

Apparel Story

অ্যাপারেল স্টোরি



July-August 2025

BGMEA BOARD 2025-27

DECISIVE MANDATE, NEW MOMENTUM



BANGLADESH GARMENT MANUFACTURERS
& EXPORTERS ASSOCIATION (BGMEA)
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From the Desk of the President



Assuming the responsibility of BGMEA is an honor, and on behalf of my colleagues on the Board, I express my sincere gratitude to all our valued members for the trust you have placed in us to serve for the tenure 2025–2027. With this responsibility, we remain committed to representing your interests and advancing our industry toward greater sustainability, competitiveness, and global recognition.

With this edition we are resuming the Apparel Story on a regular bi-monthly basis, and first time with Bangla edition. This publication will not only reflect the positive progress made by BGMEA as an institution, but also highlight the remarkable best practices of our members, whether in sustainability, innovation, or compliance. It will serve as a platform for ideas, dialogue, and inspiration, connecting entrepreneurs, buyers, policymakers, and stakeholders. I humbly invite your suggestions to make this journal more engaging and impactful for our industry.

The months of July and August 2025 have been eventful. Domestically, the long-standing strike of the National Board of Revenue (NBR) officials was resolved, bringing stability to business operations. Internationally, the U.S. tariff issue that posed serious risks for our sector has been settled at 20 percent, thanks to the leadership of the Government of Bangladesh with close collaboration of private sectors and trade bodies including BGMEA, ensuring we retain competitiveness in our largest export market. At the same time, BGMEA conducted dialogue with the labour federations, a step toward fostering constructive industrial relations. Meanwhile, discussions on deferring Bangladesh's LDC graduation have gained momentum in the private sector, reflecting the urgent need to reassess our economic strategy during this transitional period.

As we address immediate concerns, our focus remains forward-looking. Sustainability, technological transformation, product and market diversification, and innovation will be the key pillars of resilience. With your support, BGMEA will continue to champion these priorities, upholding the image of Bangladesh's RMG industry as a responsible and competitive partner in the global supply chain.

Mahmud Hasan Khan
President, BGMEA



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EDITORIAL

The ready-made garment (RMG) industry of Bangladesh stands at a crossroads. On the one hand, it faces the monumental challenge of remaining competitive in the global market following Bangladesh's graduation from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) category in 2026. On the other hand, immense opportunities lie ahead, particularly due to the country's relatively favourable position under the U.S. tariff regime. If harnessed effectively -- with strategic policy support for infrastructural upgrades, skill development, and compliance with global labor and environmental standards -- Bangladesh's apparel sector can reach new heights.

The newly elected Board of Directors of BGMEA assumed office on 16 June 2025. This new leadership brings together a dynamic blend of experience and youthful energy, dedicated to steering the industry through uncertainty and towards sustainable growth. The cover story of this edition highlights the new Board, its vision, and its key priorities to elevate the industry to the next level. While the Board is committed to confronting challenges head-on and unlocking the sector's full potential, the complexity of today's global market makes it clear that their efforts alone will not be enough. Without timely and strategic policy interventions, the RMG industry risks losing its competitive edge on the global stage.

This issue also features news, in-depth articles, special features, and trade analytics, offering readers a broad range of insights to better understand the industry and its evolving landscape.

Finally, we are delighted to introduce Apparel Story Bangla for the first time in its history. By making our content available in Bengali, we aim to engage a wider and more diverse readership. We look forward to hearing your thoughts and suggestions on this new initiative and encourage you to share your feedback to help us improve. Your input is truly invaluable.

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The Apparel Story



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BGMEA BOARD 2025-27

Decisive Mandate, New Momentum



The newly elected Board of Directors of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) led by its President Mahmud Hasan Khan took charge of the trade body for the term 2025-2027 from the outgoing Administrator Anwar Hossain at an event held at BGMEA Complex on 16 June 2025.

As one of the country's leading trade bodies in the ready-made garment (RMG) sector, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has a pivotal role to play in propelling the industry's growth, navigating the ever-evolving challenges both at home and abroad and to ensure a business-friendly environment.

Since its inception, BGMEA has been instrumental in the RMG industry's astounding growth, transforming it from a nascent industry into the global apparel powerhouse. The wisdom, vision, dedication, actions and smart decision of BGMEA leaders have been crucial in forging a rare consensus among major political parties, despite being poles apart politically, towards supporting the industry's growth.

There has been a demand from the members of

the apex trade body in the apparel sector to choose a dynamic leadership through a free, fair, transparent and credible election.

In response, the Government of Bangladesh has appointed an Administrator to hold a free, fair, transparent and credible election and to transfer the responsibility of the BGMEA to an elected leadership. For the first time in BGMEA's history, a third-party organization – Hoda Vasi, one of the leading audit firms in Bangladesh – was involved in the BGMEA election process to ensure impartiality and credibility. To begin with, it assisted in preparing a flawless voter list, consisting of members representing all active factories. The list was meticulously checked and compiled based on three essential criteria such as an updated income tax certificate, a current trade license and an updated Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE) certificate.

Then the election was held on May 31, 2025, with the entire process supervised by the government-appointed administrator. A total of 76 candidates representing three panels –Forum Panel, Sammilito Parishad, and Oikko Parishad--contested in the high-stakes election. The polls took place simultaneously both in Dhaka and Chattogram amid a festive mood and voters cast their ballots spontaneously at a safe atmosphere after passing through a three-stage voter checklist.

To ensure transparency, real-time voting updates were displayed on large screens and live-telecast in social media throughout the day, keeping participants engaged in every moment of the process. In Dhaka, 1,377 out of 1,564 eligible voters cast ballots, marking an 88.21 percent turnout. In Chattogram, 254 of 303 registered voters participated, reflecting an 83.83 percent turnout. This unprecedented high turnout happened as the voters came to the polling centres defying the inclement weather conditions demonstrated the voters' unwavering commitment to shaping the future of the industry through the election of dynamic and forward-looking leadership.

