

# Apparel Story

এ্যাপারেল স্টোরি

January-February 2024

## YEAR IN REVIEW AND OUTLOOK FOR 2024



BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (BGMEA)

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# EDITORIAL

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As we embark on a new year, it's essential to reflect on our achievements in the bygone year and assess to what extent the industry is prepared to face the challenges that lie ahead in 2024. The cover story of this issue of Apparel Story, therefore, sheds extensive focus on the industry's performance in the immediate past year and future challenges.

The year 2023 was marked by global conflicts, economic challenges, and the lingering impact of the pandemic, which tested the industry's strength. Despite these hurdles, the RMG industry has not only weathered the storm but emerged stronger, setting new milestones in exports and sustainability practices. The industry's resilience is evidenced by the remarkable growth in RMG exports, reaching approximately US\$ 47 billion in the fiscal year 2022-23, a testament to the sector's resilience and the stakeholders' indomitable spirit.

However, amidst the celebrations of export milestones, it's crucial to address the challenges faced, particularly in key markets like the European Union (EU) and the USA. While positive growth was maintained in some EU countries, overall export growth to the EU was meager, signaling the need for strategic interventions to enhance market diversification and competitiveness. Similarly, the decline in RMG exports to the USA highlights the importance of adapting to evolving market trends. Despite these setbacks, positive growth was maintained in several EU markets like France, Italy, and Spain. The UK, the third-largest destination, also saw a 12.46% increase. Besides, non-traditional markets emerged as a bright spot, with a remarkable 20.54% growth, demonstrating success in market diversification efforts.

The industry's success in the face of grave adversity can be attributed to several factors such as the indomitable spirit of the entrepreneurs, strong partnerships with international buyers and other stakeholders and continuous investment in backward linkage industries. A shift towards higher-end products such as outerwear and non-cotton garments is also taking place, while factories are embracing digitalization and new technologies for increasing efficiency.

Looking ahead, therefore, the industry can be optimistic about the future. We navigated a challenging year in 2023 but emerged stronger. By fostering collaboration, innovation, and a dedication to environmental responsibility, the industry is well-positioned for a sustainable and prosperous future.

**The Editorial Board**  
The Apparel Story





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# Year in Review and Outlook for 2024



Faruque Hassan

We have bidden farewell to the year 2023 and welcomed the year 2024 with renewed hope amid a plethora of newly emerged challenges. The immediate past year had also its fair share of challenges and achievements. We had hoped the year 2023 would bring fresh air to the global economy and trade, but it appeared to be more challenging for us as the global conflicts rather broadened, economic challenges got new dimensions

affecting retail market, trade and manufacturing. The RMG industry has faced serious headwinds in the past year due to supply chain disruptions, inflation, and cautious consumer spending across the globe. However, signs of recovery are emerging, with retail sales seeing encouraging growth in key markets like the US and UK. This optimism fuels hope for a better 2024.

The resilience of the Bangladeshi RMG





industry lies in its indomitable spirit and strong partnerships. The BGMEA Board expresses its gratitude to stakeholders for their unwavering support in overcoming challenges. This collaborative spirit is crucial for sustainable growth in the years to come. We not only weathered the storm but emerged stronger, setting new milestones in exports. According to

statistics, RMG exports reached a new milestone of approximately US\$ 47 billion in 2022-23, reflecting a growth of 10.27% year-on-year. Out of the total RMG exports, knitwear saw a 10.87% year-on-year growth, amounting to US\$ 25.73 billion in export turnover. Woven garment exports reached US\$ 21.25 billion, representing a 9.56% growth. This

fiscal year stands as a landmark for us, as January 2024 set the record for the highest export in a single month at US\$ 4.97 billion.

This performance has boosted the share of RMG in Bangladesh's overall exports to 85.45% in July-February 2023-24, up from 84.58% in FY 2022-23 and 81.82% in FY 2021-22. Including all textile and related articles within RMG (such as home-textiles, headgear, specialized textiles including silk and wool, and textile waste), the year-end export turnover reaches US\$ 49.24 billion, accounting for 88.35% of our national export earnings.

This is undoubtedly a significant accomplishment, considering the turbulent global trade environment we are navigating. I extend my congratulations to my fellow entrepreneurs for this achievement. Such a remarkable feat would not have been possible without your unwavering resilience. We are honored to facilitate and support this journey from BGMEA and express our deepest gratitude to the Government of Bangladesh for its unparalleled support that has contributed to securing this position.

I would like to note that during the fiscal year 2022-23, Bangladesh's total exports reached US\$ 55.56 billion, marking a 6.67% year-over-year growth, the highest-ever export earnings in the history of Bangladesh. However, the growth in total exports fell short of the growth in RMG exports, indicating that while RMG exports grew by 10.27% in this fiscal year, non-RMG and non-textile exports declined by 8.62%. This contrast in growth, favoring RMG, is not a healthy sign for the economy, and we have always advocated for and promoted sector diversification. Our dynamism and determination are



evidenced by this absolutely superior performance of RMG sector among the export-oriented sectors. This momentum in exports did not happen by chance. It is undoubtedly the collective result of the individual exporters in the industry, and BGMEA is also humbled to play a supportive role. Especially through our apparel diplomacy initiatives, we aimed to create a buzz in the global market, telling the story of our transformation and the renewed vision and committed efforts toward sustainability. We dared to explore new markets, invested in backward linkage industries, secured our supply chains, and moved us toward self-sufficiency. We witnessed a qualitative shift in our product portfolio, expanding beyond basic garments to higher-end products such as non-cotton, outerwear, activewear, and suits. Our export to non-traditional markets demonstrated encouraging growth,

increasing remarkably by 20.54% to US\$ 8.87 billion in 2023 from US\$ 7.36 billion in 2022. Currently, our clothing export share in non-traditional markets stands at 18.72%, up from 16.52% in 2018. This exemplifies our commitment to diversifying our export portfolio, a result of the tireless efforts of our entrepreneurs to diversify our market base. In recent years our industry has seen significant investment in the non-cotton sector. This diversification demonstrates our evolving capabilities and commitment to meeting the changing demands of the global market. In terms of fiber diversity, in the last 3 years, the share of non-cotton apparel export increased from 25% to 30%. The industry is making investments in machine, technology and skills. We are focusing more on cutting saving natural resources and reducing wastage; to create further positive impact on environment.

The advancement in technologies also make workplaces more comfortable and convenient for the workers, eliminating unnecessary motions and physical burden on them. This reduces fatigue among the workers and enhance their productivity. Such initiatives will be continued in the future as we strive to improve. These factors, combined with our resilience, adaptability, and innovative spirit, distinguish us from our competitors. Through these efforts, we instill confidence and resilience in our customers while showcasing our adaptability and flexibility to change. The wheels of our achievements don't just stop just in our growth momentum. As we navigate the complex trajectory of global trade, sustainability remains a cornerstone of our industry. Despite the numerous hurdles the industry has faced, especially in recent years due to the pandemic, global



conflicts leading to inflation, and their subsequent impact on the retail industries and consumer spending, there have been significant achievements. In 2022, 30 RMG factories were added to the LEED list, comprising 15 Platinum and 15 Gold certifications. In 2023, an additional 24 RMG factories achieved LEED status, with 16 achieving Platinum and 8 attaining Gold certification.

Of particular note, one factory achieved the highest LEED score of 104 points in 2023. Later in the year, breaking our own record, another Bangladeshi garment factory scored 106 points, positioning itself as the highest-rated LEED-certified factory globally. That means two of our factories hold the number one and number two positions globally in terms highest-rated green factories. Overall, we can boast of having a total of 213 LEED-certified factories so far, with 80 rated Platinum and 119 achieving Gold status. Notably, 21 out of the top 23 LEED-certified factories worldwide proudly represent our nation. This marathon effort in advancing sustainable practices in our industry serves as a testament to our steadfast dedication to sustainability. Our multi-pronged approach encompassing sustainability, the circular economy, worker safety and health, and the overall green revolution of the industry remains the cornerstone of our continued success. This holistic approach fosters not only economic growth but also environmental and social responsibility, positioning us as responsible leaders in the global garment industry. Thus the industry that was once questioned for its workplace safety standards has now emerged as a role model for its workplace safety standard and green and ethical manufacturing practices. Beyond sustainability, factories are now investing in new technologies,



skills and product development, value addition, efficiency, enhancement etc. Apart from that, the investment in backward linkage industry is increasing, especially in fabrics, accessories, product diversification and innovation. The recent trend in investments in diverse items has been crucial to safeguard our industry against vulnerability and secure a balanced growth, while demonstrating our commitment to future. Given all these efforts and progress, we are aiming for more trade and investments in coming years, and we need to find ways to maximize the utilization of all these opportunities.

To expedite our sustainability journey, BGMEA has taken sustainability vision 2030 by prioritizing ESG that means Environment, Social and Governance. This has earned the confidence of the global brands and retailers, their representatives and agents, and Bangladesh has emerged as the most preferred apparel sourcing destination. To facilitate this transformation, BGMEA has established Center for Innovation, Efficiency, and Occupational Safety and Health (CIEOSH) at BGMEA to equip the industry with knowledge, skills, and technical know-how to tackle

future challenges and enhance competitiveness. Additionally, we have established the Responsible Business Hub and a dedicated Circular Fashion Unit to provide information and advisory services. The success of these facilities at BGMEA greatly depends on all the stakeholders' active involvement, support, and guidance.

Looking ahead, 2024 presents a crucial opportunity for us to turn the tide. Retail sales in our major markets are showing positive come back. The advanced economies are already showing positive trend in terms of curbing inflation and growth in employment. By further diversifying our industry, incorporating modular production practices, and continuously adapting to the evolving global business landscape, we can not only overcome these challenges but also propel ourselves towards even greater heights.

I am filled with immense confidence for the future of the Bangladeshi RMG industry. Together, we are poised to write the next chapter of success, a chapter characterized by innovation, resilience, and sustainable growth. **A**

*Faruque Hassan is the President of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA)*

# A New Horizon for Bangladesh Apparel Industry

## Beyond Cotton



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with others hold the copies of the study report at the report unveiling ceremony held at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka.

BGMEA undertook three research initiatives in 2021 focusing toward the future vision and growth of Bangladesh's apparel industry. As part of this endeavour, BGMEA has already unveiled a study titled "Beyond Cotton: A Strategic Blueprint for Fibre Diversification in Bangladesh Apparel Industry" on 3 March 2024. The "Beyond Cotton" was commissioned to Wazir

Advisors Pvt. Ltd., a leading research organization on textile and apparel based in India. The BGMEA team was actively involved to facilitate the research. Over the past 45 years our industry has grown into a \$47 billion export sector. At present Bangladesh's share in the world market is 7.87%. The country wants to increase this share to 12% by 2030, pursuing an

export target of 100 billion dollar from this sector. Achieving this target will not be easy if the industry follows the conventional business model.

Until now Bangladesh's garment industry is mainly based on cotton, but the fashion market of the world is now shifting towards non-cotton. Global fashion trend is shifting from cotton to manmade fibers





because of better functionality, price, competitiveness and sustainability. The demand is growing for a wider range of fibers including synthetics like polyester and nylon, regenerated fibers like viscose rayon, animal fibers like wool and silk, and even other vegetable fibers like linen, etc. At the consumer level, 75% of global apparel consumption is

non-cotton and 57.5% of global textile trade is non-cotton. On the contrary, the share of non-cotton apparel in Bangladesh's export was only 25%, and, encouragingly, in the last 3 years this share has increased to 30%. In recent years Bangladesh has seen significant investment in the non-cotton sector. The import of non-cotton fibers and textiles is also following an

increasing trend, indicating further increase in exports in coming days. While the industry has all the potentials, there are challenges too. The industry has certain challenges and limitations too, like dependency on imported raw materials, lack of technology, skills and innovation, requirement for capital investment and energy. The purpose of this study was to identify the challenges and weakness, and set forth a roadmap to strategically explore the non-cotton space for our industry - the roadmap for manufacturers, investors, policymakers, development partners and other influencers, detailing approaches and ways to establish a strong presence in the non-cotton textile and apparel market.

The study also encompasses learnings from global leaders, evolution of industry in other countries, key enablers-investments, ecosystems, policies, partnerships etc. Additionally, the report benchmarks our industry against leading non-cotton apparel producers like China, India, and Taiwan. It outlines actionable recommendations and concrete steps for all stakeholders to enhance our collective competitiveness on the global stage.

While cotton remains a major capability of our industry, diversifying into non-cotton products presents an exciting opportunity. The "Beyond Cotton" report delves into the changing global fiber mix, explores emerging trends impacting our industry's future, and provides an in-depth analysis of Bangladesh's current and future value chain structure. **A**

# Establishing a Virtual Marketplace Platform for the RMG sector



*Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA, joined by other attendees, presents copies of the study report during the unveiling ceremony held at the BGMEA Complex in Dhaka.*

Global geopolitical tensions, exchange rate fluctuations, dollar crisis, surge in cotton price, aggravated by intense competition from low-cost nations etc. have been challenging the industry in recent times. To this end, digital transformation has emerged as one of the pivotal enablers. Nevertheless, limitations arising from the regulatory framework,

particularly in the realm of cross-border transactions and foreign currency policies, serve as an impediment for the domestic apparel industry to tap into the global burgeoning e-commerce market. In light of these challenges, BGMEA commissioned LightCastle Partners to conduct a comprehensive feasibility study as a precursor to

developing a virtual platform tailored for Bangladesh's textile and apparel sector. The findings of this study were officially unveiled at the BGMEA headquarters in Dhaka on 25 January 2024. The report meticulously identifies market potential and sector readiness to digitize the apparel sector of Bangladesh. The study also proposes sustainable business





models along with policy gaps, and necessary requisite strategies essential for the successful implementation of the marketplace. The primary objective of the virtual marketplace is to integrate the local textile industry into global value chains and capitalize on the shift towards online purchasing. The report emphasizes two critical strategic approaches for the

sustained success of the apparel sector: (1) Expansion of current Business-to-Business (B2B) activities into emerging markets like Asia and Middle East and (2) Creation of additional value by establishing direct connections between Bangladeshi manufacturers and end customers (B2C), thereby achieving superior profit margins and increased

The report meticulously identifies market potential and sector readiness to digitize the apparel sector of Bangladesh. The study also proposes sustainable business models along with policy gaps, and necessary requisite strategies essential for the successful implementation of the marketplace.

volume of business.

The platforms will operate as independent private entities, incorporating features such as logistical assistance, design consultation services, secure payment systems, and spare capacity matching, among others. Furthermore, the report underscores the virtual marketplace's potential to serve as a central hub for stock lots, streamlining connections among local producers, traders, and international buyers in emerging markets.

Speaking at the study launch event, Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA, said "If we want to maintain our position in the global competition ahead, we need to develop a comprehensive business model. This report, I believe, will not only facilitate the expansion of our presence in the digital realm but also serve as a guiding framework for our future business expansion endeavors." <sup>A</sup>

# Exploring Trade and Investment Opportunities



Ambassadors and High Commissioners from countries with non-resident missions accredited to Bangladesh at an event hosted by BGMEA in New Delhi.

Bangladesh has the diplomatic presence of a number of countries, but there are countries (some of which are highly potential for our RMG industry) do not have their missions (Embassies / High Commissions) here. In many cases their missions in New Delhi have the concurrence for Bangladesh. For the first time, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) united almost all the non-resident ambassadors and high

commissioners to Bangladesh, Chargé d'affaires and officials of different missions in New Delhi in local hotel on February 29, 2024. This initiative aimed to promote trade and investment opportunities with Bangladesh while cultivating stronger connections with nations holding untapped potential. BGMEA organized such event to highlight the vast potential for trade and investment in Bangladesh, with a focus on building mutually beneficial relationships among

stakeholders.

BGMEA invited the Ambassadors and High Commissioners of a number countries to the event. About 80 delegates including Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Chargé d'affaires appeared in the reception and engaged in the discussion. Representatives from apparel brands and Indian suppliers of machinery and raw materials also joined the occasion. Notable attendees included H.E. Mrs. Aliko Koutsomitopoulou,





Ambassador of Greece; H.E. Didier Anna L. Vanderhasselt, Ambassador of Belgium; H.E. Nikolay Yankov, Ambassador of Bulgaria; H.E. Mikhail Kasko, Ambassador of Belarus; H. E. Elchin Huseynli, Ambassador of Azerbaijan; H.E. Federico Salas Lotfe, Ambassador of Mexico; H.E. Juan Angulo, Ambassador of Chile; H.E. Alberto Antonio Guani Amarilla, Ambassador of Uruguay; H.E. Omar Lisandro Castañeda Solares, Ambassador of Guatemala; H.E. Mr. Jason Hall, High

Commissioner of Jamaica; H.E. Mrs. Dillah Lucienne, Ambassador of the Republic of Chad; H.E. Mustapha Jawara, High Commissioner of the Gambia; H.E. Ms. Jacqueline Mukangira, High Commissioner of Rwanda; H.E. Brig. General Aloys Bizindavyi, Ambassador of Burundi; H.E. Adv (Mrs.) Lebohanga Valentine Mochaba, High Commissioner of Lesotho; H.E. Clemente Pedro Francisco Camenha, Ambassador of Angola; Abel Aballe Despaigne, Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Cuba; Margus Solnson,

Tahina Rasamoelina, Chargés d'affaires of Madagascar; Ms. Sofia Salas, Chargés d'affaires of Costa Rica; Dr. Aminata Thiam, Chargés d'affaires of Guinea; Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Estonia; Peter Hobwani, Deputy Ambassador of Zimbabwe; and Nilesh Roneel Kumar, Charge'd Affaires of the Embassy of Fiji. Besides, diplomats from the embassies of Poland, the Dominican Republic, Slovenia, and Togo were present at the cocktail reception.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan makes his welcome remarks at the event.

