



সাধারণ নকলজাত পণ্য সমূহ



তৈরী
পোশাক পণ্য



ইলেকট্রনিক
যন্ত্র



প্রসাধনী



ঔষুধ



চামড়াজাত
পণ্য

নকল পণ্য ক্রয় থেকে বিরত থাকুন

- ১। নকল পণ্য ক্রয় না করে, আসল পণ্য ক্রয়ের জন্য সকলকে উৎসাহিত করুন।
- ২। বিশ্বস্ত সরবরাহকারীর কাছ থেকে পণ্য ক্রয় করুন।
- ৩। যেকোন পণ্য ক্রয়ের পূর্বে যথাযথভাবে যাচাই করুন।
- ৪। অত্যন্ত সুরক্ষিত আই.পি. (মেধাসম্পত্তি) সিস্টেম এর মাধ্যমে পণ্যের উদ্ভাবন, ডিজাইন, কর্মশৈলী, ট্রেডমার্ক এর নকল প্রতিরোধ নিশ্চিত করে।



U.S. COTTON
TRUST PROTOCOL®

JOIN NOW

— — — SETTING A NEW STANDARD IN MORE SUSTAINABLE COTTON PRODUCTION

Launched in 2020, the U.S. Cotton Trust Protocol was designed to set a new standard in **more sustainably grown cotton**, ensuring that it contributes to the **protection and preservation of the planet**, using the most sustainable and responsible techniques. It is the only system that provides quantifiable, verifiable goals and measurement in **six key sustainability metrics** and article-level supply chain transparency.

| The Trust Protocol provides
| **brands and retailers the**
| **critical assurances** they need to
| show the cotton fiber element
| of their supply chain is more
| sustainably grown with **lower**
| **environmental and social risk.**

| **Trust in a smarter**
| **cotton future.**



Learn more +
become a member
TrustUSCotton.org



LIBAS ATTAQWAA

“ALIF” The luxury lifestyle brand. ALIF is committed to provide the highest services and top quality products to its valued customers. ALIF is a pioneer brand with its design innovation and apparel masterpieces. It now has a significant products line for Men's. ALIF produces traditional clothes like Panjabi, Thobe and Trousers.



The word “LIBAS ATTAQWAA” is our motto where LIBAS means clothing and TAQWAA means belief. Our mission is to establish our religious belief and Sunnah over Men's clothing. Our management has a clear message to contribute social welfare and charity from a large portion of ALIF's profit.

GO GREEN



ALIF is a sister concern of Mithela Group, The world's first LEED Platinum Certified textile industry and Green factory. ALIF uses its own fabrics and material to make eco-friendly and user-friendly products. The fabrics we use are from man made fibers. Commonly, we use the most premium Supima Cotton and we use various types of fabrics. All the fabrics pass multiple lab tests and exams before being selected for production.

Facebook & Instagram: [libasattaqwaa](#)

Hotline - 09638-224455

Web: www.alif.clothing

Find Store