The election result shows that the Forum panel sealed a landslide victory, winning 31 out of 35 director posts, while the opponent Sammilito Parishad panel could manage to win only four director posts. In a show of true democratic spirit, the contesting panels came forward to congratulating the winners in the election, a gesture that underscored the credibility of the electoral process. There have been no allegations of any irregularities or any sort of misconduct. In one word, the election was conducted in such a free, fair, transparent and credible manner that it offered a blueprint for other trade bodies to reform their leadership selection process, which will benefit the entire business community and the economy.

Following the election, a new, dynamic BGMEA board was formed for the 2025-27 term, with Forum



Panel Convener Mahmud Hasan Khan, the managing director of Rising Fashions Ltd. as its President. Composed of highly educated and successful second- and third-generation industrialists, the new board brought together a blend of youth and experienced business personalities to lead the industry into the future.

The board is comprised of not only successful entrepreneurs, but they also graduated from locally and internationally acclaimed universities and an academic from the country's leading universities. It is highly expected that the new board will strengthen the BGMEA further through strong governance and dynamic leadership so that it can steer the industry through the hard challenges and restore its lost glory.

The newly elected board has already hit the ground running with a host of challenges awaiting it and stakeholders placing high hopes on its leadership. The current

challenges facing the apparel sector include high bank interest rates, customs-related complexities, energy shortage, supply chain disruptions, energy shortages, port-handling inefficiencies, factory-level crises, and the urgent need to restore customer confidence. At the same time, product–market diversification and value addition have emerged as critical priorities for sustaining growth.

With a new generation of forward-looking apparel industry leaders at the helm of BGMEA, stakeholders are hopeful that the industry will successfully overcome the challenges. The new board has already outlined a set of visionary priorities to drive the sector forward. Of Chief among them is taking measures to capitalize on Bangladesh's advantageous position in the US tariff regime. The latest shift in US tariff policy imposed a 20 percent reciprocal tariff on goods from Bangladesh, in addition to the existing 16.5 percent tariff. This has

placed Bangladesh in a comparatively advantageous position, as key competitors such as Vietnam and Sri Lanka are subject to the same 20 percent tariff rate, while India and China are likely to face significantly higher tariffs than Bangladesh. The current board is committed to prioritising tapping into the opportunities created by global supply chains shifting away from China and India. At the same time, it will work with American buyers to ensure that the burden of the tariff is not unfairly passed on to Bangladeshi manufacturers, who are already operating on razor-thin profit margins.

Another high priority for the board is to address the challenges surrounding Bangladesh's scheduled LDC graduation in November 2026. The BGMEA has called for a deferment of the graduation date, citing prevailing global and domestic uncertainties. The board will keep pressing the government to retain all existing incentives until 2029, as permitted under the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) Ministerial Conference-13 (MC13) decisions. At the same time, it plans to initiate engagement with policymakers to design a WTO-compliant alternative support mechanism for the post-2029 period. Another priority is to pursue measures to secure and expand market access in other preference-giving countries such as Japan, China, Korea and India.

Recognising the crucial role of SMEs in driving future growth and export diversification, the new board aims to place special emphasis on their sustainable growth. To this end, the BGMEA aims to advocate for dedicated policy frameworks that ensure easier access to financing, provide documentation support, and secure necessary regulatory exemptions for SME exporters. It has proposed that, for confirmed purchase orders, non-bonded and SME factories be allowed to import duty-free raw materials for a specified period. The board also seeks simplification in the number of licences required to operate, along with extending licence tenure to three



On behalf of Sammito Parishad, which contested in the recent BGMEA election, President Quazi Moniruzzaman and General Secretary & Chaity Group Managing Director Abul Kalam congratulated the newly elected BGMEA Board of Directors by presenting a bouquet at the charge handover ceremony.

to five years to reduce compliance costs. Moreover, to safeguard SMEs from risks arising from cancelled work orders from the international clothing retailers and brands, delayed payments, or non-payments, the BGMEA plans to form a legal support team to assist them to resolve such disputes amicably through holding consultation.

The board also envisions persuading policymakers to establish a separate ministry dedicated to the garment sector. Given that the Commerce Ministry is burdened with multiple responsibilities, a separate ministry for RMG industry could streamline services, cut costs, reduce delays and improve the ease of doing business.

The current board is also working on ensuring Back-to-Back LCs for non-bonded factories. Traditionally, these factories were not permitted to use the back-to-back Letter of Credit (LC) mechanism for procuring raw materials on credit. To address this, BGMEA has submitted formal letters to the National Board of Revenue (NBR), Bangladesh Bank, and the Ministry of Commerce, urging a revision of the rules to allow non-bonded factories access to back-to-back LCs for local procurement.

Alongside this, the board has outlined several other priorities. These include ensuring the security of the industry and its workers,

securing proper representation of BGMEA in BGMEA University of Fashion and Technology (BUFT), advocating for a simplified exit policy for factories and creating a welfare fund for RMG owners. The board is also working toward developing a unified code of conduct to reduce harassment of audit, establishing Garments Palli at Chattogram and creating a B2C platform to directly connect Bangladeshi manufacturers with end customers in order to tap into the booming global e-commerce market. Additionally, efforts are underway to make the BGMEA Innovation Center fully functional as a dedicated hub for knowledge-sharing on best practices, advanced technologies, and emerging trends in the global fashion industry.

The RMG industry is not only the country's main source of foreign exchange earnings but also its largest industrial employment generating sector, providing a livelihood for millions. Steering such a vital industry toward prosperity is a huge responsibility. Given the sector's importance, the newly elected BGMEA board is now poised to tackle the industry's challenges with renewed vigor and determination. This is crucial for securing a resilience and sustainable future for the RMG sector, which, in turn, will profoundly benefit the national economy and its people. **A**

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U.S. Tariff in Focus: What We Need to Know



On 2 April 2025, US President Donald J. Trump announced the “Liberation Day” reciprocal tariff, applying additional duties on imports from nearly all trading partners¹. For Bangladesh, the initial declaration imposed a 37 percent additional tariff—one of the highest rates among major apparel-exporting nations. This announcement immediately generated uncertainty within the ready-made garment (RMG) industry, as the U.S. is not only Bangladesh’s largest single export destination but also accounts for nearly 20 percent of the country’s total RMG exports in a year. The risk of such a steep tariff prompted serious

concern, especially when compared with the rates applied to regional competitors.