The event featured networking and interactions among the participants and the BGMEA delegates. High Commissioner of Bangladesh to India Mustafizur Rahman were also present on this occasion. In his welcome remarks, Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA, focused on the transformation of the readymade garment industry of Bangladesh and the socio-economic and infrastructural improvements in our country. Highlighting strengths of Bangladesh, he inspired the them to explore

Bangladesh as a sourcing destination, as well as for investments. He also presented Bangladesh's RMG industry in terms of its capabilities, social and environmental transformation, and also the recent advancements in product categories. Faruque Hassan also highlighted the significance of supply chain collaboration. Bangladesh imports a lot of fibers like cotton, wool, polyester, synthetics, viscose, and others from different countries to meet the need of the industry. The

country also sources dyes, chemicals, machineries and equipment, as well as petrochemical chips for our accessory industry. He urged the participants to find the scope of supplying these raw materials. The BGMEA President invited them to visit Bangladesh and organize exchanges of delegation from their respective countries. The enthusiasm among the diplomats to enhance bilateral trade and cooperation was noteworthy. <sup>A</sup>



# A Global Leader in Green Garment Manufacturing

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Bangladesh

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Bangladesh is rapidly emerging as a champion of sustainable practices, particularly within its booming garment industry. This commitment to environmental responsibility is evident in the country's staggering number of LEED-certified green garment factories. Boasting the world's highest concentration with a remarkable 213 LEED facilities, Bangladesh stands out, with a significant portion (80) achieving the prestigious platinum rating. This leadership extends even

further, as Bangladesh is now home to a staggering 54 of the Top 100 highest-rated LEED Green Factories globally. Even more impressive, 9 out of the Top 10 and 18 out of the Top 20 Green Factories reside in Bangladesh, showcasing the country's unwavering commitment to environmental stewardship. This dedication is further highlighted by the impressive growth trajectory. In 2023 alone, 24 factories received LEED certification, with a notable shift towards the top tiers of

sustainability. All certified factories achieved either Platinum (16) or Gold (8) status, demonstrating a significant focus on environmental excellence. Among these, S. M. Sourcing (106 points) and Green Textiles Limited Unit 4 (104 points) stand out as the world's highest-rated LEED Green Factories. These achievements solidify Bangladesh's position as the leading nation with the most LEED-certified green factories among the Top 100. The future looks even brighter, with over 500



Bangladeshi factories currently pursuing LEED certification, indicating a strong commitment to continued growth in sustainable practices. The year 2024 has already witnessed significant additions to Bangladesh's impressive portfolio of LEED Green Factories. Shah Fatehullah Textile Mills Ltd (SHAFTEX), a brand-new venture by the Shah Fatehullah Group, has broken new ground. Their factory in Narayanganj secured the prestigious LEED Platinum rating

with a score of 87. This remarkable feat makes SHAFTEX the world's first and only LEED-Platinum certified Spinning Factory. COMFIT, ECO VILLE and Fakir Eco Knitwears Ltd. RMG Building have also joined the ranks of LEED Platinum achievers in 2024. Located in Gorai, Tangail and Kayampur, Narayanganj respectively, these factories further demonstrate the widespread commitment to sustainability within the Bangladeshi garment industry. Both COMFIT and Fakir

Eco Knitwears achieved impressive scores of 85 points. Additionally, Pretty Composite Textiles Ltd secured a remarkable Platinum rating with a score of 81 points. Beyond the Platinum certifications, 2024 has also seen contributions from Union Sportswear Limited who secured a Gold LEED rating with 69 points. This increase in green practices is driven by a clear understanding of the benefits. LEED-certified factories are not just





environmentally conscious; they are demonstrably more competitive. These facilities typically use less energy and water, generate less waste, and incur lower operating costs compared to traditional factories. This translates to significant financial advantages and a stronger market position in today's environmentally conscious global market. Bangladesh is not merely participating in the green growth movement; it is spearheading it within the garment industry. With a

*With a growing pipeline of potential green facilities, Bangladesh is poised to solidify its position as a global leader in eco-friendly garment manufacturing. This commitment to environmental responsibility not only benefits the planet but also strengthens the Bangladeshi garment industry, ensuring its continued success and competitiveness for years to come.*

rapidly growing number of certified factories, a focus on top tiers of sustainability, and a growing pipeline of potential green facilities, Bangladesh is poised to solidify its position as a global leader in eco-friendly garment manufacturing. This commitment to environmental responsibility not only benefits the planet but also strengthens the Bangladeshi garment industry, ensuring its continued success and competitiveness for years to come. <sup>A</sup>

# Bangladesh - India Have Immense Scope to Grow Together through Collaboration

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*BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with other panelists pose for photograph following a discussion organized by the Indian Ministry of Textiles and the Consortium of the Export Promotion Councils in New Delhi.*

Bangladesh and India possess immense potential for expanding bilateral trade, particularly in the garment and textile industry. Both countries can complement each other's strengths rather than being seen as competitors. Bangladesh is renowned for its expertise in garment manufacturing, excelling in producing high-quality apparel at competitive prices for global

markets. On the other hand, India boasts a robust textile industry with strengths in raw material production, technical know-how, and a diverse product range. By leveraging these complementary strengths, both countries can create a symbiotic relationship within the industry, enhancing efficiency and competitiveness. Faruque Hassan, President of the

Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), emphasized the immense potential for collaboration between Bangladesh and India as trading partners, particularly in the textile and apparel sectors to grow together. Speaking at the "Building Resilient Value Chains - India as Global Sourcing Destination" discussion



“As we are pursuing a higher growth vision, the exchange of knowledge, expertise, technologies, and closer cooperation among our nations would create a win-win situation for us.”



organized by the Indian Ministry of Textiles and the Consortium of the Export Promotion Councils in New Delhi on February 28, Faruque Hassan highlighted the synergies between the strengths of both nations.

India, being strong in textile segments, and Bangladesh, with a proven capability in apparel manufacturing, present a great

opportunity for mutual growth.

“As we are pursuing a higher growth vision, the exchange of knowledge, expertise, technologies, and closer cooperation among our nations would create a win-win situation for us,” remarked Faruque Hassan.

The panel discussion was moderated by Girish Menon, Managing Director, Stride Partners,

and joined by a diverse range of industry experts including Mohammad Hatem, Executive President, Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), Vipin Tiwari, Senior Managing Director, Target Sourcing Services; Nitin Prasad, Managing Director- India, PVH Corp; Yatin Kirori, Global Chief Representative, Bestseller; and Asker Laubjerg, COO, KAS Group Asia. Faruque Hassan underscored the need for a regional value chain, suggesting an integrated network of ‘raw material supply,’ ‘production networks,’ and ‘marketing networks.’

“We need to set up a ‘collaborative supply chain’ so that we can complement our capabilities and strengths and grow together,” he added.

“The RMG industry of Bangladesh is making significant investments in machine, technology, and skills to enhance the competitiveness of Bangladesh’s ready-made garment industry in the global market,” said Faruque Hassan.

Investment in cutting-edge technologies aims not only to reduce costs and enhance efficiency but also to promote sustainable practices with the apparel in Bangladesh, thus positively impacting the environment, he further remarked. <sup>A</sup>



**While the RMG industry will continue to play a key role in Bangladesh's growth, success in modernizing the industry could help draw the attention of foreign investors in other sectors**

**H. E. Lilly Nicholls, High Commissioner for Canada in Bangladesh**

In an exclusive interview with *The Apparel Story*, H. E. Lilly Nicholls, High Commissioner for Canada in Bangladesh, sheds light on the evolving Bangladesh-Canada relationship and potential avenues for trade and investment expansion between the two nations. With a focus on the thriving ready-made garment (RMG) industry, the High Commissioner also shares her thoughts on Bangladesh's economic progress and strategies for attracting investment and increasing high-value garment exports.



## Can you provide insights into the Bangladesh-Canada relationship and potential areas for expansion in the realms of trade and investment for both countries?

In 2024, Canada and Bangladesh celebrated 52 years of a long-lasting and multi-faceted diplomatic relationship. Canada was one of the first countries to recognize Bangladesh's independence and support Bangladesh's grassroots micro-finance movement and poverty reduction journey. In line with Bangladesh's graduation from least developed country (LDC) status, today, Canada is helping Bangladesh equip itself for new development challenges, including enhancing technical and vocational skills, promoting labour rights, empowering women and girls and addressing climate change.

Over the years our relationship has evolved beyond foreign aid. Today, our two countries enjoy a \$3.6 billion trade relationship, currently based primarily on Bangladeshi Ready Made Garment (RMG) exports to Canada and the import of Canadian agricultural commodities such as wheat, pulses and potash fertilizer. Furthermore, areas such as agro-industry, green technologies, and ICT hold potential to diversify and deepen our commercial engagement. Expanding trade, growth and investment in an inclusive and sustainable manner is one of the key pillars of Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) which is a veritable game changer in Canadian foreign policy and aims to position Canada as a long-term, dependable and engaged partner in the region. In Bangladesh, the creation of the Bangabandhu-Pierre Elliott Trudeau Agricultural Research Centre which will focus on increasing food security and agricultural productivity is but one example of

the innovative partnerships we want to forge between our two countries.

## How do you Evaluate the progress of the overall economy of Bangladesh, particularly the ready-made garment industry?

RMG exports, which account for almost 80% of Bangladeshi exports, employ over 6 million people, and generate \$50 billion in revenue, have undeniably been a key engine of the country's economic growth. Moving forward, the sector presents both challenges and opportunities for the country's path towards becoming an upper middle-income country. As duty-free access to international markets diminishes after graduation from LDC status in 2026, RMG industries will need to significantly increase their productivity, innovation, and sustainability.

On this front, some of Bangladesh's more modern RMG factories are already leading the way towards creative new solutions such as recycling used clothing or using "green" high-tech laser technologies to dry clothing, thereby significantly reducing water usage and environmental contamination. In parallel, strides forward have also been made in terms of worker safety in the decade since the Rana Plaza tragedy in 2013, when 1,100 workers lost their lives and many others were injured. Through multi-stakeholder efforts involving Government, private companies, unions and international actors such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), Bangladesh's Labour Act is being revised in order to strengthen the national safety inspection system; A National Occupational Safety Health Council has been created as well as additional Labour Courts; a National Labour Action Plan (NAP) and accompanying annual Strategic Inspection Plans (SIPs) have been

drafted; and the Labour Department's oversight capacity has been strengthened through the training of a network of 450 factory inspectors and the establishment of workplace safety committees and a Labour Department Inspection (DIFE) Worker Hotline. Canada is pleased to have funded these important efforts.

Canadian companies doing business in Bangladesh are paying particular attention to their Corporate Social Responsibility strategies. NGOs and foreign governments are vigilant in monitoring corporate activity, and they press for continued improvements in labour rights and transparency in Bangladesh, to guard against further tragedies such as the Rana Plaza garment factory collapse.

However, major challenges remain, particularly in terms of labour rights. To this day only a third of Bangladesh's RMG factories fall under DIFE's supervision, and only a third of these have completed the needed safety renovations. Moreover, workers' rights, voices and representation remain constrained by technical and political difficulties with union registration and the illegality of unions in Export Processing Zones (EPZ). Proper labour legislation and practices, labour inspection enforcement and administration of justice in cases of harassment or discrimination against female workers or violence against union leaders and workers also remain serious barriers.

While the RMG industry will continue to play a key role in Bangladesh's growth, success in modernizing the industry could help draw the attention of foreign investors in other sectors. Diversifying Bangladesh's industrial strengths into other sectors such as Agro-industry, ICT and pharmaceuticals would contribute to raising the country's overall commercial brand.

**Moving forward, the sector presents both challenges and opportunities for the country's path towards becoming an upper middle-income country. As duty-free access to international markets diminishes after graduation from LDC status in 2026, RMG industries will need to significantly increase their productivity, innovation, and sustainability.**

**As the Bangladesh RMG industry enters a new era of growth based on diversification, value addition, and innovation, how could Bangladesh attract investment and increase its share of high-value garment RMG exports?**

Moving forward, as Bangladesh's RMG exports become more specialized and compete for a greater share of an increasingly competitive globalized market, we can expect informed investors and discerning consumers alike to demand to know more about the way their garments are manufactured, including the extent of their environmental footprint and the fairness of treatment of the workers who produce them. In this context, compliance with global environmental and labour standards such as the ILO's Labour Inspection Convention (No. 81), the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention (No. 98) will be essential for global competitiveness. Global brands, consumers and highly-trained employees will all be looking for worker safety, decent wages, employment injury protection, unemployment benefits for workers, workers' organization and voices,

and professional opportunities for women. The RMG sector will need to continuously improve their productivity with innovation (the adoption of advanced technologies and value-added processing). Canadian partners and investors have shown their willingness to support this transformation.

**Bangladesh's graduation from LDC status marks a significant milestone. What preparatory steps and operational measures do you believe Bangladesh should undertake to address potential challenges and capitalize on emerging opportunities? Does Canada have any strategies in place to facilitate a more seamless transition?**

Canada and Bangladesh continue to benefit from a rapidly expanding commercial relationship. Bangladesh is presently Canada's 3rd largest source of RMG (after China and Vietnam). In 2023, Bangladesh's apparel exports to Canada stood at approximately \$2 billion. Many Canadian brands produce their clothing in Bangladesh. Following the Rana Plaza collapse, brands that were operating in the plaza provided compensation to the victims and continue to invest in responsible business practices.

Under Canada's Least Developed Country Tariff (LDCT) regime, all Bangladeshi apparel exports to Canada are duty free—which has been beneficial to the Bangladeshi garment industry since Canada's tariff rates for apparel range up to 18%. In parallel, the Canadian government works closely with the Department of Labour, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), global brands, and unions to help Bangladesh build national capacity to ensure safer RMG factories and work conditions. Canada has provided \$40 million in international assistance towards this priority to achieve this goal. After its graduation from LDC status in 2026, Bangladesh will also graduate from Canada's LDCT regime. Canada intends to provide a three-year transition period during which Bangladeshi exports will continue to benefit from duty-free treatment as provided under the LDCT regime until 2029. After this transition period, Bangladeshi exports will remain eligible for Canada's General Preferential Tariff (GPT), which offers duty-free or reduced tariff rates for over 80% of goods. Through continued international assistance, in 2024 Canada will fund a new ILO Project to help Bangladesh enhance its capacity to meet international labour rights standards. In addition, Canada has also announced that it will establish a GPT+ program, which is intended to offer additional tariff benefits to countries that adhere to international standards on human rights, labour rights and sustainable development. More details about the program will be announced as they become available. This could be an important opportunity for Bangladesh, but it will also require a concerted national effort and political will - by the Government and private sector to fully commit to workers safety, rights, and voices. <sup>A</sup>



# Sustainable Growth: Keeping the Momentum Alive



*The launching ceremony of the Responsible Business Hub (RBH)*

Since the inception, BGMEA, as the apex trade body of the bloodline of economy, the RMG sector has been trying to improve the scale of standard in every way possible. Even though when the journey started, sustenance was the main goal; as time passed by, sustainably growing instead of just focus on volume became the priority. As a commitment to a better future, BGMEA has published “2030 Sustainability agenda” where industry’s future target has been aligned with all the 17 goals of SDGs. Starting from achieving \$100 bn export earnings within 2030 to use 30% less energy, all aspects have been taken into account while developing the vision. This article

will focus on some of the recent initiatives that BGMEA has executed with an aim to fulfil the agenda within the agreed time frame.

## **First-ever BGMEA Career Summit & Fest 2023**

BGMEA Career Summit & Fest 2023, two-day event, supported by BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (BUFT), was arranged with an aim to transfer valuable insights and experiences from industry leaders to graduates. In the event more than 100 companies participated and Hundreds of graduates and students from various universities explored the

opportunities and scope offered by the RMG sector. The summit also featured sessions where industry experts shared their valuable insight into the career prospects in the RMG industry and how graduates could build their career in the sector. The highly dynamic nature of the global apparel market and the upcoming 4th industrial revolution calls for more equipped, skilled and envisioned young minds to join the industry and through this fest, a bridge was built between aspirant job seekers and the factories. The summit served as a pivotal platform for networking and career exploration for those aspiring to build a successful career in the garment sector.

## Sustainability Data Management training

BGMEA has conducted Sustainability Data Management training for three batches, enhancing the skills of garment factory professionals in environmental, compliance, sustainability, and IT domains. This initiative, a part of BGMEA's ongoing efforts is in collaboration with GIZ's IGS project, specifically targeting SME factories. So far, 85 participants from 30 factories have been trained. Participants gained up-to-date sustainability knowledge through practical exercises focusing on Environmental, Social, and Governance KPIs. These insights will be implemented in the policies of their respective factories. Moreover, the training emphasizes on capacity building for BGMEA's ESG Data Disclosure Platform. Participants are equipped with the skills to input sustainability data and assess their own sustainability index. This hands-on approach ensures that garment factory professionals can actively contribute to their sustainability progress and also track them, aiming to publish their sustainability reports. BGMEA's commitment extends to monitoring their progress in Sustainability Data Management capacity building over three months post-training, with acknowledgment for the best practices observed.