Although the additional tariff was scheduled to take effect from 9 April 2025, the U.S. administration gave a 90-days’ pause², allowing time for negotiations and possible remedy. Nonetheless, from 2 April onwards, a baseline tariff at 10 percent was applied in addition to the existing Most Favored Nation (MFN) tariff.

Due to a Non-Disclosure Agreement agreement between the governments of Bangladesh and the United States, private sector involvement in the negotiation was limited. However, BGMEA as the largest trade

body in the apparel sector, remained active throughout the negotiation process, providing data, analysis, and inputs whenever the cooperation was sought. Through coordinated efforts by the Government of Bangladesh and persistent advocacy from BGMEA, a substantial breakthrough was achieved. Upon an intense negotiation a U.S. Executive Order issued on 31 July 2025³, with effect from 7 August, reduced the tariff to 20 percent, bringing it closer to the level imposed on key competitors and averting the risk of a disproportionate trade shock.

of the Executive Order “Regulating Imports with a Reciprocal Tariff to Rectify Trade Practices that Contribute to Large and Persistent Annual United States Goods Trade Deficits” (2 April 2025) states: “More generally, the ad valorem rates of duty set forth in this order shall apply only to the non-U.S. content of a subject article, provided at least 20 percent of the value of the subject article is U.S. originating.” In practical terms, this means that if at least 20 percent of the raw materials used are of U.S. origin, the additional tariff does not apply to the

Analysis suggests that products such as 100 percent cotton trousers (knit and woven, men’s and women’s), T-shirts, sweaters, men’s woven shirts, and underwear have the potential to meet the U.S. content threshold, although the extent will depend on product pricing. Some exporters said they are using up to 40 percent US content now as they source the cotton from the USA. From a broader point of view, cotton garments constitute 72.40% of U.S. clothing imports from Bangladesh, amounting to over US\$ 5.31 billion in value.

Chart-1: Reciprocal Tariffs in accordance with the Executive Order dated July 31, 2025

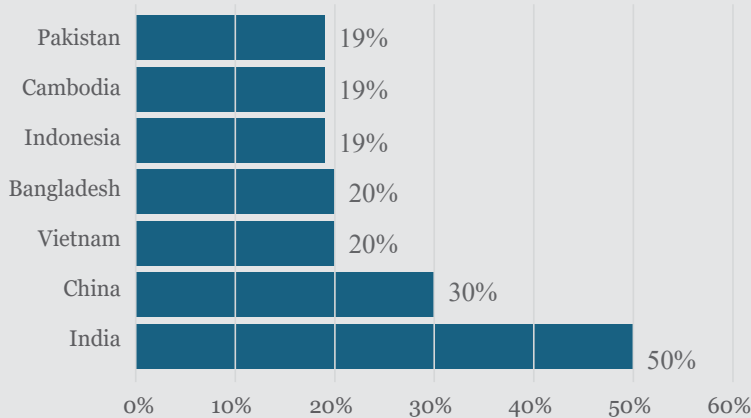
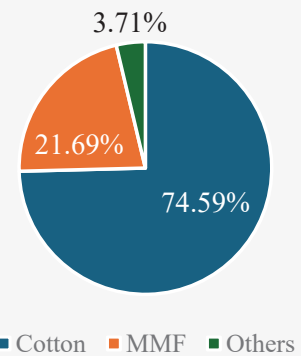


Chart-2: U.S. Apparel Import Share of Different Fibers from Bangladesh, 2024



Source: Otexa, USA.

Understanding the Tariff and Exemptions

Prior to this development, apparel exports from Bangladesh to the U.S. faced an average tariff at 16 percent on the Most Favoured Nation basis. With the introduction of the reciprocal tariff, an additional 20 percent has been added, raising the effective rate to approximately 36 percent. For example, if a cotton T-shirt is exported at a value of USD 2, the previous tariff obligation was 32 cents under the MFN system. With the additional 20 percent duty, exporters now face a further 40 cents, resulting in a total tariff burden of 72 cents—equivalent to 36 percent of the export value. Importantly, the U.S. order includes a conditional exemption. Section 3(f)

U.S. content portion. Returning to the T-shirt example: if the cotton used is sourced from the U.S. and valued at 50 cents, then the 20 percent duty applies only to the remaining USD 1.50. In this case, the additional tariff becomes 30 cents, which, when added to the 32 cents MFN tariff, reduces the total duty to 62 cents.

Encouragingly enough, the Government of Bangladesh has announced plans to establish a dedicated warehouse for storing the imported U.S. cotton⁴. This initiative will not only help addressing trade imbalance between the two countries but also will improve lead time, thereby enabling exporters to make greater use of the U.S. content

Tariff Impact on 100% Cotton T-Shirt Exports to USA

| Export Value (per piece) | U.S. Cotton Value | U.S. Content % | Meets 20% Threshold? | Previous Tariff (16.5%) =(1 X 16.5%) | Additional Tariff Base =(1-2) | Additional Tariff (20%) =(6 X 20%) | Total Tariff (USD) =(5+7) |
|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| \$2.00 | \$0.45 | 22.5% | Yes | \$0.33 | \$1.55 | \$0.31 | \$0.64 |
| \$2.50 | \$0.45 | 18.0% | No | \$0.41 | \$2.50 | \$0.50 | \$0.91 |



Table-1: Bangladesh’s Cotton Import by Country (FY2023–24)

| Country | Import Value (millionUSD) | Share (%) |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------|
| India | 702.78 | 19.93% |
| Brazil | 567.96 | 16.11% |
| Benin | 424.33 | 12.03% |
| Usa | 357.01 | 10.12% |
| Burkina Faso | 280.72 | 7.96% |
| Australia | 274.96 | 7.80% |
| Mali | 247.33 | 7.01% |
| Cameroon | 244.86 | 6.94% |
| All Countries | 3526.19 | |

Source: Bangladesh Bank.

exemption. Moreover, U.S. cotton provides an added advantage in terms of traceability, an increasingly important criterion for global buyers. Currently, Bangladesh sources only around 10 percent of its cotton from the U.S., while the majority comes from India, Brazil, Argentina, Australia and from some African countries. In FY2023–24, U.S. cotton imports stood at USD 357

million, against Bangladesh’s total cotton import bill of over USD 3.5 billion.

Market Outlook

While the reduction of Bangladesh’s tariff rate to 20 percent is a relief for now, it should not be viewed as a final resolution. Tariff levels remain high, and negotiations are underway

by several other countries that could result in further reductions, potentially altering competitive dynamics. It is essential that Bangladesh continues to engage diplomatically and strategically to prevent erosion of its market share. Trade data from early 2025 indicates the shifting trends. During January–June, U.S. apparel imports from the world rose by 6.74 percent year-on-year, while imports from China fell by 16.07 percent. Bangladesh and Vietnam, by contrast, registered gains at 25.12 percent and 17.96 percent, respectively, while India and Pakistan also recorded moderate growth. However, industry analysts cautioned that this surge may be temporary, reflecting front-loaded shipments to avoid tariff impacts. Indeed, the National Retail Federation (NRF), the largest retail association in the USA, forecasts a 5.6 percent contraction in U.S. trade volume in 2025⁵, raising concerns about a potential slowdown in orders.



Strategic Priorities

The lowering tariff should not be celebrated rather the tariff race is far from over. More efforts are required, to negotiate internationally and to increase our preparedness, as a number of countries are currently pursuing trade negotiation with the United States to further reduce tariff. The Government of Bangladesh is also continuing discussion with the U.S. government, and we need continuous monitoring and engagement plan for this. In addition, we believe government will ensure timely implementation of the commitments it made with the U.S., particularly the establishment of a warehouse for imported cotton may help to reduce tariff as well as to further diversify our cotton supply base and increasing of goods import from the USA to reduce the trade gap

between the two countries. BGMEA is already in discussion with stakeholders concerned regarding cotton traceability issues, where U.S. cotton has a superiority, and we believe the use of U.S. cotton will put us in a better position while considering global due diligence focus. Bangladesh’s export mix to the U.S. also warrants closer attention. Currently, woven garments dominate with a 65.32 percent share, compared to 34.68 percent for knitwear. In contrast, the U.S. market as a whole imported USD 81 billion worth of apparel in 2024, of which 56.45 percent was knitwear. This divergence suggests significant untapped potential for Bangladesh to expand in knitwear, where local value addition is higher and the scope for backward linkage

integration is greater. As we speak about value addition, the capacity of the backward linkage (primary textile sector) industry must increase, which is not only important for bilateral trade negotiation, but also to retain our duty free market access in EU and U.K. after LDC graduation. The additional 20 percent tariff in U.S.A. may cause disproportionate impact on certain product categories, especially MMF items, lingerie and high priced garments. Exporters of these items to the U.S. need particular attention.

Conclusion

The United States remains Bangladesh’s largest export market and a vital trade partner. In FY2024–25, Bangladesh exported USD 7.55 billion worth of apparel items to the U.S., representing 86.81 percent of total exports to that country. Over the years, Bangladesh has established its reputation as a reliable supplier of high-quality and affordable apparel, serving millions of American consumers. Alongside this, the RMG industry in Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in sustainability, labour rights, and green manufacturing.

While the United States is taking measures to protect its own economy, Bangladesh’s values and commitments as a responsible trade partner to be recognized, ensuring its continued participation in global trade on a fair and reciprocal basis. ^A

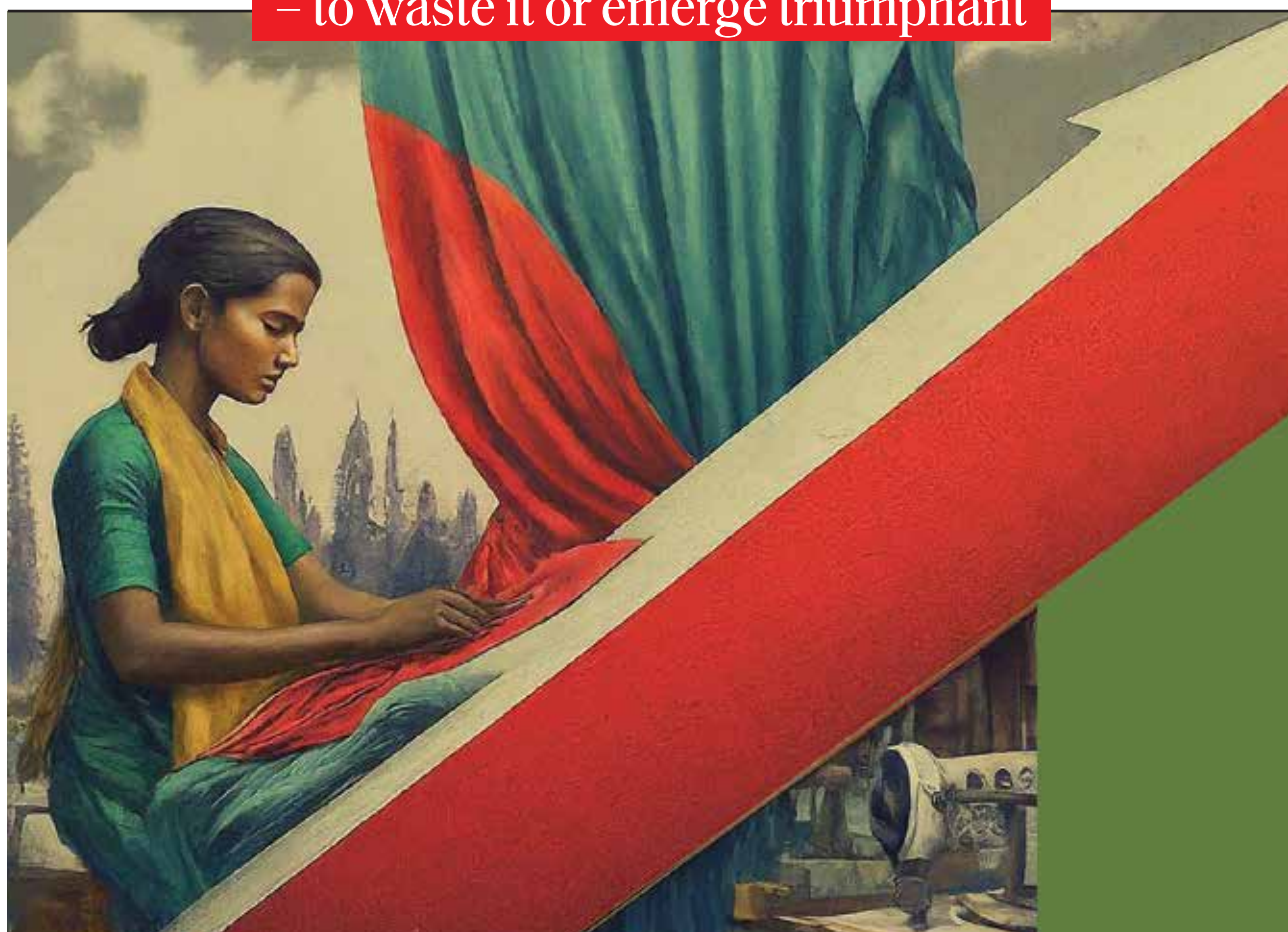
Table 2: Bangladesh’s Export to U.S.A. (Value million USD)