## Centre of Innovation, Efficiency and OSH globally launched

As we are on the verge of being swept away by the gigantic impact of 4th industrial revolution, BGMEA has set its priority to equip the industry with the changes and make the manpower skilled so that we can embrace the change with preparation. With that aim, Centre of Innovation, Efficiency and OSH has been running successfully



*The inaugural ceremony of the Centre of Innovation, Efficiency and Occupation Safety and Health Improvement (CEOSH) at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka.*

within the premise of BGMEA, along with a photography and media center. With an aim to build necessary capacity and capabilities to make the Centre a knowledge hub and exchange at national and international levels, BGMEA has been working with several local and international partners. The Centre is bringing knowledge about best business practices, most-advanced technology and latest trends of the global fashion industry to the apparel industry of Bangladesh through trainings, workshops and stakeholders' gatherings. It is also focusing on wider issues concerning the industry such as industrial relations, industrial engineering, productivity, efficiency, human resource development, business ethics and practices, financial reporting, occupational safety and health, and good governance. Besides, the Centre helps to find out the areas where Bangladesh RMG sector needs to work on to keep pace with the rest of the world regarding productivity and efficiency. It is also contributing to developing curriculum based on the needs of the RMG industry so that the long desired industry academia relationship is established.

## Responsible Business Hub: to strengthen human rights, environmental due diligence in RMG sector

The Responsible Business Hub (RBH), set up by BGMEA with the support of GIZ, has started its journey with an aim to strengthen human rights and environmental due diligence in the readymade garments (RMG) industry of Bangladesh. The RBH is serving as an information centre, raising awareness and providing guidance to manufacturing companies on the standards and requirements of Human Rights and Environmental Due Diligence (HREDD). This hub is supporting garment factories in strengthening capacities to adapt and comply with new regulations and reporting requirements with regard to due diligence and sustainability. It will assist the companies in integrating environmental and human rights due diligence in their operations in order to prevent and address negative impacts of business





The participants at a workshop organized by Responsible Business Hub at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka.



The inaugural ceremony of Professor Dr. Mazharul Islam Library at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka.

activities on people and the environment. Since due diligence is the new buzz word for coming year, and as an industry, the RMG sector has always moved forward with participating well in the trend, RBH is being used as an one stop service center for the member factories to be well prepared for coming days.

### **BGMEA library to meet industry needs**

BGMEA has opened a library at its headquarters in Uttara to meet the needs of information, research, and education which will be instrumental in facilitating the RMG industry's move towards sustainable development. The

BGMEA library is named after Professor Dr. Mazharul Islam, former Vice-Chancellor of Rajshahi University, first Director General of Bangla Academy, freedom fighter and one of the pioneers of the garment industry. A state-of-the-art facility having a vast collection of books, journals and other resources related to the apparel industry, the library will serve as a hub of knowledge and research which is vital for enhancing the capacity of the RMG industry in line with the latest trends and technologies. The library is stocking printed materials, manuscripts, documents, and information related to the apparel industry and contemporary issues. It will also contain a collection of paintings, audio-visual works, and literary pieces from both within the country and abroad in the coming days. **A**

# Bangladesh Heritage Festival 2024



Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, State Minister, the Ministry of Commerce, Bangladesh along with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan and others at the inaugural ceremony of Bangladesh Heritage Festival 2024.

For the first time, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) organized the Bangladesh Heritage Festival 2024 at the BGMEA Complex in Uttara, Dhaka on February 18 to promote and celebrate the cultural and heritage treasures of Bangladesh. Ahasanul Islam Titu, MP, State Minister, the Ministry of Commerce, attended the opening ceremony as the chief guest. BGMEA President Faruque Hassan presided over the opening ceremony of the three-day cultural festival that took place from February 18 to 20, 2024. Charles Whiteley, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, Francisco de

Asis Benites Salas, Ambassador of Spain in Bangladesh, renowned artists Mohammad Eunus and Gulshan Hossain attended the opening ceremony. The festival aimed to showcase and celebrate the rich cultural and historical heritage of Bangladesh like weaving industry people, Jamdani, Muslin, Khadi, Gamcha, Monipuri cloths, Pottery (Teppa dolls, Shokher Hari, Terracotta), Handicraft, Nakshi Katha, Jute products, Cane, Shitalpati, and the 6th World Heritage recognized Rickshaw Painting and many more. The event features exclusive fashion show, cultural performances, exhibitions, art and craftsmanship that make

Bangladesh unique. Throughout the festival, visitors will have the opportunity to explore the diverse cultural heritage that Bangladesh has to offer. A key highlight of the festival is a painting exhibition featuring renowned artists' works on the ground floor of the BGMEA Complex, showcasing the beauty of the country's heritage. A total of 40 stalls are participating in the festival, exhibiting local products that express the essence of Bangladesh's cultural heritage. The event also included a mesmerizing fashion show featuring high-end garments made from Jamdani, Muslin, Khadi, and other traditional fabrics. The





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festival had Bengali folk music performances. On the first day, renowned actress and dancer Sadia Islam Mou and her troupe made dance performance at the festival.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan emphasized the importance of preserving and promoting Bangladesh's cultural treasures. He stated, "By presenting our rich heritage and culture to the world,

we can brand ourselves and create an opportunity of exporting garments linking rich culture and heritage of Bangladesh with fashion, thus contributing to economic growth. It is crucial to promote heritage products, such as Jamdani, Khadi, and various handlooms internationally." Faruque Hassan called upon everyone to use more local products and celebrate the country's heritage and culture. "Let us all contribute to elevating our beloved motherland to a glorious position in the international arena from our respective positions," he urged all. <sup>A</sup>

# BGMEA Collaborates with UNICEF, Helen Keller International, and The Fred Hollows Foundation for Workers Health and Wellbeing

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The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has initiated groundbreaking collaborations with renowned international organizations UNICEF, Helen Keller International, and The Fred Hollows Foundation to implement three distinct health projects aimed at improving the health and well-being of workers in garment factories across the country. In partnership with UNICEF,

BGMEA is implementing a project focusing on enhancing the well-being of working mothers in factories. UNICEF is providing technical guidance on seven minimum standards to be met, including provisions for maternity leave, establishment of daycare centers, creation of functional and effective breastfeeding corners, and implementation of flexible working conditions. These standards are designed to ensure a conducive

environment for working mothers, enabling them to balance their work responsibilities with childcare needs effectively.

The MOTHERS@WORK project is dedicated to fostering safe and supportive workplaces for mothers across various industries.

Recognizing the crucial role of factory management, HR officers, compliance officers, doctors, and nurses in ensuring the success of this initiative, the project conducts



*Enrollment Seminar of MOTHERS@WORK*



specialized training sessions on the seven minimum standards for workplace management. These sessions aim to equip participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement MOTHERS@WORK policies and procedures.

Simultaneously, Helen Keller International has joined hands with BGMEA to implement a comprehensive eye care and nutrition program among factory workers. This initiative addresses critical health issues such as vision impairment and malnutrition prevalent among workers in the garment industry. By providing accessible and comprehensive eye care services alongside nutritional support, this project aims to enhance the overall health and well-being of workers, thereby contributing to a healthier and more productive workforce. The Comprehensive Eye Care and



*Eye Screening at the Factory Premise, with the technical assistance of Helen Keller.*

Nutrition for Garment Workers project organized a two-week intensive training session tailored specifically for doctors and nurses involved in the care of garment factory workers. This training focused on equipping healthcare professionals with the expertise needed to effectively screen for

eye-related issues and accurately diagnose problems among this population group. Covering a range of topics from basic eye anatomy to advanced diagnostic techniques, the sessions provided a comprehensive understanding of common eye conditions prevalent among garment workers. By enhancing the





*BGMEA President Faruque Hassan signed MoU with the respective concern of The Fred Hollows Foundation, Helen Keller International and SightSavers*

capabilities of healthcare providers in identifying and addressing visual impairments promptly, the project aims to significantly improve the eye health and overall well-being of garment workers, ensuring they can perform their duties comfortably and thrive in their workplace environments.

Furthermore, The Fred Hollows Foundation has embarked on a pilot program in collaboration with BGMEA, focusing on eye care within the garment sector. This pilot program is being implemented in 200 Ready-Made Garment (RMG) factories, with the aim of providing essential eye care services to workers. The success of this pilot initiative will serve as a blueprint for scaling up the program across 1400 factories, significantly expanding access to eye care services for thousands of workers in the garment industry.

**These collaborative efforts between BGMEA and international organizations signify a proactive approach towards addressing crucial health issues within the garment sector. By prioritizing the well-being of workers and implementing targeted interventions, these projects aim to create healthier and more supportive work environments, ultimately benefiting both workers and employers alike.**

These collaborative efforts between BGMEA and international organizations signify a proactive approach towards addressing crucial health issues within the garment sector. By prioritizing the well-being of workers and implementing targeted interventions, these projects aim to create healthier and more supportive work environments, ultimately benefiting both workers and employers alike. Speaking on these initiatives, BGMEA officials emphasized the organization's commitment to promoting the health and welfare of workers in the garment industry. They highlighted the importance of such collaborations in addressing systemic health challenges and reiterated their dedication to implementing sustainable solutions for the betterment of workers' lives. **A**



# Bangladesh Garment Industry: Inspiring Tales of Women Empowerment



## Afia Akter



Afia Akter's story is one of resilience and determination, hailing from Netrokona District, Bangladesh. Despite facing financial crises in her family, she embarked on a journey of professional growth in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry. With extensive experience as a pattern maker at Kenpark Bangladesh (PVT.) Limited, Afia honed her skills in computer-aided design and pattern development.

Transitioning to Aabha Limited, an RMG startup founded by AUW graduates, Afia assumed pivotal roles in strategy, innovation, and supplier collaboration. Armed with a diverse skill set encompassing

data analysis, software proficiency, and design expertise, Afia aspires to become an entrepreneur. Her vision extends beyond personal success, aiming to create job opportunities for underprivileged women and empower them in Bangladesh's workforce.

Afia's dedication to continuous learning is evident in her pursuit of a Master's program at AUW and her plans to expand Aabha Limited. With guidance from esteemed mentors like Dr. Rubana Huq and Dr. Raghunandan Reddy, Afia is poised to achieve her entrepreneurial dreams while fostering positive change in her community.

## Marufa Khatun



Marufa Khatun's journey from a small village in Gaibandha, Bangladesh, to Asian University for Women (AUW) is marked by resilience and determination. Despite facing pressure for early marriage and enduring familial challenges, Marufa remained steadfast in her pursuit of education. With unwavering support from her father and a scholarship opportunity at AUW, Marufa embarked on a transformative journey.

Overcoming language barriers and academic challenges, she excelled in her undergraduate studies, majoring in Economics with a minor in Finance. Driven by her ambition, Marufa aspires to break gender barriers in the RMG sector, aiming to become one of the first female production managers in Bangladesh. Her journey of self-discovery and academic excellence underscores the transformative power of education and perseverance.

## Lucky Sharma



Lucky Sharma's journey at Azim Group (Woven Division) began in 1984 when she joined as a helper. Her dedication and hard work quickly propelled her through the ranks, transitioning to an operator later that same year. From there, Lucky's career trajectory was nothing short of impressive as she ascended the corporate ladder with remarkable speed.

Over the years, Lucky assumed various roles within the company, showcasing her versatility and leadership skills. She progressed from being an operator to serving as an assistant line leader, then as a Junior Supervisor, Senior Supervisor, and eventually as an Executive. Her journey culminated in her appointment as the head of the sample section, a testament to her exemplary work ethic and dedication to excellence.

As a mother of two, Lucky faced the

devastating loss of her husband in 1996. Undeterred, she worked tirelessly to provide her children with the best possible education opportunities. Her efforts bore fruit as her daughter successfully completed her undergraduate and master's degrees from Premier University and has now joined the same company as her mother.

Although they work in different departments, the fact that they share the same workplace brings a sense of comfort and closeness to both Lucky and her daughter. Looking ahead, Lucky's daughter is determined to continue her personal and professional development, harboring aspirations of exploring her entrepreneurial spirit. She hopes to eventually provide for her mother in the same way that Lucky has selflessly supported her throughout her life. Their bond of love, support, and mutual ambition serves as a powerful testament to the enduring strength of family ties and the transformative power of determination and perseverance.



## Rasida Akter



Rasida Akter's journey at Epyllion Textiles Ltd. began in 2006 when she joined as an Assistant Technician. Through her dedication and hard work, she steadily progressed through the ranks, transitioning from Technician to Technical Officer, then to Assistant Officer, and eventually Senior Officer. Today, she holds the esteemed position of Assistant Technical Manager, a testament to her remarkable career advancement within the company. Rasida's path to success was not without its challenges. Married off at a young age, she faced interruptions in her education. Despite these obstacles, Rasida persevered, driven by her desire to provide a better future for her family. However, after 18 months of work, she encountered resistance from her family, particularly her in-laws, who pressured her to quit her job. In the face of adversity, Rasida found solace and support from her colleagues and seniors at the factory, who provided counseling and encouragement to persevere. Fueled by her determination

to secure a brighter future for her children, Rasida refused to succumb to the pressure and continued to forge ahead in her career.

Her efforts bore fruit as her children excelled academically, paving the way for a promising future. Rasida's contributions extended beyond her family as she successfully built two homes for herself and her loved ones, a testament to her hard work and dedication.

But Rasida's journey doesn't end here. Driven by her thirst for knowledge and personal growth, she has embarked on a journey to complete her HSC, furthering her education while balancing her professional responsibilities. From starting at the bottom to ascending to a managerial role, Rasida is proud to shoulder responsibilities and is determined to continue her upward trajectory. Her aspirations know no bounds, and she remains committed to achieving greater heights in both her career and personal development.

## Sofia Begum



Sofia Begum has been a dedicated employee at Cute Dress Industries Ltd for the past six years, where she has worked tirelessly to support her family. Her son, Liton Ahmed, is currently pursuing a degree in Management Information Systems at Dhaka University, a source of immense pride and hope for Sofia. The journey to this point hasn't been easy for Sofia. When her son was much younger, her husband fell ill and was unable to work, leaving the responsibility of providing for the family squarely on her shoulders. Determined to make ends meet, Sofia started her career at Cute Dress Industries as a helper. Through hard work and perseverance, she has since risen to the position of an operator, demonstrating her dedication and skill. Despite facing numerous hardships

associated with working in an industrial setting, Sofia remained steadfast, buoyed by the support of the factory management. Her unwavering commitment to her family's well-being has been unwavering throughout her journey.

Sofia's greatest joy comes from seeing her son excel academically, knowing that his education holds the promise of a brighter future. She harbors hopes that Liton will complete his studies and secure a government job through the Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination.

Until that day comes, Sofia remains committed to her work, knowing that it is crucial for supporting her son's education and eventual entry into the job market. Her selflessness and dedication serve as a testament to the sacrifices parents make for their children's futures.

## Mousumi Akhter



Mousumi Akhter hails from Gaibandha, Bangladesh, where she grew up with four sisters and three brothers. Despite her limited education, having studied only till SSC, Mousumi embarked on a remarkable journey of self-improvement and professional growth. She began her career at Northern Tosrifa Garments as a line reporter, but her determination and aptitude led her to transition into the role of a mechanic.

Her pivotal moment came when the management of Northern Tosrifa Garments decided to allocate one of their factory floors for sewing operations, predominantly staffed by female workers, including mechanics and electricians. In this male-dominated field, Mousumi stood out as one of the two female mechanics. The transition presented its challenges, but with the support of her seniors and the management, she overcame the initial hurdles and found herself driven to excel.

The company recognized Mousumi's potential and provided her with the necessary training and mentorship.

Starting with just one factory line, her exceptional performance and further training enabled her to tackle more complex tasks. Today, she adeptly handles the mechanical needs of an entire factory floor, a testament to her hard work and dedication.

Despite facing social stigma, Mousumi remained undeterred, buoyed by her can-do attitude. Her perseverance has paid off handsomely, as she now earns significantly more in her new position. This financial stability has transformed her role within her family, allowing her to become the breadwinner, construct her home in her hometown, and invest in agricultural land.

Looking to the future, Mousumi aspires to further her expertise in the field, aiming to work with more intricate machinery and eventually become an engineer. Her ultimate goal is to lead her own team, a dream supported by her company's encouragement and motivation. Mousumi's journey serves as an inspiration, highlighting the transformative power of determination and hard work.

## Soniya Akter



Soniya, an employee of SHIN SHIN Group, has been working diligently as a helper in the cutting section of a factory for the past two years. Her journey to employment in the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) industry is particularly remarkable considering her physical disability, which she has had since birth. Despite facing numerous challenges and struggling to find employment, Soniya's unwavering resolve ultimately led her to a fulfilling job where she could contribute to her family's livelihood.

Her dedication and hard work have not only enabled her to support her family but also serve as an inspiration to others facing

similar challenges. Soniya's story is emblematic of the resilience and determination exhibited by many individuals with disabilities working in the RMG industry. Refusing to let their physical limitations define them, they strive to carve out meaningful careers and lead fulfilling lives. Soniya's example underscores the importance of creating inclusive workplaces that value diversity and provide equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their abilities. Her success serves as a testament to the human spirit's capacity to overcome obstacles and achieve greatness through perseverance and determination.