| Year | Woven | Knit | RMG | All Products | Share of RMG percent |
|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|----------------------|
| 2019 -20 | 3772.93 | 1373.61 | 5146.53 | 5832.39 | 88.24% |
| 2020 -21 | 3887.71 | 2058.69 | 5946.40 | 6974.01 | 85.27% |
| 2021 -22 | 5892.92 | 3120.17 | 9013.09 | 10417.72 | 86.52% |
| 2022 -23 | 5129.87 | 2231.67 | 7361.54 | 8523.37 | 86.37% |
| 2023 -24 | 4374.08 | 2257.01 | 6631.09 | 7599.53 | 87.26% |
| 2024 -25 | 4949.38 | 2596.43 | 7545.81 | 8692.35 | 86.81% |

Source: EPB (data may vary between EPB and Otexa).

At the cusp of real change for the RMG sector

– to waste it or emerge triumphant



TThere are moments in the activities of associations and institutions that are defined by how those in leadership roles take action. Actions that matter so much that – whether chosen right or wrong – it defines the trajectory of the institution for years to come. The new board’s taking over the BGMEA leadership could very well mark the start of that kind of a moment in the association’s history.

In my humble opinion the last BGMEA elections was a very surreal experience in the development of the association for the positive; the election should stand as a definitive course correction moment for the association.

It should be a point of pride for all of us that the new Board was elected in a transparent manner, sets the benchmark for the industry she represents! What’s more, I would even assert that actual members (each vetted before inclusion on the voter list) were able to cast their vote.



It is heartening that this election also saw unprecedented actual voter turnouts in both Dhaka and Chittagong, more than 90% votes casted.

Personally I have had the privilege of serving on the BGMEA boards as senior vice president multiple times and have actively participated in the development of the BGMEA under multiple presidents and boards, over that time, I have learnt that to understand the real outcome of serving on the BGMEA board comes from questioning oneself as a board member “what does BGMEA stand for as an institution?”, What are delivery expectations from the BGMEA to their members and stakeholders ?

We are USD 50 billion plus export industry, we have trained, efficient workers, we ushered in innovation and adoption of best industry

practices, we have faced and successfully overcome challenges across multiple fronts – worker rights, workplace safety, market dynamic changes – the sector has grown from strength to strength. Today we have a capable board at the helm, mix of experience and fresh yet experienced industry entrepreneurs all proven capable of leading from the front. Our President has already tabled certain priorities for the industry. It is this setting of these priorities and how this board pushes ahead will bring the desired results we are hopeful.

Time is ripe for the setting of a masterplan that will define the next 15-20 years of our industry’s evolution. A masterplan which will adopt and take forward as a succession plan from one board to another for the betterment of the industry only not for any selected

group or individuals as it was seen over a few years of the BGMEA S history!

It is time to take stock of what we have achieved over the years and take dedicated action to address the survival of the industry. Big, medium or small, we are all cogs in the same machinery; and unless we can band together under this new board to resolve the issues that plague our industry instead of just paying service to personal benefits, this hard-fought moment to define our industry’s future will go to waste. And we will have no one to blame but ourselves. **A**

Faisal Samad, Director, BGMEA

Fostering industrial harmony: A shared responsibility



BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan speaks at a meeting with trade union leaders about importance of ensuring law and order and maintain a stable industrial environment in the ready-made garment sector.

Peace and stability are two prerequisites for the sustainable growth of any industrial sector. Keeping that in mind, the new board of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has stepped up some good efforts to ensure stability in the sector by fostering harmonious industrial relations.

To this end, BGMEA has already held a series of meetings in recent months with representatives from a total of 81 labour federations. Chaired by BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan and attended by members of the trade body and worker leaders,

the meetings emphasised the critical role of labour associations in promoting industrial relations through holding constructive dialogues.

At each session, BGMEA urged trade union leaders to help ensure a stable law and order and maintain a congenial working environment in the garment sector. They were also requested to discourage workers from resorting to vandalism or disruptive activities such as road blockades to press unlawful demands or based on rumours. “Any damage to the industry results in loss to all sides – workers, owners, and the national economy,” said President Mahmud Hasan Khan. He added, “Rumours or illegitimate demands should

never escalate into violence.”

Labour leaders present at those meetings acknowledged that unrest benefits no one and reaffirmed their commitment to resolving grievances through dialogue and institutional mechanisms.

The BGMEA leadership also highlighted a series of welfare initiatives currently being undertaken by the association. These include regional grievance management cells in Gazipur, Ashulia, Savar, Mirpur, and Narayanganj to address disputes at the local level. If the grievances of the workers can be resolved quickly, it will not allow time for ill-feelings to develop, keep production uninterrupted and promote harmonious relations between employees and factory owners. The localised grievance resolution cells can be an effective tool to amicably resolve the disputes for the satisfaction of both parties.