# Unleashing Heritage of Bangladesh

## Khadi Fest



The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters (BGMEA) has been working to promote and celebrate the cultural and heritage treasures of Bangladesh, especially exploring the opportunity of exporting garments linking rich culture and heritage of Bangladesh with

fashion. The aim is to develop high-end fashionable garments blending local culture and heritage and taking them to global customers. In a spectacular showcase of Bangladesh's cultural richness and commitment to sustainable fashion, BGMEA proudly partnered with the

Fashion Design Council of Bangladesh (FDCB) to present the "KHADI THE FUTURE FABRIC SHOW" on January 19th and 20th, 2024. This two-day extravaganza aimed to spotlight the timeless beauty of Khadi. The festival featured a mesmerizing runway show where local designers



unveiled future fashion trends, emphasizing the versatility and eco-friendliness of Khadi. Beyond the glamour of the catwalk, the event also paid homage to the meticulous craftsmanship of artisans, who intricately designed handmade Khadi outfits and accessories. Far from being just a fashion event, the festival served as a platform to champion the potential of Khadi as

a sustainable fabric. BGMEA President Faruque Hassan said, "The Khadi Fest 2024 celebrates our cultural heritage and underscores Khadi's potential as a sustainable and eco-friendly fabric. This collaboration signifies our commitment to promoting ethical and environmentally conscious practices in the fashion industry." BGMEA is actively promoting fiber diversification with the garment

industry of Bangladesh, with a strong focus on sustainable fibers. The aim is to transform the industry into a more eco-friendly apparel manufacturing hub. The use of diverse heritage materials like Khadi adds a new dimension to the garment industry. It reflects Bangladesh's commitment to weaving sustainability into the fabric of fashion. The Khadi Festival served as a





bridge between centuries-old traditions and the contemporary global fashion landscape. The festival aspired to connect Bangladesh's local heritage with high-end fashion by infusing traditional handloom fabrics with contemporary designs. The goal is to inspire fashion possibilities while showcasing the talents of Bangladesh's artisans on the global stage.

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The Khadi Festival showcased how tradition, innovation, and sustainability can be woven together into the vibrant tapestry of Bangladesh's textile future. The goal is to connect the remarkable artisans and craftspeople of Bangladesh with global fashion enthusiasts, celebrating the country's unique contribution to the world of fashion. <sup>A</sup>

# Khadi Collection by BUFT Student Shines at Khadi Festival



The “KHADI: The Future Fabric Show” was organized on January 19th and 20th, 2024 to spotlight the cultural heritage of Bangladesh. The event, a testament to the timeless allure of Khadi, showcased the work of four talented students from the BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (BUFT). With their Khadi collections, these budding

designers brought forth a fusion of heritage and contemporary style, captivating audiences with their creative interpretations of Bangladesh’s cultural fabric. Khadi, renowned for its hand-spun and woven natural fibers, embodies the essence of Bangladesh’s rich heritage. Its unique texture, breathability, and versatility have

long been cherished by artisans and fashion enthusiasts alike. At the heart of the event were the collections presented by the BUFT students, each piece meticulously crafted to pay homage to Bangladesh’s cultural heritage while embracing modern sensibilities. “My Khadi Collection,” shared Mijanur Rahaman Mijan (Abir), a





fashion design student at BUFT, “is a tribute to Bangladesh’s cultural heritage.” With a focus on sustainability and eco-friendly practices, Abir’s collection weaves together tradition and contemporary elegance, offering a glimpse into the beauty of spring inspired by nature. Jakia Aforze, another student from BUFT, drew inspiration from the purity of nature, incorporating traditional elements into her designs while keeping the Khadi fabric in its original white color. Her creations radiate a sense of timeless elegance, symbolizing the marriage of tradition and sustainability that Khadi represents.

Meanwhile, Maysha Ferdous’s collection took inspiration from nature’s captivating smoke patterns, translating their ethereal beauty into stunning textures and designs. Through her work, Maysha invites viewers to appreciate the delicate intricacies of the natural world, making a profound statement on the runway with fabric manipulation techniques. Tajbir Jahan, in her collection themed “Nabanna,” celebrated the harvest season in Bangladesh, drawing inspiration from the vibrant colors of crops and the spirit of the festival. Her designs reflect the joyous festivities and cultural significance of Nabanna, weaving

together elements of tradition and modernity with finesse. As these BUFT students showcased their Khadi collections, they not only demonstrated their creative prowess but also highlighted the enduring relevance of Khadi in the world of fashion. With a nod to tradition and an eye on the future, they are paving the way for Khadi to shine as the fabric of choice for conscious fashion enthusiasts worldwide. As Khadi continues to evolve, fueled by sustainability and innovation, its journey from the looms of Bangladesh to the global stage promises to be nothing short of extraordinary. **A**

# A Synthesis of Architectural Beauty and Spiritual Tranquility

**Zebun Nessa Mosque**

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Bangladesh stands as the second largest ready-made garment exporter globally. This remarkable achievement is a testament to the unwavering dedication of resilient entrepreneurs and workers. The garment factories in Bangladesh are committed to ensuring workplace safety, promoting workers' well-being, and fostering environmental sustainability. One such inspiring initiative was taken by Fashion Forum Limited, a concern of IDS Group. The factory has built a mosque named "The Zebun Nessa Mosque" -- a

synthesis of architectural beauty and spiritual tranquility. Nestled amidst the bustling industrial outskirts of Dhaka, at Jamgora in Ashulia, this magnificent structure, conceived as a "breathing pavilion," blends architectural innovation with spiritual tranquility. And is a breath of fresh air and mental peace for all irrespective of religious belief amidst the hustle of industry. Idris Shakur, Managing Director of IDS Group, built the mosque for the workers of Fashion Forum Limited. The mosque is named in memory of his late mother. It symbolizes a

belief in fostering mutual care and trust between the owner and the workers within the industrial compound.

This architectural marvel is designed by architect Saiqa Iqbal Meghna from Bangladesh. IDS Address Maker Ltd, a real estate concern of IDS Group, contributed to making this structure into a reality. Md Farhad Ahmed contributed to the construction of the Mosque as chief site engineer.

Made in a monolithic form, the structure of the mosque has been designed harnessing the natural



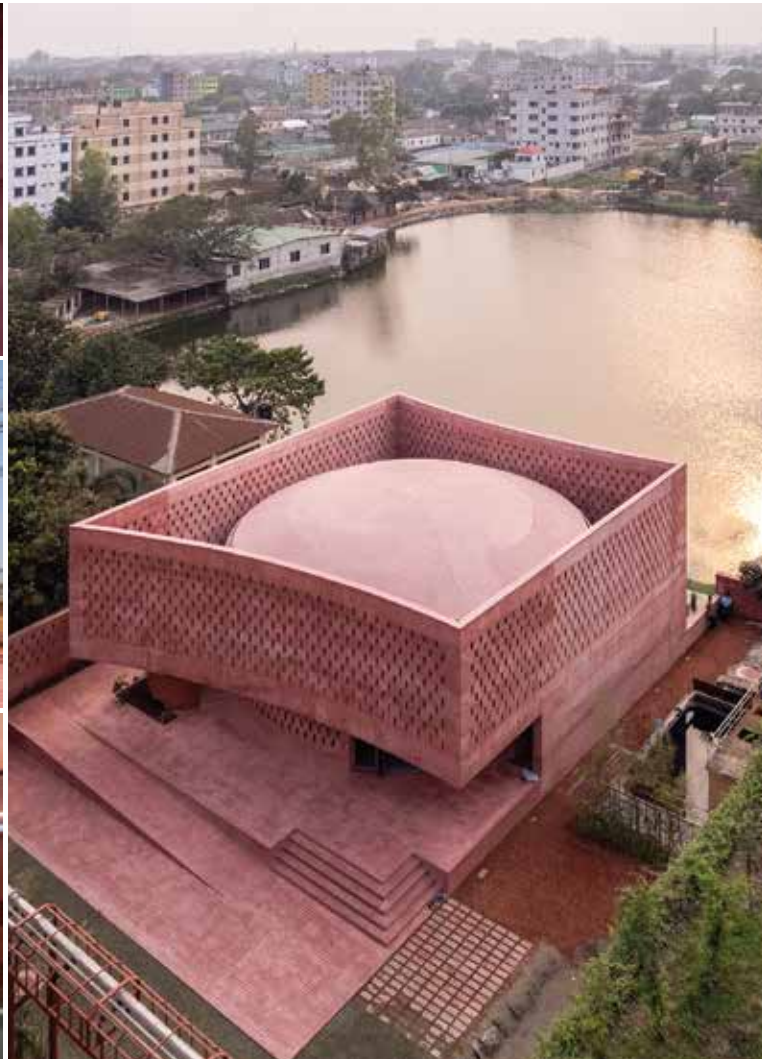


Photo: Asif Salman

elements of light and air. The mosque incorporates elements that allow for filtered natural light and ventilation, creating a “breathing pavilion”. The plan of the mosque evolves from simple geometric shapes, with a square surrounding a circular volume to create four enclosed gardens that serve as light courts on each side. The outer square volume melts into subtle curves in the east and west directions to interact with the site forces. The thick concrete walls are perforated with small rectangular voids. Filtered light seeping through the voids resembles hanging lanterns of old mosques.

The double layered thick walls create a microclimatic atmosphere within the mosque ensuring thermal comfort. Sunlight plays inside the garden-courts along the ‘jaali’ openings and reflects into the interior spaces while the heat dissipates out from interior. Being in a hot and humid climate the mosque is designed and encouraged to be a true naturally ventilated space where cool breeze passes through all openings coming from the outside natural waterbody that flows across the sequence of constructed water-pool to the interior prayer hall to outdoor elevated plinth surface. The doors

and other thresholds are all made with perforated metal sheets to ensure filtered flow of wind during the heavy monsoon. All these features establish the very idea of a ‘breathing pavilion’, a deeply rooted architecture form of this tropical climate.

A shallow thin shell dome levitates over the perforated curve walls, elevating the singular interiority of the prayer hall. The floating dome evokes the structural ingenuity of covering large space without intermediate supports manifested through chronological development of mosque architecture in the Islamic world. **A**

# A Data Hub in ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) Schemes

Digital Data Disclosure Platform of BGMEA



ESG Dashboard of Digital Data Disclosure Platform

There is an unrivaled demand for information in the form of data in the process of global supply chains in the Ready-Made Garments (RMG) Industry. Companies are held responsible not just by the governments but also by the consumers, investors, and non-governmental organizations along with several stakeholder groups who are continuously putting pressures on global and local corporations to report their social and environmental effects. Not surprisingly, foreign buyers and business partners also want to publicly disclose their social and environmental performances. This subsequently affects the manufacturers' ability to offer credible data on their social and environmental impacts. Given the

context, BGMEA, being the apex trade body of the Bangladesh RMG industry, has published its first sustainability report in the year 2020 based on GRI (Global Reporting Initiative) standards, in collaboration with GIZ. Now, the 2nd sustainability report is due to be published at the end of 2024. To make the report more comprehensive and data oriented it is imperative to collect exhaustive data from the member factories. It is also imperative to create a user-friendly data disclosure platform through which member factories of BGMEA can have their own system of sustainability reporting. However, aggregated and up-to-date data on the economic, social, and environmental footprint of BGMEA

members is lacking at the industry level right now. As a result, there is a scarcity of data that may demonstrate BGMEA members' effectiveness in reducing their social and environmental imprint, as envisaged in the 'BGMEA's Sustainability Vision 2030'. Nevertheless, boosting the availability of aggregated data on the industry's sustainability performance would significantly benefit the BGMEA's communication efforts to improve the image of Made in Bangladesh. The BGMEA recognizes the importance of upgrading data management systems at the association and factory levels. For this purpose, the Responsible Business Hub (RBH) Unit of BGMEA is already in the phase of developing a Digital Data



Disclosure Platform which will collect and visualize ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) related data of the industry. The platform is designed in a very comprehensive way and aligned with BGMEA SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIC VISION 2030. The platform will maintain a Non-Disclosure Policy (NDA) policy indicating that it will not disclose any individual factory's data; only the aggregated information of the industry will be shown.

Every individual factory will open a separate account in the platform by providing basic information along with their individual email addresses and password. This will generate a signal to the admin panel of BGMEA to approve the account. After the verification and the approval from the admin panel of the platform an individual profile will be generated for the individual factories where they can observe the ESG dashboard with the overall standpoint of the industry. Also they can provide their necessary inputs by answering the set of questions relevant to

Environmental, Social and Governance aspects of their factory. Besides getting a comprehensive overview, the dashboard will also provide a year to year data

comparison of the factories and the industry.

To acquire useful data from its members, RBH Unit, BGMEA are providing Sustainability Data Management Training to the mid and senior level managers of the factories in association with GIZ. BGMEA is providing this training at the factory level to build up the capacity of the factory management on the benefits of data-driven decision making, as well as to encourage closer collaboration between the sustainability and IT departments and to strengthen the technical capacities of the respective staff members. Also, we are expecting to showcase the trained factories data on the Environment, Social and Governance schemes in our digital data platform once the trainings are successfully provided to the targeted number of members during the project period. It is hoped that this platform will work as an integral resource for our industry in the near future. <sup>A</sup>

## SIGN UP

Factory Name \*

Enter Factory Name

User Designation

Testfac10@gmail.com

Password \*

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Email \*

Enter Email

Phone Number \*


+88 \_\_\_\_\_

Confirm Password \*


Enter Confirm Password

Next →


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# Nurturing Minds, Enriching Futures

Reaz Public School

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The ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh is one of the major driving forces behind the socioeconomic transformation of Bangladesh. The industry has contributed to lifting millions out of poverty and propelling the nation into becoming a middle-income country. Its enormous impact extends beyond economic growth, with many garment factories exhibiting a profound commitment to their employees, the environment, and society at large. Reaz Public

School is such a shining example set by Epyllion Group, illuminating a path of inspiration for others. Epyllion Group stands as a premier conglomerate in Bangladesh, driven by a profound belief in the potential of the human spirit. With a steadfast commitment to bolstering the nation's economy, Epyllion Group has emerged as a pivotal player in fostering socio-economic progress. In addition to its economic endeavors, Epyllion Group has been actively participating in social

development through different CSR projects implemented by Epyllion Foundation.

Nestled in the heart of Nabiganj, Narayanganj, Reaz Public School (RPS) stands as a testament to the transformative power of education. Established on January, 23 as a signature Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) project of Epyllion Group, RPS has emerged as a beacon of hope, offering international-standard education facilities to children in the



community. With a commitment to providing quality education to all, regardless of their background, RPS is more than just a school – it's a catalyst for social change.

The genesis of RPS can be traced back to the visionary founders' aspiration to bridge the gap in educational opportunities within the community. With a clear vision and unwavering determination, the school embarked on its journey, marking milestones of progress and achievement along the way. From its humble beginnings to its current stature, RPS continues to evolve, guided by the principles of excellence and inclusivity.

At RPS, academic excellence is not just a goal; it's a way of life. With a dynamic curriculum and innovative teaching methodologies, the school cultivates a culture of learning that goes beyond textbooks. From elementary to class six, students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to excel academically and beyond. With a student-teacher ratio of 11:1, personalized attention ensures that every child reaches their full potential.

Through a plethora of extracurricular activities, including clubs like the Cultural Club and SEED Club, Linguistic and cultural clubs where students are encouraged to explore their interests and talents. From yoga and physical exercises to arts and crafts, the school provides ample opportunities for students to discover their passions and unleash their creativity.

Beyond the confines of the classroom, RPS actively engages with the community. Through initiatives like the Environment Club and collaborations with universities like Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST), students are empowered to make a difference in the world around them. By instilling a sense of social responsibility, RPS nurtures future leaders who are committed to positive change. Already RPS Students have started showing their talent as students have secured first



place at national cultural completion at Upazila level by receiving highest number of awards. As RPS looks to the future, its vision remains unwavering: to provide affordable, quality education for every child. With expansion projects on the horizon and a commitment to continuous improvement, the school aims to reach even greater heights of excellence. By fostering a love for learning and cultivating a supportive environment, RPS strives to empower every student to realize their dreams and aspirations.

In a world where education is the key to unlocking endless possibilities, Reaz Public School shines as a beacon of hope and opportunity. With its steadfast commitment to quality, inclusivity, and excellence, the school is not just shaping minds but also transforming lives. As it continues on its journey of growth and innovation, RPS remains dedicated to its mission of nurturing the next generation of leaders, thinkers, and changemakers. <sup>A</sup>

# Ushering in The Future

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**Azfar Hassan**

Our RMG industry, the lifeline of Bangladesh's economy, boasts a remarkable journey since its beginning. The pioneering spirit of the first generation, their dedication, and astute leadership laid the foundation for this success. They have navigated uncharted waters, created an investment-friendly climate, taking big risks which ultimately propelled Bangladesh to become one of the most leading sustainable sourcing destinations. From the humble beginnings of the industry to the present moment, each step has been imbued with lessons learned, countless challenges overcome, and achievements celebrated. Bangladesh does neither grow cotton, nor is it an integrated producer of textiles, but we have already emerged as the second largest apparel exporting country in the world. This is an example of our entrepreneurial spirit and resilience and the dedication of millions of our workers

are behind this achievement.

I grew up in this industry, my father and all his 5 brothers are involved in this sector and almost every other conversation during family dinners would be about textile and garments. I remember hearing the words Yarn, Cm, Dia, Gsm so much growing up— I never thought these would also become a part of my daily conversations. I now recall fondly the stories of perseverance and resilience passed down through generations. The stories of struggles and challenges that we now cannot even imagine trying to tackle. These are guiding us through moments of uncertainty and inspiring us to push the boundaries of what's possible. I truly believe what's possible is endless and the time is now.