The BGMEA President further said that, in order to resolve workers’ issues inside factories promptly, BGMEA is taking initiatives to enhance the skills of mid-level management through training. Appreciating the move, the leaders of the labour federations expressed their views that proper follow-up and monitoring are essential after such training is provided.

If disputes in the sector can be resolved amicably at the factory level, it would be a win-win situation for all. Moreover, it would help maintain strong relations and mutual respect between workers and employers, foster an environment of trust and understanding, and support the sustained growth of the industry.

The BGMEA President also informed the labour leaders about the plans to build dedicated hospitals in key industrial zones to provide healthcare access for workers, and about arranging a food rationing system to ease the cost of living, to be rolled out with the support of labour federations.

To support these efforts, BGMEA called on federations of the union

“



We request workers to refrain from resorting to vandalism or disruptive activities such as road blockades to press unlawful demands or based on rumours. Any damage to the industry results in loss to all sides.”

**-Mahmud Hasan Khan
President, BGMEA**

leaders to submit specific proposals and participate in shaping welfare schemes such as rationing cards, which will require the development of a comprehensive worker database.

BGMEA said the current board is committed to prioritizing workers’ welfare while safeguarding the industry’s global competitiveness. He also added that collaboration with unions is essential to project a positive image of Bangladesh’s RMG industry, particularly in the European market, where compliance with labour standards is closely monitored.

Both BGMEA and labour federations agreed on the importance of a stable industrial climate for the long-term growth of the sector. The workers’ federations welcomed BGMEA’s initiatives and pledged to submit proposals from their respective organizations to ensure proper implementation.

The RMG industry of Bangladesh is now at a crossroads as both

opportunities and challenges beckon simultaneously. The industry needs to prepare to successfully face the challenges of Bangladesh’s graduation to a developing nation from the league of Least Developed Countries (LDCs). It also needs to enhance its capability through product diversification, innovation, and technology upgradation and skills development.

To meet these challenges, the industry must work in a harmony, like a family, to address all obstacles and sustain the sector’s growth momentum. Workers, labour leaders, and entrepreneurs must remain focused, united, and collaborate for the greater interests of all stakeholders in the RMG industry. Building and maintaining harmonious industrial relations by fostering good relations between workers and factory management is a shared responsibility of both owners and labour leaders, and it is of paramount importance for long-term success. **A**

By Sheikh Hossain Muhammad Mustafiz

LDC Graduation: Are we ready?



Bangladesh's forthcoming graduation from the United Nations' Least Developed Country (LDC) category is, first and foremost, a story of success. It signals steady growth, social progress and industrial resilience. Yet for the Ready-Made Garment (RMG) sector—the country's export engine and largest formal employer—graduation is also a stress test. The central question is no longer whether graduation will happen, but whether the industry and the state can make it work to Bangladesh's advantage. Readiness, in this context, is not a slogan; it is a set of hard choices about cost, capability and credibility.

What changes the day after graduation is the price equation. Duty-free access that once gave Bangladeshi garments an automatic edge will begin to narrow in the European Union and other key destinations unless new arrangements are secured. At the same time, the world to which Bangladesh exports is rewriting the rules of responsible trade. European due-diligence, product transparency and circularity frameworks will progressively require proof—of labor safeguards, environmental performance, traceability and end-of-life responsibility—embedded in the way factories operate. Competitors have not stood still either: countries with free-trade agreements, deeper man-made fiber ecosystems and faster logistics

already convert policy advantages into purchase orders. “Are we ready?” therefore means: can the industry protect margins without cutting corners, and can the state remove the frictions that make Bangladeshi goods more expensive, slower or riskier than they need to be?

A realistic way to frame readiness is to start with the cost-shock math. If the loss of preferences translates into an 8–12 percent tariff headwind on key lines, that gap must be closed through a mix of internal efficiency gains and external price recovery from higher value. No single lever will deliver the full offset, but several together can. Energy is often the largest controllable overhead after materials, and it is where standing still is the most expensive choice. Factories that put proper energy management in place—auditing boilers, compressed air and HVAC systems; replacing inefficient motors and lighting; using heat recovery; and layering rooftop solar for daytime loads—consistently shave meaningful points off unit cost. Those savings compound when utility reliability improves production stability: fewer stoppages, fewer changeovers and less quality fallout.

Water use and effluent treatment sit in the same category of “compliance that pays.” A modern ETP that recovers and reuses water, combined with low-liquor dyeing, smarter chemical dosing and rainwater harvesting, does not just pass audits; it lowers the monthly bill and insulates operations against scarcity and price spikes. These are capital decisions, but the paybacks are practical and, crucially, bankable when paired with green-finance instruments.

The second pillar of readiness is productivity. Bangladesh still leaves value on the sewing floor through imbalance, motion waste and rework. When line balancing is treated as an engineering problem rather than a daily firefight, throughput rises without adding heads. When inline quality is owned by operators and team leaders, defects are prevented rather than inspected out. When changeover discipline is tightened,

small lots stop costing like micro-orders. Lean is sometimes dismissed as jargon; in practice it is the habit of seeing and eliminating losses you already pay for. The prize is not theoretical. Factories that turn lean into daily management routinely unlock double-digit improvements in pieces per person per day, which feed directly into the margin gap that graduation opens up.

Digitization is the third pillar because it compresses time as much as it cuts cost. An ERP that actually mirrors the way the factory runs—paired with digital production boards and real-time WIP visibility—turns guesswork into control. 3D design and virtual sampling shift development cycles from weeks to days, reducing fabric waste and courier expense while making brands happier to brief more work. Production planning supported by better data and simple predictive tools keeps raw material and capacity aligned, lowering excess inventory and airfreight emergencies. Automation, where it is justified—automatic spreaders and cutters, templated operations, programmable folders—saves fabric and stabilizes quality. It needs not be an all-or-nothing leap; targeted investments in the highest-loss steps pay for themselves first.

Materials still dominate garment cost, so procurement strategy is a fourth pillar. The country must build more of what buyers want to count as local: man-made fibers, specialized knits and finishing that meet rules-of-origin tests. But while that ecosystem scales, individual factories can improve their own position. Strategic supplier agreements that trade forecast visibility for price stability reduce quote volatility. Color and fabric library standardization across styles cuts MOQs and waste. Collaborative purchasing among SMEs in a production cluster narrows the disadvantage of small lot sizes. Every percentage point squeezed from materials is a percentage point less that tariffs can erode.

Scale can also be rented rather than owned. Shared services are a practical bridge for smaller and mid-sized

exporters who cannot individually afford world-class labs, marketing or logistics. A jointly governed compliance and testing facility within an industrial zone reduces the per-factory cost of routine audits and certifications. A pooled export consolidation center helps factories fill containers, smooth sailings and negotiate better freight. A representative office abroad that showcases a multi-factory portfolio gives buyers confidence that continuity and category depth exist beyond any single plant. None of this requires giving up identity; it requires agreeing the rules of cooperation and enforcing them transparently.

Circularity is often framed as ethics; it is equally a cost strategy. Cutting waste that becomes yarn, patterns that minimize off-cut, trims recovered for reuse, deadstock designed into value lines, waste heat captured for preheating, sludge handled as a resource rather than a liability—these are not marginal gestures. They translate into lower input costs and new revenue, while meeting the documentation standards that brands and regulators increasingly expect.

If this is the manufacturer’s playbook, what does “ready” mean for the state? First, market access has to be treated as a core competitiveness program, not just trade diplomacy. Securing continued preferential access where possible, qualifying for GSP-type schemes that demand legal and institutional reforms, and negotiating tariff-reducing agreements in priority markets are all part of the same job: converting national policy into factory orders. The legal housekeeping that underpins these schemes—ratifying and implementing conventions on labor, environment and governance—should be done with business, labor and civil society inside the tent so that compliance is real and evidence is auditable.

Second, logistics must become a source of advantage rather than a chronic drag. Port dwell times, documentation loops and inland bottlenecks add cost that shows up as lost orders. Customs processes that are fully digital, risk-based and predictable compress lead time;

container handling capacity and rail links that keep pace with export volumes stop peak-season chaos; and properly managed inland container depots bring the port closer to the factory. When days are removed from the calendar, money is returned to the P&L.

Third, energy reliability is an industrial policy. Manufacturers can and should invest in efficiency and captive renewables, but only the grid can provide the baseline stability that high-utilization factories require. Transparent pricing, predictable supply and a pipeline of generation and transmission investments are part of the export strategy because every outage is a hidden tariff.

Fourth, finance must reward the behaviors Bangladesh needs. Green lines of credit that are simple to access and priced to adoption will accelerate retrofits and renewables. Export credit and insurance that de-risk new markets will make diversification real rather than rhetorical. SME-friendly facilities for automation and digitization will keep smaller exporters in the game. Tax policy that encourages backward linkages in man-made fibers and specialized finishing will move the country toward rules-of-origin resilience. None of these instruments are experimental; they are in the toolkits of the competitors Bangladesh benchmarks itself against.

Fifth, skills and standards complete the system. National programs that train supervisors in industrial engineering and problem-solving, that upskill operators into multi-skilling, and that produce the technicians who keep modern equipment running will pay back every day on the floor. Accredited labs that buyers recognize reduce the cost and time of sending tests abroad. Helpdesks and templates that translate new European due-diligence requirements into practical factory checklists will prevent SMEs from being shut out by paperwork rather than performance.

A different angle on readiness is to think in time horizons rather than themes. Over the next few years, the




most valuable actions are those that lock in certainty: a focused energy-efficiency plan with measurable targets; a production-system reset that puts line balancing, changeover discipline and first-time-right at the center of daily management; and a buyer dialogue that shifts a portion of the book into higher-value, lower-volatility categories. In parallel, the government's most valuable actions are those that reduce friction quickly: a visible customs modernization push, a green-finance window designed with industry input, and a credible calendar for the legal and institutional upgrades required for preference schemes.

Over the following couple of years, the horizon broadens. This is where backward linkages, industrial clusters with common effluent treatment, and trade agreements come into their own. It is also where Bangladesh can reposition itself in the minds of buyers: not as the cheapest place to make a basic tee, but as a reliable, transparent, speed-capable ecosystem for a wider range of knit and woven categories, particularly in man-made fibers. The ambition, ultimately, is to make "Bangladesh" mean predictable quality, demonstrable responsibility and competitive total landed cost, regardless of the tariff line.

So, are we ready? A candid answer begins with questions each factory and each ministry can ask itself. Can we identify, in numbers, the sources of loss in our operations and show month-on-month improvement? Can we demonstrate, with evidence, that our labor and environmental practices would withstand the

scrutiny of new due-diligence regimes? Do we have a path to reduce our reliance on imported inputs in the categories where buyers are growing? Are our ports, roads, customs and energy supply improving at the pace the market requires? And most importantly, are we coordinating industry action with public policy so that efforts reinforce one another instead of working at cross-purposes?

If the honest answers reveal gaps, that is not a reason for pessimism; it is the starting point for a plan. Bangladesh did not build the world's second-largest apparel export industry by accident. It did so through entrepreneurship, learning by doing and the ability to organize around shared goals. LDC graduation raises the bar, but it also raises the opportunity. As soon as possible, if manufacturers can pull every efficiency and digitization lever available, if they move decisively into higher-value categories and smarter procurement, and if the state clears the lanes of trade, logistics, energy and finance, the sector can trade away old advantages and build new ones.

Graduation, in other words, does not decide the future; readiness does. The countries that convert policy change into competitive renewal are the ones that win the orders that matter. Bangladesh can be one of them—if it treats the question "Are we ready?" as the daily checklist it must keep answering "yes." 

Sheikh Hossain Muhammad Mustafiz
Director, BGMEA, & Managing Director, Cute
Dress Industry Ltd.