As we stand on the cusp of a new era defined by technological advancements, ever-shifting consumer demands,



excellence in ESG, innovation, diversification, and evolving economic landscape of our country including graduation to a Middle Income Country, the responsibility to carry forward this rich legacy falls squarely on the shoulders of the next generation. It necessitates strategic interventions to empower the young minds. The youth, brimming with fresh perspectives, adaptability, and digital prowess – I truly believe are uniquely equipped to navigate these complexities. As stewards of this new age, we have the privilege and responsibility to harness the opportunities to create meaningful impact, and address the pressing challenges of our time. And I believe we will be able to successfully steer to our goal, if we can utilize our collective strengths we each bring to the table. As a founding Board member of Bangladesh Apparel Youth Leaders Association (BAYLA) – I am surrounded by exceptionally smart women and men who are hungry to succeed, eager to make changes, ready for any challenge that come their way and I can confidently say that Bangladesh is in good hands. It's great to see that our entrepreneurs are focusing on moving up the value chain as our RMG is heavily based on cotton – there have been a lot of investments in man-made fibers as well as value added goods like lingerie and technical apparels. Our import of non-cotton fibers and textiles is also following an increasing trend. At the consumer level, 75% of global apparel consumption is non-cotton and 57.5% of global textile trade is non-cotton. This brings me to the challenges – we are very dependent on imported raw materials, the requirement of capital investment and energy. The lack of technology, skills and the slow and steady approach to innovation also makes it very difficult for these investments to sustain. "Beyond Cotton: A Strategic Blueprint for



Fiber Diversification in Bangladesh Apparel Industry", which was unveiled on 3 March 2024 by BGMEA. This report delves into the changing global fiber mix, explores emerging trends impacting our industry's future, and provides an in-depth analysis of Bangladesh's current and future value chain structure. It's an interesting read for the current and future investors on non-cotton and value-added products. I think for us to continue this spectacular growth of the Bangladesh RMG industry, we need to keep our focus on upgrading our technologies, invest our time and money on sustainable processes and products, innovation in both our product and the process, and believe in the power of training and upskilling our people. We should make investments in circular fashion, renewable energy and other energy efficient technologies. I would urge my fellow young entrepreneurs to expand and grow but with the right plan and market study in place. I would like to bring up BGMEA and how undoubtedly it serves as the platform to foster the transition the industry is going through right now. The increasing appearance and involvement of the next generation in the leadership is quite inspiring. The association is quite successfully making its transition

toward its future vision bringing in fresh perspectives to the table. Especially in the last 3 years, there has been a paradigm shift in changing the focus from 'now' to the 'future'. The establishment of innovation center, the future center, the circular fashion unit and the responsible business hub signifies a broader transition towards more inclusive and forward-thinking direction. The futuristic vision and tireless efforts by the Honorable President of BGMEA Mr. Faruque Hasan and his Board has presented the "BGMEA Sustainability Vision 2030" with a renewed corporate identity symbolizing growth, transformation, sustainability and inclusivity. Mr. Hassan has made BGMEA Global and BANGLADESH Proud – his continuous efforts to unlock opportunities for the RMG industry, tap into unexplored trade potential, ensuring favorable trade terms in Bangladesh and abroad just to name a few – his achievements have been unparalleled. With gratitude for the past and optimism for the future, may we continue to write the next chapters of our entrepreneurial legacy with passion, integrity, and boundless ambition. **A**

*Azfar Hassan is a Director at Giant Group.*

# The Imperative for Skilling in Bangladesh Apparel Industry

## Navigating the Future

In an era marked by rapid technological advancements and the pervasive influence of artificial intelligence, Many industries, including the ready-made garment sector in Bangladesh, are undergoing a profound transformation. As automation and sophisticated machinery become integral to production processes, the demand for a skilled workforce capable of navigating these innovations has become more pressing than ever. The imperative for skilling, reskilling, and up-skilling within the RMG industry of Bangladesh is paramount, particularly as the sector endeavors to ascend the value chain by delivering high-end products and enhancing productivity. To shed light on this crucial matter, young entrepreneurs have shared their insights with The Apparel Story.



**Rafia Anowar**

Director, Textown Group

In the recent years, stakeholders across the RMG industry have been feeling the importance and urgency to diversify Bangladesh's product category and to move up the value chain aiming high-end and high-value product categories. Achieving this goal and being able to position ourselves as a competitive player in the high-value garment segment will drastically drive economic growth and increase employment opportunities. Skilling, re-skilling, and up-skilling are the key areas we need to address and proactively work on as an industry in order to achieve this goal.

Skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling workforce is perhaps the most important aspect in moving up the value-chain as an industry. If we take for example the relatively newer product categories such as Lingerie and Outerwear, these industries require certain niche technical skills that are not yet common in our existing pool of human resource. The challenges that we are currently facing in our Group's Outerwear facility (Glamour Dresses Limited) include the availability of technical know-how of certain operations. These issues consequently result in decreased productivity, efficiency and most importantly quality issues. As a group, we differentiate ourselves in the market with our quality and commitment and as such we acted on these challenges and have been seeing visible results in all 3 of these factory metrics all owing to skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling.

I believe we must develop a skilled workforce in the following ways in order to prepare ourselves for the challenges that lie ahead in these critical product categories. The sector needs to invest in training and development programs through Vocational Training facilities that would address skilling, re-skilling and up-skilling. Here interested personnel from all types of factories

(knit, woven and high-value categories) or graduates can attend. For instance, a graduate with passion for Technical & Quality aspects of Active Wear/Sports Wear product category should have this avenue to get her/his career kick-started here - that would be Skilling. Industries can also opt to send their existing workforce to these Training Centres for up-skilling and re-skilling based on interests and needs.

It is absolutely necessary to develop a learning culture through which we can share knowledge and skill, otherwise the industry will not progress. Due to this gap - on a factory level, these high-value products are currently being developed with the help of the expertise we are hiring from overseas. The responsibility that we have as owners is to ensure that our workforce is being developed sustainably so that we are self-sufficient in the future.

In conclusion, I believe our industry is mature enough to adapt our workforce through skilling, re-Skilling and up-skilling initiatives. It will ensure that the workforce remains adaptable to changing market demands and technological advancements, enabling the industry to sustain long-term growth and success.





## Anik Podder

Director, Panam Group

The impact of rising energy and labor costs on Bangladesh's garment manufacturing sector cannot be overstated. With energy expenses on the rise and labor wages steadily increasing, maintaining competitiveness in the global market becomes increasingly challenging. To remain viable, businesses must find ways to enhance efficiency, minimize waste, and maximize productivity across all facets of their operations. One promising avenue for addressing these challenges lies in the adoption of advanced technology. By incorporating automation and digital manufacturing technologies into the production process, manufacturers can streamline operations, improve productivity, and achieve more consistent quality. From automated cutting machines and auto chemical and dye dispensing machines to auto folding and packing machines, technology offers unprecedented opportunities to drive efficiency and innovation within the industry.

However, the successful integration of advanced technology hinges upon the availability of a skilled and adaptable workforce. In order to leverage the full potential of these technologies, businesses must invest in reskilling and upskilling their employees. Training programs and

professional development initiatives can empower workers with the technical expertise needed to operate and maintain advanced machinery, thereby enhancing productivity and ensuring a smooth transition to efficient manufacturing processes. One crucial area where upskilling and the implementation of advanced technology will play a pivotal role is in the market's pivot towards more value-added products. In the context of Bangladesh's garment manufacturing industry, the imperative for value addition is paramount, particularly as market dynamics shift and margins on basic products become increasingly narrow. While Bangladesh has long been celebrated for its proficiency in producing basic apparel items at competitive prices, relying solely on this segment poses inherent risks in an evolving global market. The reliance on basic products exposes manufacturers to intense competition from other low-cost producers, leading to downward pressure on prices and margins. As more countries enter the market and production capacities expand, the oversupply of basic garments further exacerbates this challenge, making it increasingly difficult for manufacturers to maintain profitability. One of the key solutions lies in upskilling the labor force. By investing in training programs and education initiatives, manufacturers can empower workers with the skills and knowledge needed to adapt to changing technologies and production processes. Upskilling not only increases the efficiency of operations but also opens doors to higher-value segments of the market, such as customization, premium products, and sustainable manufacturing.

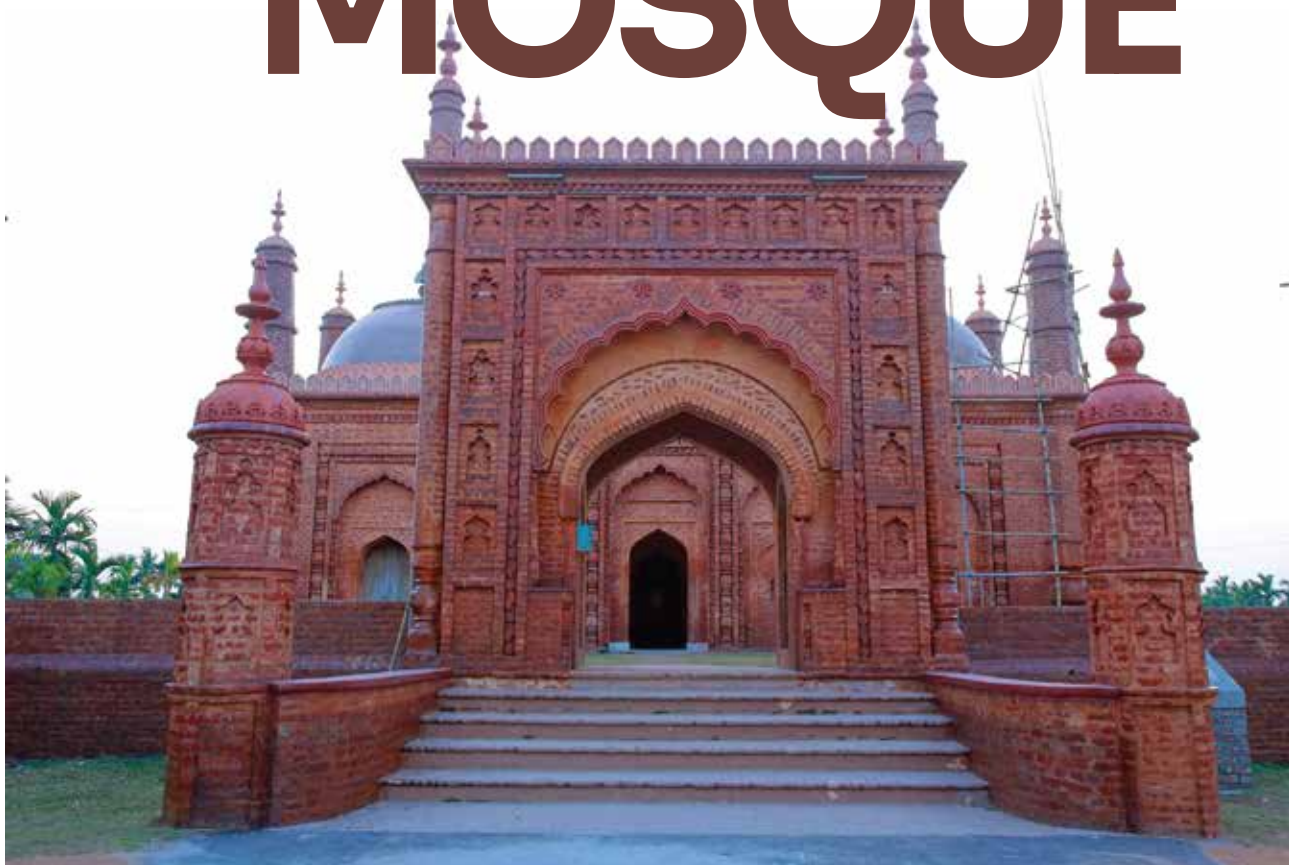
While individual organizations need tailored training programs, addressing this at the macro level requires an industry-wide training campaign to upskill the workforce. Organizations such as BGMEA and BKMEA are uniquely positioned to address this need by leveraging their

resources, networks, and expertise to establish comprehensive training programs tailored to adapting to new technology within the industry. Of course, embracing advanced technology requires significant capital investment. From acquiring state-of-the-art machinery to implementing digital infrastructure, the upfront costs can be substantial. While the long-term benefits in terms of efficiency gains, cost savings, and competitive advantage far outweigh the initial investment, the initial financial burden may be tough to overcome for small-medium enterprises. Over time, failure to adapt to changing technology may lead to a loss of market competitiveness and erosion of a sizeable segment of SMEs in the industry.

BGMEA and BKMEA serve as advocates for the industry, and they need to work together with government agencies and policymakers to provide support and incentives for technological upskilling initiatives. By highlighting the importance of investing in human capital and technology development, these platforms can help create an enabling environment for businesses to embrace innovation and remain competitive in the global market. Moreover, government incentives and industry partnerships can help alleviate the financial burden and accelerate the adoption of advanced technology across the sector.

In essence, the challenges posed by rising energy and labor costs in Bangladesh's garment manufacturing industry are daunting, but not insurmountable. By embracing innovation, investing in upskilling initiatives, and leveraging advanced technology, businesses can not only survive but thrive in a rapidly evolving market. As we look forward, collaboration and strategic investment in upskilling and technological advancements will be key to remaining market competitive and securing a brighter future for all stakeholders involved. **A**

# BALIA MOSQUE



Balia Masjid is located in Balia village, 15 km from Thakurgaon Sadar. Historical records indicate that the construction of this mosque was initiated by local zamindar Gulmati Chaudhurani in 1860.

However, it is noteworthy that all activities were overseen by her husband, Meher Bux Chowdhury, whose ancestors are believed to have settled in this area during the Mughal period. Artisans were

brought from Delhi for the construction of the mosque. Construction progressed through various stages until Meher Bux Chowdhury's passing in 1905, after which the mosque's development





stalled due to several reasons. The architectural style of this mosque, with its three domes, is captivating. It spans an area of 62 feet from east to west and 69 feet from north to south. The rectangular mosque can be divided into three parts: the entrance with stairs, the open square, and the main prayer hall. The roof of the mosque majestically

shows off three domes of equal size and eight minarets, with four large minarets positioned at the corners and the remaining four being smaller. The entire mosque, including its foundation, is constructed from lime-surki mortar and hand-burnt bricks. Various designs have been created by shaping bricks in different ways

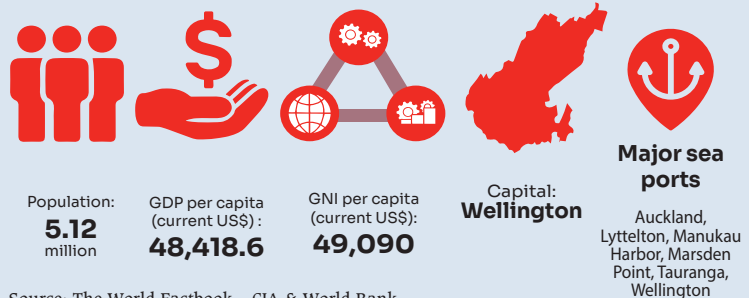
along the walls of the mosque. Over time, the mosque fell into disrepair, but from 2005 to 2010, it was rebuilt to replicate its original architecture. It is rare in this country to witness such dedication to the restoration of an ancient mosque. Every day, people from far and wide flock to catch a glimpse of this exquisite mosque. **A**

# Tapping the Emerging Market: New Zealand

New Zealand, an island nation nestled in the southwestern Pacific Ocean, boasts a diverse geography ranging from snowcapped mountains to lowland plains. Comprising two main landmasses, the North Island and the South Island, along with numerous smaller islands, it is a country of stunning natural beauty. The capital city, Wellington, and the largest urban area, Auckland, are both situated on the North Island. With a free market economy and membership in key economic organizations like the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), New Zealand has positioned itself as a significant player in the global marketplace. In terms of its relationship with Bangladesh, bilateral trade has been steadily growing, facilitated by duty-free market access that Bangladesh has enjoyed in New Zealand since 2001. Despite ranking as the 40th import and 27th export trading partner of New Zealand, the trend of bilateral trade between the two nations is on an upward trajectory.

In 2022-23, New Zealand's total exports of goods and services to Bangladesh amounted to USD \$326.63 million, while imports stood at USD \$131.91 million, resulting in a trade balance of USD \$292.61 million and a total trade value of USD \$458.54 million. This burgeoning trade relationship underscores the mutual benefits derived from the exchange of goods between the two nations. As both countries continue to explore opportunities for collaboration and economic partnership, the prospects for further growth and cooperation remain promising.

## Demographic and Economic Overview of New Zealand



Source: The World Factbook – CIA & World Bank

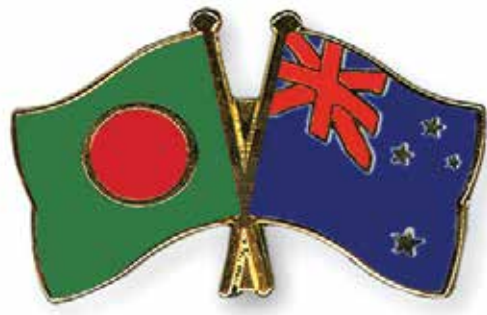


# Bilateral Trade:

Table-1: Bilateral trade between Bangladesh and New Zealand  
(Value in million USD)

Year	BD's Export to New Zealand	BD's Import from New Zealand	Trade Balance
2017-18	83.38	186.57	-103.20
2018-19	91.79	241.84	-150.05
2019-20	82.07	243.76	-161.69
2020-21	104.30	225.11	-120.81
2021-22	117.98	281.32	-163.34
2022-23	131.91	326.63	-194.72

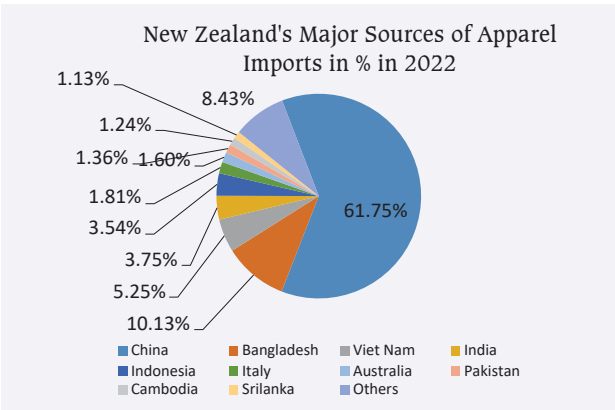
Source: Bangladesh Bank and Export Promotion Bureau (EPB)



# New Zealand's Clothing Import from the World:

Though Bangladesh is the second largest apparel sourcing country of New Zealand, the share of Bangladesh in New Zealand's total RMG import is only 10.13%. In 2022, New Zealand imported USD 138.09 million apparel from Bangladesh. China tops as a supplier with 61.75% share.

Exporters	2020	2021	2022	Share in 2022
China	631.90	839.56	841.81	61.75%
<b>Bangladesh</b>	<b>93.51</b>	<b>124.91</b>	<b>138.09</b>	<b>10.13%</b>
Viet Nam	40.12	55.46	71.62	5.25%
India	33.04	48.11	51.18	3.75%
Indonesia	30.52	42.63	48.24	3.54%
Italy	14.92	21.92	24.66	1.81%
Others	140.48	176.53	187.61	13.76%
<b>Total</b>	<b>984.50</b>	<b>1309.11</b>	<b>1363.21</b>	<b>100.0%</b>



# Bangladesh's Clothing Export to New Zealand:

New Zealand is one of the nontraditional markets for Bangladesh RMG industry. Bangladesh's RMG export to New Zealand reached US\$ 125.43 million in FY2022-23 with increased 13% year-on-year growth.

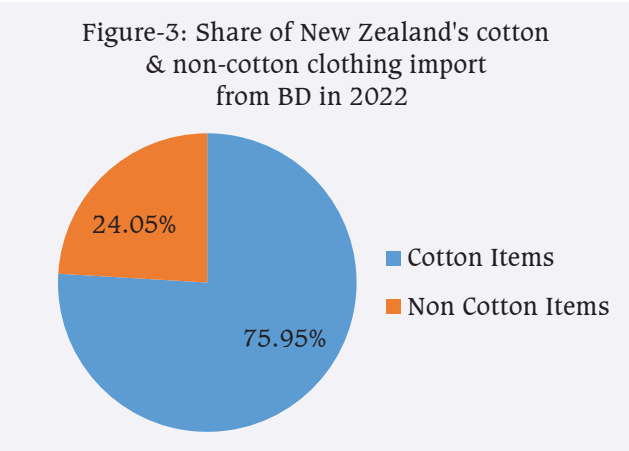
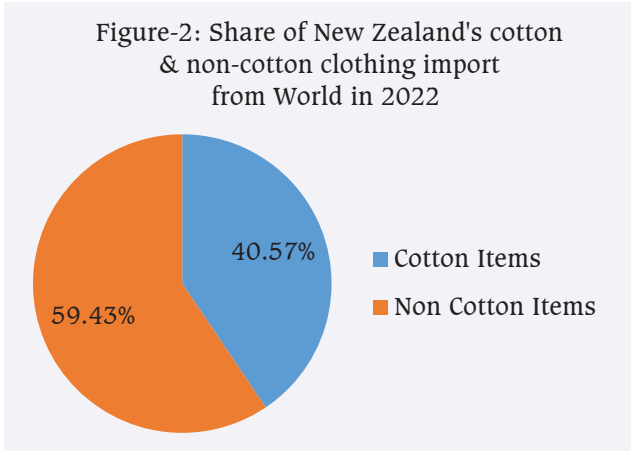
Table 3: BD's Knit, Woven and Total apparel Export to New Zealand (Value in million USD)\*

Year	Knit	Woven	Total	Growth
2012-2013	26.85	10.78	37.63	33.44%
2013-2014	26.51	11.09	37.59	-0.09%
2014-2015	32.01	13.98	45.99	22.33%
2015-2016	41.62	19.64	61.26	33.20%
2016-2017	42.72	19.38	62.10	1.37%
2017-2018	53.68	23.39	77.08	24.11%
2018-2019	51.35	30.27	81.62	5.89%
2019-2020	48.53	26.29	74.82	-8.32%
2020-2021	63.78	32.90	96.68	29.21%
2021-2022	77.65	33.35	111.00	14.81%
2022-2023	90.18	35.25	125.43	13.00%

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

## New Zealand's cotton & non-cotton clothing import share in 2022

New Zealand imported USD 1.36 billion worth of apparel from the world where the share of cotton made items was 40.57%. On the other hand, the share of non-cotton items by New Zealand from Bangladesh was 24.05% only of total apparel imports while the share of cotton items was 75.95%.





# New Zealand's Major Clothing Items Import from Different Countries in the World

Following Table-4 shows the top 20 clothing items imported by New Zealand from Bangladesh and competitor countries of Bangladesh in 2022 and the Compound Average Growth Rate (CAGR) of those clothing import by New Zealand from the world during 2017-2022.

Table-4: New Zealand's top 20 imported items from the world and major countries in 2022 (Value in MN USD)

HS	Products	2017	2022	China	BD	Viet Nam	India	Indonesia	Italy	Australia	CAGR of New Zealand's import from world (2017 - 2022)
610910	Cotton knitted T-shirts	70.47	99.82	38.35	37.24	2.40	7.92	0.25	1.30	0.99	7.21%
611020	Cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	34.88	68.53	41.20	8.90	1.92	2.35	0.85	1.58	0.82	14.46%
620342	M/B cotton woven trousers	46.35	63.15	31.70	14.96	3.47	1.78	1.88	0.54	0.80	6.38%
611030	MMF Knitted Jerseys & pullovers	47.49	58.15	42.52	4.83	2.67	0.19	0.93	0.51	0.34	4.13%
620462	W/G cotton woven trousers	46.34	52.79	28.90	12.39	0.65	1.49	1.78	0.57	0.90	2.64%
621210	Non cotton woven Brassieres	36.44	40.93	30.45	1.18	1.81	0.50	3.46	0.03	0.24	2.35%
610990	Non cotton knitted T-shirts	50.38	40.43	25.96	1.67	2.53	0.58	1.34	0.15	0.38	-4.31%
620343	M/B synthetic woven trousers	24.92	39.51	18.44	4.66	5.19	0.47	2.86	0.14	0.93	9.66%
620240	W/G MMF woven overcoats, car-coats, capes, etc	0.00	35.56	21.53	0.51	6.81	0.03	3.01	1.04	0.21	#DIV/0!
620520	M/B cotton woven shirts	29.09	33.11	18.67	2.62	1.89	1.29	1.30	0.57	0.31	2.62%
620140	M/B MMF woven overcoats, car-coats, capes, etc	0.00	30.70	16.80	0.61	6.51	0.02	2.17	0.89	0.17	#DIV/0!
610463	W/G synthetic knitted trousers	17.19	29.88	18.52	2.55	1.93	0.15	1.75	0.12	0.18	11.69%
611011	Woolen knitted Jerseys & pullovers	23.08	25.83	20.81	1.63	0.05	0.16	0.02	1.26	0.17	2.28%
620463	W/G synthetic woven trousers	21.35	24.61	15.76	1.60	2.81	0.24	0.82	0.24	0.40	2.88%
611120	Cotton knitted Babies' garments	17.37	24.18	15.88	2.49	0.05	3.89	0.11	0.01	0.10	6.84%
611430	MMF knitted sporting & special garments	24.90	23.18	18.25	1.44	1.05	0.37	0.36	0.10	0.27	-1.42%
620443	W/G synthetic woven dresses	22.10	21.74	16.54	0.07	0.54	0.91	0.55	0.27	1.31	-0.32%
620640	W/G MMF woven blouses & shirts	25.08	19.79	14.57	0.25	0.84	0.84	1.49	0.10	0.32	-4.63%
611595	Knitted Full or knee-length stockings	12.25	19.65	16.31	0.01	0.83	0.01	0.08	0.08	0.15	9.91%
610462	W/G cotton knitted trousers	16.41	19.49	11.39	3.74	0.43	1.80	0.39	0.10	0.07	3.50%

Source: ITC Trademap

Table-5 shows the major apparel items imported by New Zealand from the world which had positive annual growth in the last 5 years (from 2017-2022). But the shares of Bangladesh in these items are comparatively less. So Bangladesh has the potential to export those items to New Zealand as they have high demands for those products.

HS code	Items	New Zealand's import from world	New Zealand's import from BD	BD's share in New Zealand's total import	CAGR of New Zealand's import from world during 2017-22*
'620333	M/B synthetic woven jackets & blazers	15.08	0.45	2.95%	6.03%
'610520	M/B MMF knitted shirts	15.42	0.47	3.03%	9.25%
'620433	W/G synthetic woven jackets & blazers	12.69	0.45	3.53%	0.91%
'610832	W/G MMF knitted nightdresses & pyjamas	6.60	0.27	4.11%	1.29%
'620630	W/G cotton woven blouses & shirts	13.40	0.61	4.52%	5.75%
'620530	M/B MMF woven shirts	8.59	0.50	5.81%	4.32%
'620520	M/B cotton woven shirts	33.11	2.62	7.93%	2.62%
'620452	W/G cotton woven skirts & divided skirts	4.56	0.45	9.75%	3.47%
'611090	Non cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	5.40	0.37	6.85%	4.94%
'620469	W/G non cotton woven trousers	15.46	0.24	1.58%	12.60%

Source: ITC Trademap 







A delegation from the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), led by President Faruque Hassan, paid a courtesy visit to the Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at her office in Dhaka. The delegation included Tipu Munshi MP, former Commerce Minister and President of BGMEA; Abdus Salam Murshedy MP, former President of BGMEA; Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin, former Member of Parliament and President of BGMEA; and Md. Siddiqur Rahman, former President of BGMEA, and current Industries and Trade Affairs Secretary of the Awami League as well as current First Vice President Syed Nazrul Islam, Senior Vice President S. M. Mannan (Kochi), Vice Presidents Shahidullah Azim, Md. Nasir Uddin, Miran Ali, and Rakibul Alam Chowdhury, Directors Barrister Shehrin Salam Oishee, Barrister Vidiya Amrit Khan and Neela Hosna Ara.



The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has joined forces with Manabik Shahajya Sangstha (MSS) to provide comprehensive eye care services to the workers and staff of garment factories. BGMEA Secretary General Md. Faizur Rahman and MSS Adviser Tarikul Ghani signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the presence of BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex. This partnership seeks to bring the essential eye care services directly to the garment factory workers and employees.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan paid a visit to Uttara Export Processing Zone (UEPZ) in Nilphamari and toured factories in the EPZ and talked to both workers and employers. Accompanying him during the visit were Md. Shariful Islam, Executive Director of Uttara EPZ; and Shahadat Musharraf Khan, Managing Director, Section Seven International Ltd and President, Bangladesh EPZ Investors' Association (BEPZIA); and Sharmeen Hassan Tithi, Director, Giant Group.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan met with NBR Chairman Abu Hena Md Rahmatul Muneem at the NBR office in Dhaka and urged NBR to make services easier, faster and hassle-free for RMG industry. Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin, former President of FBCCI and BGMEA, and Md. Munir Hossain, Vice President of FBCCI, were present at the meeting which was also attended by Md. Masud Sadiq, Member (Customs Policy and ICT), NBR.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with others cut a cake to celebrate the first foundation day of Chattagram BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (CBUFT) in Chattogram. The event was attended by Syed Nazrul Islam, First Vice President of BGMEA; Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of CBUFT; Professor Dr. Mohammed Obaidul Karim, Vice Chancellor, CBUFT; Abdullah Hil Rakib, Director, BGMEA; Md. M. Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Director, BGMEA and S.M. Abu Tayyab, Founder Member, Board of Trustees, CBUFT.



A delegation from China, comprising representatives from the China Knitting Industrial Association and the China Cotton Textile Association, met with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka. The Chinese delegation included Lin Yunfeng, Chairman, China Knitting Industrial Association; Jing Shenquan, Vice Chairman, China Cotton Textile Association, and Wei Wei, Vice Director of Department, China Knitting Industrial Association. Besides, representatives from various Chinese companies specializing in textile machinery, chemicals, and raw materials were also part of the delegation.



Samsoo Kim, Trade Representative (Director General) of the Commercial Section at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, and Faruque Ahmed, Chief Specialist at the Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) in Dhaka, held a meeting with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka. The primary focus of the meeting was to explore new avenues of trade and investment between Bangladesh and Korea, aiming to benefit both economies.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan addressed a round table discussion on "Due Diligence Laws" organized by the International Business Forum of Bangladesh (IBFB) at its conference hall in Dhaka. H.E. Charles Whiteley, Ambassador and Head of Delegation, EU to Bangladesh also spoke at the discussion while Dr. Bernd Spanier, Deputy Head of EU Mission, delivered the keynote speech.



Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh, H.E. Christian Brix Møller, paid a courtesy call on BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at the BGMEA Complex in Dhaka. Their discussions revolved around crucial issues related to Bangladesh's ready-made garments (RMG) industry, focusing on the current status, global market dynamics, challenges, and priorities for sustainable development.



A delegation from BGMEA led by President Faruque Hassan held a meeting with Alfred Sim, Vice President, and Lim Wei Chiang, Assist Vice President, Group Business Development at PSA International Ltd. Asif Ashraf, Director, BGMEA; Shams Mahmud, Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Foreign Mission Cell; Azfar Hassan, Director of Giant Group; and Sanjay Kumar Naha, Director of Rose Intimates Ltd were present at the meeting held in Singapore. The meeting was also attended by Luthfun Nahar Shipu, Commercial Counsellor at Bangladesh High Commission in Singapore.



A delegation from BGMEA, headed by President Faruque Hassan, met with H. E. Derek Loh, High Commissioner of Singapore to Bangladesh. The meeting, which took place in Singapore, aimed to explore potential avenues for enhancing trade and investment relations between the two countries. The BGMEA delegation included Asif Ashraf, Director of BGMEA; Shams Mahmud, Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Foreign Mission Cell; and Sanjay Kumar Naha, Director of Rose Intimates Ltd.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan met with Ray Kwan, Director (Africa, Middle East, and South Asia), and WenYiing Ho, Senior Market Advisor at the Singapore Business Federation. The meeting held in Singapore aimed to discuss the investment climate in both countries, explore available opportunities, and examine ways to enhance mutual trade and investment.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan held a meeting with representatives from the Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) and Enterprise Singapore (ESG) in Singapore. Asif Ashraf, Director, BGMEA, Shams Mahmud, Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Foreign Mission Cell, and Sanjay Kumar Naha, Director of Rose Intimates Ltd were also present at the meeting. Discussions centered around exploring potential avenues for enhancing trade and investment collaboration between Bangladesh and Singapore.



A meeting was held between the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and the Singapore Fashion Council (SFC) in Singapore. Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA, and Zhang Ting Ting, Chief Executive Officer, SFC represented the respective organizations at the meeting.

Discussions focused on avenues to strengthening the capacity of Bangladesh's garment industry in the fields of fashion design, technology, and product development, particularly high-value apparels using manmade fibers (MMF).



A delegation led by BGMEA President Faruque Hassan met with Finance Minister Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali MP at the secretariat in Dhaka. The delegation comprised former BGMEA President Md. Siddiquir Rahman, BGMEA Senior Vice President SM Mannan (Kochi), President of Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA) Mohammad Ali Khokon, Executive President of BKMEA Mohammad Hatem, and Vice President of FBCCI Md. Munir Hossain.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with other industry leaders held a meeting with Md Khairuzzaman Mozumder, Secretary of the Finance Division, at the secretariat in Dhaka. The discussions primarily centered on the current challenges faced by the RMG industry.



A delegation of BGMEA led by President Faruque Hassan met with Ahasanul Islam (Titu) MP, State Minister of the Ministry of Commerce at the secretariat in Dhaka. They sought policy support of the government necessary to sustain competitiveness of the export-oriented industries, particularly the ready-made garment sector.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan spoke at a business seminar organized by the Ministry of Commerce and the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB) where he emphasized the critical role of branding in attracting investments and solidify Bangladesh's position on the global stage.



Ambassador of Indonesia to Bangladesh H. E. Heru Hartanto Subolo paid a courtesy call on Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA. The meeting focused on fostering collaboration and enhancing bilateral trade relations between the two countries, with a particular emphasis on the apparel and textile sector.

JG Lim, Vice President at Hyosung Corporation, paid a visit to Faruque Hassan, President of BGMEA in Dhaka. Discussions primarily focused on investment opportunities in the high value-added and non-cotton textiles sector in Bangladesh.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan distributed warm clothes, including blankets and sweaters, among the underprivileged individuals on the premises of the Safiuddin Ahmed Foundation in Debipur, Thakurgaon.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with others offered dua during the foundation laying ceremony of the extension building of Community Based Resource Center (CBRC) at Saidpur on January 15. The event was attended by Executive Vice Chairman of Microcredit Regulatory Authority Md. Fashiullah and Director of Giant Group Sharmeen Hassan Tithi.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan addressed a workshop titled "Strengthening nutrition services for RMG workers through Workforce Nutrition Alliance" at Hotel Lakeshore in Dhaka.

Vaneet Goel, Senior Vice President of PT. Indo-Rama Synthetics, met with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka. The meeting, also attended by Ambassador of Indonesia to Bangladesh H. E. Heru Hartanto Subolo, Puneet Dhall of PT. Indorama Polychem Indonesia, Managing Director of DBL Group Mohammed Jabbar, and Deputy Managing Director of Mahmud Group Rafee Mahmood, focused on exploring investment opportunities in Bangladesh's non-cotton textiles sector.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan met with Jahangir Kabir Nanak, MP, Minister of Textiles and Jute at the secretariat in Dhaka. They had discussions concerning issues related to the development of the apparel and textile industry in Bangladesh, with a particular focus on enhancing the capacity of the local textile industry in the production of non-cotton yarn and fabrics.



The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) observed the solemn occasion of 'Amar Ekushey' and the International Mother Language Day with a rich tribute to the Language Movement martyrs. On February 21, BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with Senior Vice President S. M. Mannan (Kochi) paid their respects by laying wreaths at the Central Shaheed Minar in Dhaka.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan called on R. A. M. Obaidul Mukhtar Chowdhury, MP, Minister of Housing and Public Works at the secretariat in Dhaka. The meeting, also attended by former President of BGMEA Md. Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin, Director Neela Hosna Ara, and Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Labour and ILO Affairs ANM Saifuddin, included discussions about the challenges and opportunities facing the RMG industry.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan met with Anisul Huq, MP, Minister for Law, Justice, and Parliamentary Affairs, at the secretariat in Dhaka. The discussions covered a range of topics, including workplace safety, environmental sustainability, and workers' rights in the ready-made garment industry in Bangladesh.



The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has been honored with the ESSAB Safety Excellence Award 2024 in the 'Commercial Building' category. This accolade recognizes BGMEA's commitment to implementing state-of-the-art fire safety measures at the BGMEA Complex, its headquarters located in Uttara, Dhaka. The award ceremony took place at the 9th International Fire Safety and Security Expo-2024 held at BICC, Dhaka, where Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan, MP presented the award to BGMEA.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan along with the newly appointed commercial counsellors and the first secretary of Bangladesh embassies from various countries, who visited BGMEA, posed for photograph after a meeting held at BGMEA Complex.

During the meeting, President Faruque Hassan briefed the delegates on the current state of the ready-made garment industry, including its vision and prospects, with a particular focus on exploring new and promising markets for RMG exports.



BGMEA President Faruque Hassan paid a courtesy call on Bangladesh High Commissioner to India, Md Mustafizur Rahman, in New Delhi and urged the High Commission to extend its support in enhancing bilateral trade and investment ties between Bangladesh and India.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan paid a courtesy call on Ambassador of Greece to India H. E. Aliko Koutsomitopoulou at the embassy in New Delhi. Directors of Giant Group -- Sharmeen Hassan Tithi, Azfar Hassan and Ashaab Adeeb Hassan were also present at the meeting. The meeting focused on various aspects of mutual interest, with an emphasis on exploring potential areas for bilateral trade and investment collaboration between Bangladesh and Greece. 



# Statistics

## Bangladesh's RMG Export to World

Value in Million USD

Month	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2023-24 VS 2022-23	2023-24 VS 2021-22
July	2887.22	3366.91	3953.74	17.43%	36.94%
August	2753.38	3745.76	4044.86	7.99%	46.91%
September	3418.84	3161.67	3618.90	14.46%	5.85%
October	3561.71	3678.00	3165.60	-13.93%	-11.12%
November	3235.05	4378.94	4052.55	-7.45%	25.27%
December	4044.50	4665.41	4555.69	-2.35%	12.64%
January	4084.58	4421.33	4971.84	12.45%	21.72%
February	3511.72	3943.87	4493.22	13.93%	27.95%
March					
April					
May					
June					
Total	27497.00	31361.89	32856.40	4.77%	19.49%

Source: EPB

## Knitwear

Value in Million USD

Month	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2023-24 VS 2022-23	2023-24 VS 2021-22
July	1658.45	1854.15	2266.48	22.24%	36.66%
August	1600.44	2061.53	2315.73	12.33%	44.69%
September	1905.29	1733.78	2180.38	25.76%	14.44%
October	2045.89	2075.66	1914.19	-7.78%	-6.44%
November	1775.50	2388.53	2312.64	-3.18%	30.25%
December	2176.06	2546.03	2490.77	-2.17%	14.46%
January	2112.41	2300.70	2699.27	17.32%	27.78%
February	1795.68	2099.95	2412.80	14.90%	34.37%
March					
April					
May					
June					
Total	15069.72	17060.33	18592.26	8.98%	23.37%

Source: EPB

## Wovenwear

Value in Million USD

Month	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2023-24 VS 2022-23	2023-24 VS 2021-22
July	1228.77	1512.76	1687.26	11.54%	37.31%
August	1152.94	1684.23	1729.13	2.67%	49.98%
September	1513.55	1427.89	1438.52	0.74%	-4.96%
October	1515.82	1602.34	1251.41	-21.90%	-17.44%
November	1459.55	1990.41	1739.91	-12.59%	19.21%
December	1868.44	2119.38	2064.92	-2.57%	10.52%
January	1972.17	2120.63	2272.57	7.16%	15.23%
February	1716.04	1843.92	2080.42	12.83%	21.23%
March					
April					
May					
June					
Total	12427.28	14301.56	14264.14	-0.26%	14.78%

Source: EPB



## Bangladesh's RMG Export to World

(July-February FY 2022-23 & 2023-24)

Export Value in Million USD

EU Countries	Woven			Knit			Total		
	July-Feb 2022-23	July-Feb 2023-24	Growth %	July-Feb 2022-23	July-Feb 2023-24	Growth %	July-Feb 2022-23	July-Feb 2023-24	Growth %
Austria	8.34	8.81	5.60	30.53	28.01	-8.24	38.87	36.82	-5.27
Belgium	153.98	159.66	3.68	359.58	336.53	-6.41	513.57	496.18	-3.38
Bulgaria	0.03	0.10	250.63	0.44	1.90	333.95	0.47	2.00	328.70
Denmark	293.55	337.06	14.82	550.81	784.30	42.39	844.35	1121.36	32.81
Finland	5.49	13.66	149.02	29.82	28.75	-3.59	35.31	42.41	20.13
France	667.77	721.25	8.01	1,226.03	1,262.01	2.93	1893.80	1983.26	4.72
Germany	1,855.54	1,497.97	-19.27	2,774.17	2,593.20	-6.52	4629.71	4091.18	-11.63
Greece	13.49	12.78	-5.27	38.50	41.69	8.30	51.99	54.47	4.78
Italy	532.10	562.72	5.75	1,015.74	970.76	-4.43	1547.84	1533.49	-0.93
Ireland	58.16	67.92	16.79	95.41	115.36	20.91	153.57	183.28	19.35
Netherlands	503.50	632.69	25.66	749.46	802.58	7.09	1252.96	1435.28	14.55
Portugal	26.56	30.07	13.21	61.85	70.55	14.06	88.41	100.62	13.80
Romania	3.01	22.65	653.14	16.88	69.41	311.16	19.89	92.06	362.87
Spain	938.47	1,099.83	17.19	1,413.59	1,456.35	3.02	2352.06	2556.18	8.68
Sweden	227.69	207.31	-8.95	387.18	405.25	4.67	614.87	612.56	-0.38
Cyprus	0.37	0.37	-1.94	1.61	1.87	15.81	1.99	2.23	12.47
Czech Republic	133.70	110.03	-17.71	121.87	148.02	21.46	255.57	258.05	0.97
Estonia	0.05	0.11	119.40	1.06	1.30	23.12	1.11	1.41	27.33
Hungary	35.27	30.96	-12.2	114.26	96.32	-15.69	149.53	127.28	-14.88
Latvia	0.29	0.39	36.5	0.59	4.55	676.01	0.88	4.94	464.73
Lithuania	0.17	0.01	-91.75	0.11	0.03	-75.36	0.28	0.04	-85.21
Malta	0.08	0.28	240.42	0.29	0.23	-21.61	0.38	0.51	35.87
Poland	407.39	481.78	18.26	683.01	846.55	23.94	1090.40	1328.33	21.82
Slovakia	18.37	16.38	-10.83	50.81	43.08	-15.21	69.18	59.46	-14.05
Slovenia	19.98	18.08	-9.50	60.21	37.96	-36.96	80.20	56.04	-30.11
Croatia	13.16	19.43	47.68	23.43	35.36	50.94	36.58	54.79	49.77
Luxembourg	0.36	2.67	643.36	1.85	2.72	47.01	2.21	5.39	143.85
<b>Sub-Total (EU)</b>	<b>5,916.89</b>	<b>6,054.98</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>9,809.07</b>	<b>10,184.6</b>	<b>3.83</b>	<b>15,725.96</b>	<b>16,239.63</b>	<b>3.27</b>
<i>EU % of World</i>	<i>41.37</i>	<i>42.45</i>		<i>57.50</i>	<i>54.78</i>		<i>50.14</i>	<i>49.43</i>	
<b>USA</b>	<b>3,910.67</b>	<b>3,468.11</b>	<b>-11.32</b>	<b>1,698.32</b>	<b>1,996.11</b>	<b>17.53</b>	<b>5,608.99</b>	<b>5,464.22</b>	<b>-2.58</b>
<i>% of USA</i>	<i>27.34</i>	<i>24.31</i>		<i>9.95</i>	<i>10.74</i>		<i>17.88</i>	<i>16.63</i>	
<b>U.K.</b>	<b>1,343.70</b>	<b>1,447.27</b>	<b>7.71</b>	<b>2,016.46</b>	<b>2,404.88</b>	<b>19.26</b>	<b>3360.16</b>	<b>3852.15</b>	<b>14.64</b>
<i>% of U.K.</i>	<i>9.40</i>	<i>10.15</i>		<i>11.82</i>	<i>12.93</i>		<i>10.71</i>	<i>11.72</i>	
<b>Canada</b>	<b>551.02</b>	<b>548.93</b>	<b>-0.38</b>	<b>429.94</b>	<b>449.84</b>	<b>4.63</b>	<b>980.96</b>	<b>998.77</b>	<b>1.81</b>
<i>% of Canada</i>	<i>3.85</i>	<i>3.85</i>		<i>2.52</i>	<i>2.42</i>		<i>3.13</i>	<i>3.04</i>	
<b>Non-Traditional Markets</b>									
Japan	510.04	507.71	-0.46	565.81	644.76	13.95	1075.85	1152.47	7.12
Australia	258.59	307.16	18.78	509.16	624.02	22.56	767.75	931.18	21.29
Russia	92.53	107.22	15.88	173.04	226.46	30.87	265.57	333.68	25.65
India	416.37	340.13	-18.31	337.55	240.48	-28.76	753.92	580.61	-22.99
Korea Rep.	178.62	222.94	24.81	209.01	231.20	10.62	387.63	454.14	17.16
China	95.13	136.18	43.15	71.88	105.60	46.90	167.02	241.78	44.76
United Arab Emirates	84.04	113.67	35.26	122.83	168.80	37.42	206.87	282.47	36.54
Mexico	132.59	126.30	-4.74	106.46	105.01	-1.36	239.05	231.31	-3.24
Malaysia	62.33	84.14	34.98	158.77	166.86	5.10	221.11	251.01	13.52
Saudi Arabia	48.53	72.66	49.72	97.49	142.26	45.92	146.02	214.92	47.19
Turkey	96.25	138.96	44.37	69.43	131.69	89.66	165.69	270.65	63.35
South Africa	35.81	41.19	15.02	49.40	49.32	-0.18	85.21	90.51	6.21
New Zealand	24.91	28.11	12.86	61.26	75.71	23.57	86.17	103.82	20.48
Chile	51.59	56.63	9.77	52.86	60.41	14.27	104.45	117.04	12.05
Brazil	40.29	60.87	51.09	74.73	64.35	-13.88	115.01	125.23	8.88
Other Countries	451.67	400.99	-11.22	446.81	519.86	16.35	898.49	920.85	2.49
<b>Total (Non-Trad. Markets)</b>	<b>2,579.29</b>	<b>2,744.86</b>	<b>6.42</b>	<b>3,106.52</b>	<b>3,556.79</b>	<b>14.49</b>	<b>5,685.82</b>	<b>6,301.65</b>	<b>10.83</b>
<i>% of Non-Traditional</i>	<i>18.04</i>	<i>19.24</i>		<i>18.21</i>	<i>19.13</i>		<i>18.13</i>	<i>19.18</i>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>14,301.56</b>	<b>14,264.14</b>	<b>-0.26</b>	<b>17,060.33</b>	<b>18,592.26</b>	<b>8.98</b>	<b>31,361.89</b>	<b>32,856.41</b>	<b>4.77</b>

Source: EPB, Compiled by: RDTI Cell, BGMEA

## Bangladesh's Top 30 Apparel Items Export to World

(Fiscal Year Basis)  
Value in Million USD

SL	HS Code	Products Description	Jul-Feb 2022-23	Jul-Feb 2023-24	Growth
1	610910	Cotton T-shirts	5893.08	5764.05	-2.19%
2	620342	M/B cotton woven trousers	3967.74	3691.95	-6.95%
3	611020	Cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	2326.06	2665.63	14.60%
4	620462	W/G cotton woven trousers	2315.84	2402.33	3.74%
5	611030	MMF knitted Jerseys & pullovers	1311.79	1373.27	4.69%
6	610462	W/G cotton knitted trousers	1127.64	1161.66	3.02%
7	620520	M/B cotton woven shirts	1274.33	1109.19	-12.96%
8	610510	M/B cotton knitted shirts	946.17	1004.83	6.20%
9	620343	M/B synthetic woven trousers	1048.87	939.62	-10.42%
10	611120	Cotton knitted Babies' garments	546.69	851.04	55.67%
11	610342	M/B cotton knitted trousers	586.87	763.96	30.17%
12	610711	M/B cotton knitted underpants	419.64	488.79	16.48%
13	610821	W/G cotton knitted briefs & panties	438.10	442.09	0.91%
14	610990	Non cotton knitted T-shirts	399.23	412.03	3.21%
15	621210	Non cotton woven Brassieres	403.23	411.14	1.96%
16	610442	Cotton knitted Dresses	317.43	365.92	15.28%
17	620463	W/G synthetic woven trousers	372.48	347.12	-6.81%
18	610831	W/G cotton knitted nighties	225.73	308.97	36.87%
19	620530	M/B MMF woven shirts	274.59	273.20	-0.51%
20	610463	W/G synthetic knitted trousers	195.76	265.74	35.75%
21	620469	W/G non cotton woven trousers	200.68	256.29	27.71%
22	620920	Cotton woven Babies' garments	185.03	241.11	30.31%
23	611090	Non cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	252.25	240.44	-4.68%
24	620333	M/B synthetic woven jackets & blazers	215.50	228.25	5.92%
25	620590	M/B non cotton woven shirts	164.03	226.82	38.28%
26	620630	W/G cotton woven blouses	202.45	222.57	9.94%
27	620442	Cotton woven dresses	158.70	186.20	17.32%
28	610721	M/B cotton knitted pyjamas	136.10	184.24	35.37%
29	620432	W/G cotton woven jackets & blazers	152.90	183.11	19.76%
30	620640	W/G MMF woven blouses	190.96	177.37	-7.12%

Source: EPB

Note: M/B= Men's or boys

W/G= Women's or girls



**Bangladesh's Top 30 RMG Items Export to World**  
(Calendar Year Basis)  
Value in million USD

SL	HS Code	Products Description	CY 2021	CY 2022	CY 2023	Growth CY 2022 VS CY 2023
1	610910	Cotton knitted T-shirts	7115.60	8937.33	8343.85	-6.64%
2	620342	M/B cotton woven trousers	4834.97	5943.18	5439.04	-8.48%
3	611020	Cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	2721.33	3418.72	3870.56	13.22%
4	620462	W/G cotton woven trousers	3051.23	3633.97	3443.64	-5.24%
5	611030	MMF knitted Jerseys & pullovers	1625.34	1967.19	1948.62	-0.94%
6	620520	M/B cotton woven shirts	1193.41	1796.18	1726.42	-3.88%
7	610462	W/G cotton knitted trousers	1413.98	1673.21	1679.30	0.36%
8	610510	M/B cotton knitted shirts	651.66	1127.80	1457.14	29.20%
9	620343	M/B synthetic woven trousers	1296.87	1649.23	1405.89	-14.75%
10	611120	Cotton knitted Babies' garments	565.45	725.68	1127.96	55.44%
11	610342	M/B cotton knitted trousers	584.47	797.88	997.55	25.02%
12	610711	M/B cotton knitted underpants	544.99	601.74	720.33	19.71%
13	610821	W/G cotton knitted briefs & panties	602.88	668.46	702.87	5.15%
14	621210	Non cotton woven Brassires	559.69	642.17	602.36	-6.20%
15	610990	Non cotton knitted T-shirts	399.13	521.14	578.16	10.94%
16	610442	Cotton knitted Dresses	361.30	440.59	511.71	16.14%
17	620463	W/G synthetic woven trousers	243.04	501.32	511.61	2.05%
18	620530	M/B MMF woven shirts	175.17	330.84	416.72	25.96%
19	610831	W/G cotton knitted nighties	264.68	314.49	382.11	21.50%
20	611090	Non cotton knitted Jerseys & pullovers	296.38	361.55	363.62	0.57%
21	610463	W/G synthetic knitted trousers	209.65	282.63	330.89	17.07%
22	620333	M/B synthetic woven jackets & blazers	112.59	245.95	326.73	32.85%
23	620920	Cotton woven Babies' garments	208.95	268.21	318.65	18.80%
24	620469	W/G non cotton woven trousers	198.57	288.53	307.07	6.43%
25	620630	W/G cotton woven blouses	225.26	298.34	304.69	2.13%
26	620590	M/B non cotton woven shirts	111.22	209.72	273.14	30.24%
27	620640	W/G MMF woven blouses	195.24	262.51	263.04	0.20%
28	610610	W/G cotton knitted blouses	136.54	205.66	257.10	25.01%
29	610721	M/B cotton knitted pyjamas	124.51	157.77	250.18	58.58%
30	620442	Cotton woven Dresses	216.44	260.28	242.66	-6.77%

Source: EPB

Note: M/B= Men's or boys

W/G= Women's or girls

## EU Apparel Import Growth

Value Growth: 2023 VS 2022													
Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	3.71%	-4.61%	-7.79%	-16.23%	-13.65%	-11.22%	-2.49%	-20.79%	-27.54%	-21.04%	-16.00%	-17.92%	-13.56%
China	-7.35%	-17.99%	-25.13%	-13.03%	-5.01%	-3.75%	-1.96%	-26.35%	-35.32%	-23.28%	-22.90%	-20.95%	-18.70%
Bangladesh	12.33%	4.18%	-0.29%	-29.48%	-29.92%	-26.21%	-4.52%	-25.64%	-30.18%	-29.05%	-24.59%	-27.84%	-18.28%
Turkey	-6.93%	-15.75%	-11.19%	-9.59%	-6.32%	-8.77%	-10.59%	-13.73%	-15.04%	-16.23%	-6.48%	-8.45%	-10.85%
India	13.88%	17.21%	-5.66%	-12.01%	-22.57%	-16.06%	-6.55%	-15.27%	-24.61%	-20.36%	-17.13%	-28.78%	-11.02%
Cambodia	3.03%	6.89%	-1.69%	-21.25%	-24.69%	-16.21%	6.46%	-13.07%	-23.51%	-12.27%	-4.49%	-14.46%	-10.43%
Vietnam	15.84%	9.30%	5.10%	-12.81%	-12.49%	-10.63%	-1.38%	-18.03%	-29.68%	-27.34%	-16.93%	-18.93%	-11.72%
Pakistan	6.78%	-0.13%	-10.34%	-23.16%	-17.46%	-19.28%	-5.11%	-28.89%	-27.23%	-18.39%	-15.95%	-22.63%	-15.84%
Morocco	-11.74%	-23.62%	-15.42%	-4.38%	-4.49%	-12.08%	-11.41%	-20.35%	-17.77%	-22.21%	-3.69%	16.93%	-11.75%
Sri Lanka	-6.49%	-18.85%	3.04%	-30.31%	-19.63%	-16.63%	-4.76%	-20.60%	-24.31%	-19.11%	-12.14%	-25.78%	-16.51%
Indonesia	7.34%	-10.74%	-6.02%	-19.14%	-34.03%	-35.57%	-22.08%	-32.03%	-36.42%	-25.93%	-31.06%	-29.46%	-23.63%

Value Growth: 2023 VS 2021													
Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	29.73%	15.31%	14.00%	1.57%	17.88%	15.40%	20.30%	11.19%	-12.42%	-7.20%	-10.70%	-13.81%	5.53%
China	12.36%	0.63%	-12.31%	1.63%	16.53%	23.42%	28.96%	3.11%	-23.20%	-17.70%	-26.24%	-25.28%	-4.59%
Bangladesh	65.26%	33.92%	52.23%	-4.20%	13.48%	5.79%	30.77%	18.51%	-8.77%	-4.36%	-17.90%	-21.24%	11.42%
Turkey	9.10%	3.87%	7.11%	6.96%	20.60%	10.10%	-9.64%	-0.81%	-15.25%	-13.63%	-8.71%	-15.38%	-1.31%
India	41.14%	20.71%	12.66%	3.64%	22.04%	19.66%	31.10%	24.43%	-21.12%	-19.68%	-17.43%	-18.12%	8.63%
Cambodia	19.34%	43.31%	32.73%	7.26%	12.21%	64.33%	61.89%	35.67%	0.71%	17.04%	12.12%	7.60%	23.18%
Vietnam	45.60%	32.73%	24.80%	5.92%	17.30%	17.81%	16.24%	22.62%	7.19%	21.85%	29.63%	12.80%	20.91%
Pakistan	39.93%	25.46%	16.31%	-2.04%	14.81%	22.94%	-1.07%	8.09%	-6.38%	-5.02%	6.05%	-3.01%	8.73%
Morocco	13.03%	-6.74%	1.63%	-0.80%	25.87%	9.43%	-16.81%	-10.32%	-28.01%	-24.02%	-13.74%	0.09%	-5.66%
Sri Lanka	10.13%	-3.90%	14.66%	-28.44%	-1.84%	9.51%	-3.59%	11.92%	-8.81%	3.93%	4.65%	-30.92%	-2.98%
Indonesia	41.38%	21.65%	16.08%	-14.73%	-7.86%	-3.45%	11.16%	10.89%	-20.14%	-9.02%	-29.16%	-35.62%	-3.82%

Value Growth: 2023 VS 2020													
Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	3.70%	12.30%	34.11%	64.68%	72.49%	39.50%	12.24%	2.81%	-11.39%	-4.47%	15.37%	4.05%	14.70%
China	-4.81%	4.67%	47.98%	47.68%	12.78%	9.60%	4.61%	-2.14%	-14.54%	-2.43%	8.42%	-3.50%	4.11%
Bangladesh	28.34%	29.89%	33.91%	36.12%	134.71%	117.41%	58.76%	12.68%	6.14%	2.57%	31.22%	19.73%	33.66%
Turkey	3.47%	11.93%	47.60%	151.38%	108.50%	56.43%	-7.87%	3.37%	-16.97%	-10.78%	9.50%	-0.59%	16.57%
India	10.66%	17.70%	31.15%	91.62%	180.21%	93.08%	35.56%	20.24%	-16.16%	-15.66%	18.89%	15.30%	30.16%
Cambodia	-4.67%	22.40%	22.66%	27.48%	43.19%	33.69%	17.21%	1.41%	18.49%	40.17%	72.26%	39.51%	24.19%
Vietnam	17.40%	30.36%	66.02%	80.91%	94.68%	50.63%	24.37%	15.87%	-0.95%	9.10%	33.54%	15.54%	29.35%
Pakistan	25.60%	41.99%	19.81%	63.15%	161.68%	80.39%	37.93%	18.03%	18.85%	11.92%	56.04%	24.31%	37.54%
Morocco	-8.77%	-3.20%	24.17%	811.95%	541.86%	71.02%	-21.54%	12.76%	-34.67%	-16.97%	23.82%	27.05%	21.01%
Sri Lanka	-2.36%	13.05%	36.10%	22.82%	201.36%	67.72%	-1.49%	0.52%	-9.84%	-7.47%	12.65%	3.57%	14.82%
Indonesia	-3.53%	13.46%	9.01%	18.46%	24.44%	-9.46%	-0.06%	4.03%	-24.21%	-0.90%	3.17%	-15.91%	0.35%

Source: eurostat




## U.S. Apparel Import Growth

Value Growth: 2023 VS 2022													
Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	-3.78%	-19.95%	-32.50%	-29.43%	-25.81%	-24.31%	-17.53%	-25.56%	-23.02%	-21.86%	-18.12%	-17.05%	-22.05%
China	-24.60%	-35.36%	-45.64%	-23.03%	-21.97%	-23.67%	-27.19%	-32.71%	-18.55%	-11.03%	-11.83%	-10.74%	-24.98%
Vietnam	-0.35%	-20.01%	-44.25%	-36.13%	-30.74%	-20.06%	-14.20%	-23.65%	-20.79%	-20.64%	-4.74%	-16.76%	-22.29%
Bangladesh	15.33%	-11.76%	-35.36%	-31.39%	-24.28%	-43.58%	7.50%	-33.67%	-34.75%	-36.48%	-27.42%	-27.17%	-25.07%
Indonesia	4.62%	-19.09%	-33.66%	-44.51%	-35.66%	-37.85%	-13.71%	-18.20%	-22.09%	-25.89%	-26.73%	-17.06%	-25.19%
India	9.56%	-9.27%	-27.17%	-30.65%	-35.71%	-25.24%	-18.94%	-25.47%	-23.96%	-13.75%	-24.83%	-19.74%	-21.42%
Mexico	-0.72%	-3.74%	-7.87%	-14.09%	-9.50%	-11.74%	-11.04%	-10.29%	-13.25%	-13.62%	-17.56%	-17.66%	-10.96%
Honduras	-20.40%	-3.78%	-22.32%	-34.16%	-13.96%	-24.40%	-28.54%	-26.38%	-30.23%	-19.70%	-35.01%	-16.20%	-23.51%
Cambodia	-12.96%	-44.11%	-38.54%	-40.26%	-33.79%	-20.64%	-18.86%	-11.51%	-18.56%	-24.04%	-4.68%	-6.06%	-23.58%
Pakistan	-3.45%	-37.15%	-37.39%	-37.41%	-39.24%	-28.13%	-26.30%	-18.94%	-27.69%	-11.25%	-33.62%	-4.04%	-26.60%
Korea	1.06%	-32.80%	-16.66%	-1.37%	-20.31%	-5.33%	12.76%	-26.55%	-6.59%	-8.96%	-35.89%	-10.76%	-12.76%

Value Growth: 2023 VS 2021													
Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	31.09%	10.84%	-3.66%	1.20%	2.68%	6.08%	10.18%	-4.48%	-9.45%	-22.75%	-30.28%	-25.61%	-4.59%
China	10.95%	-5.58%	-24.16%	7.41%	7.35%	1.43%	1.84%	-15.57%	-26.55%	-36.91%	-45.24%	-35.76%	-16.79%
Vietnam	18.11%	7.08%	-24.49%	-11.57%	-5.16%	16.66%	17.24%	-4.76%	13.19%	-12.61%	-8.88%	-14.54%	-1.35%
Bangladesh	66.78%	25.34%	26.21%	19.44%	4.53%	-5.98%	31.34%	-1.65%	-12.34%	-16.66%	-34.58%	-36.62%	2.01%
Indonesia	64.35%	24.37%	14.09%	-14.50%	2.29%	1.27%	34.31%	12.38%	11.12%	-22.27%	-42.67%	-26.07%	1.08%
India	68.65%	29.13%	17.77%	13.73%	-2.52%	27.51%	41.59%	4.23%	-2.36%	-25.23%	-35.09%	-23.74%	6.54%
Mexico	26.05%	15.23%	8.45%	9.38%	13.12%	-4.02%	-6.88%	-0.58%	-11.52%	-6.39%	-18.25%	-20.57%	-0.83%
Honduras	-10.41%	11.53%	-0.08%	-17.60%	5.98%	-9.00%	-12.71%	-7.02%	-16.16%	-8.23%	-21.89%	-16.12%	-8.75%
Cambodia	23.22%	-	-21.68%	-10.87%	12.22%	51.27%	42.88%	16.44%	-1.80%	-37.89%	-27.87%	-6.82%	-2.04%
Pakistan	37.70%	13.94%	-10.65%	6.98%	-7.38%	-11.94%	-3.04%	-6.60%	-9.03%	-14.88%	-44.74%	-24.04%	-9.02%
Korea	97.78%	13.36%	41.96%	39.64%	36.63%	-0.34%	32.04%	-8.34%	13.56%	-15.40%	-42.10%	-17.32%	9.13%

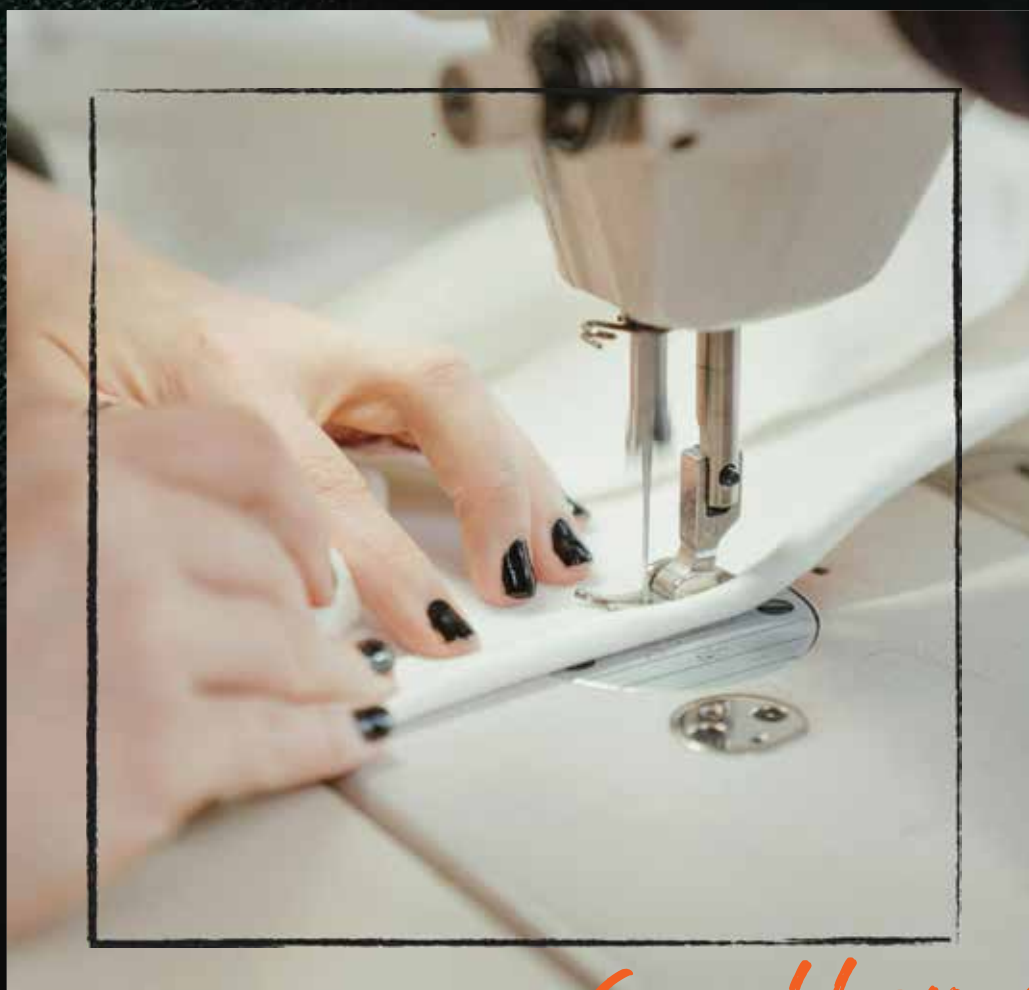
Value Growth: 2023 VS 2020													
Country	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan-Dec
World	7.13%	1.14%	20.67%	68.15%	137.90%	64.90%	29.51%	17.46%	10.98%	7.04%	-2.60%	12.41%	21.51%
China	-11.11%	0.79%	63.92%	69.37%	71.80%	31.01%	17.49%	2.31%	-2.79%	-	-	0.75%	7.67%
Vietnam	-3.83%	2.81%	0.85%	24.22%	80.70%	46.80%	15.69%	15.98%	14.30%	-	-4.76%	16.35%	12.79%
Bangladesh	39.14%	14.05%	26.99%	40.58%	269.35%	124.90%	76.95%	3.61%	25.29%	7.94%	16.66%	37.89%	39.43%
Indonesia	9.83%	-7.65%	7.61%	13.71%	74.67%	46.33%	36.17%	38.08%	36.99%	2.23%	-	32.12%	19.19%
India	30.99%	1.41%	18.29%	90.92%	507.01%	234.45%	97.20%	36.18%	33.74%	2.30%	0.42%	42.65%	48.01%
Mexico	9.71%	-0.31%	16.84%	238.75%	170.46%	38.15%	22.75%	26.38%	14.68%	6.90%	6.76%	-5.26%	27.67%
Honduras	-18.84%	-3.35%	18.46%	767.82%	825.03%	210.56%	37.07%	18.49%	-5.15%	-	19.52%	10.78%	32.88%
Cambodia	1.89%	-23.08%	4.41%	25.97%	84.60%	57.83%	17.21%	52.91%	35.04%	-8.94%	-5.64%	14.05%	17.60%
Pakistan	54.17%	31.35%	34.77%	51.50%	375.17%	82.31%	80.77%	43.61%	26.32%	2.76%	2.03%	13.05%	43.96%
Korea	50.41%	-18.31%	50.68%	112.32%	101.58%	32.77%	42.49%	28.97%	91.87%	-9.74%	-8.25%	17.68%	33.95%

Source: otexa 

SHIN SHIN GROUP



**PRODUCING QUALITY APPAREL FOR GLOBAL BRANDS**



**EXPERIENCE THE** *Excellence*

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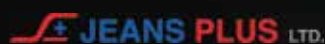
Mob: +8801777762301



Tailoring Products



Casual Products





# RE USE RE CYCLE RE CLAIM

Together, we can protect our environment through simple daily changes – cutting down on consumption, extending the life of products, favouring reusable items, and prioritizing recycling. These small actions, when done collectively, make a significant impact on preventing pollution.



# পুনর্ব্যবহার রিসাইকেল পুনরুদ্ধার



দৈনন্দিন জীবনে কিছু ছোট ছোট পরিবর্তনের মাধ্যমে আমরা আমাদের পরিবেশকে রক্ষা করতে পারি-পণ্যের ব্যবহার কমিয়ে, পণ্য ব্যবহারের সময় বাড়িয়ে, পুনর্ব্যবহারযোগ্য পণ্য ব্যবহারে উদ্বুদ্ধকরণে এবং রিসাইক্লিংকে প্রাধান্য দেয়ার মাধ্যমে। সংঘবদ্ধভাবে এসব ছোট ছোট পরিবর্তন আমাদের পরিবেশের দূষণ প্রতিরোধে একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা রাখবে।

আসুন,  
সবাই মিলে  
একটি সবুজ এবং  
সুরক্ষিত ভবিষ্যৎ  
গড়ে তুলি।







# PATHWAYS FOR PROMISE

Empowering Women Through Education

SCAN TO  
KNOW FURTHER  
DETAILS



The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and the Asian University for Women have been collaborating since 2016 with the vision to provide women from the garment industry with higher education, leadership development, and social equality. The Pathways for Promise Program aims to empower women, promote equality, and drive positive social change.

## Be a Part of Change

We invite BGMEA members to join us in the AUW Pathways for Promise Program, in an exclusive scholarship initiative designed to support talented women working in the garment industry.

For details, email: [suman.chatterjee@auw.edu.bd](mailto:suman.chatterjee@auw.edu.bd)



**BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURERS & EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION**  
বাংলাদেশ পোশাক প্রস্তুতকারক ও রপ্তানীকারক সমিতি

• বাংলাদেশে তৈরি •



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