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Weaving Excellence with Innovation and Sustainability

Evitex Dress Shirt Limited



In the fast-changing global fashion industry, where sustainability and ethics are increasingly shaping the sourcing decisions, the local Evitex Dress Shirt Limited (EDSL) has emerged as a resounding model for what responsible apparel manufacturing looks like. Founded in 2019, the factory has quickly earned a reputation for balancing cutting-edge technology, uncompromising quality, and a people-first philosophy.

Located at Shirirchala, Bhabanipur under Gazipur Sadar Thana, the factory spans on 5.5 acres of land and employs more than 3,000 professionals—of whom 1,800 are women. Guided by industry veteran and former President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Anwar-ul Alam Chowdhury Parvez, Evitex is proving that success in the ready-made garment sector comes not only from scale and efficiency but also from vision, responsibility and inclusivity.

Evitex has quickly established itself as a reliable global partner, producing more than 750,000 pieces of woven garments per month for premium brands across Europe, North and South America, and Asia. Its expansive client base spans the retailers and brands from the UK, USA, Germany, France, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Türkiye, India, Mexico, and Brazil—reflecting both capacity and credibility. The factory's product range is equally diverse, including men's formal, semi-formal, and casual shirts, denim-inspired looks, school uniforms, children's wear, and women's blouses, tunics, dresses, and co-ord sets. By addressing multiple market segments, Evitex demonstrates flexibility in meeting global fashion demands without compromising quality or consistency. Its impressive portfolio of certifications—Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum (v4.1), ISO 14001:2015, OEKO-TEX Standard 100, GOTS, GRS, OCS, RCS, European Flax, WRAP Gold, SEDEX, BSCI, Better Work, and SLCP—reinforces its standing as a world-class manufacturer with global compliance benchmarks.

Evitex places innovation at the centre of its operations. Digital tools like CLO 3D enables virtual garment simulations that reduce design iterations and speed up approvals, while ERP systems provide real-time



production tracking and documentation. Textronics Dobby software and Adobe Creative Suite strengthen design capabilities, ensuring efficiency from concept to production. On the shop floor, precision machinery sourced from Japan, Germany, Italy, and beyond enables seamless operations. Automated buttonhole and pocket-setting machines, 3D collar

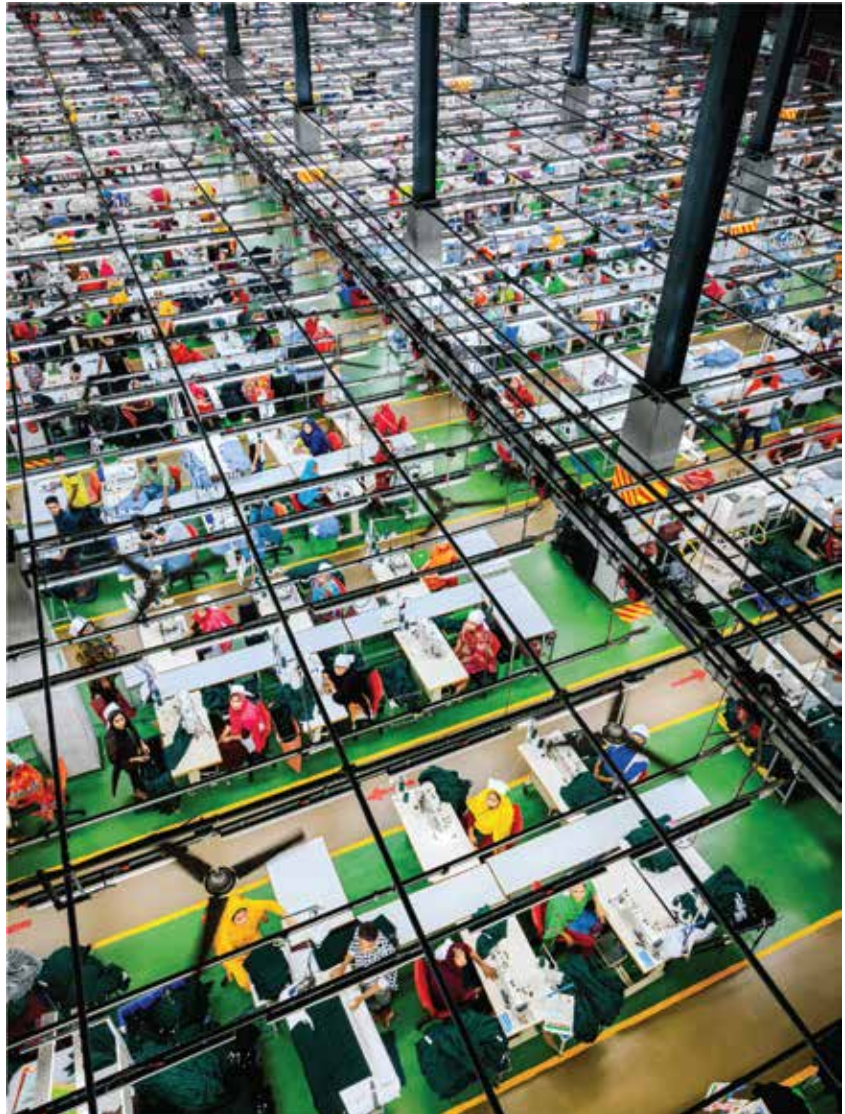
and cuff pressing systems, embroidery technologies, and digital fabric cutting ensure garments meet the highest standards of accuracy and finish. These innovations are not just about aesthetics—they are about measurable efficiency. Operator productivity has doubled in certain areas, with advanced sewing machines raising main label attachment output from 150 to 330



pieces per hour. The result is reduced defects, minimized fabric waste, shorter lead times, and enhanced competitiveness. Looking ahead, Evitex is already exploring AI-driven predictive maintenance, IoT-enabled quality monitoring, and intelligent line optimization. These forward-looking investments underlines its ambition to remain at the forefront of Industry 4.0 transformation in apparel sector.

Sustainability is not an add-on at Evitex—it is part of the DNA. The company's green infrastructure and resource management practices are designed to minimize environmental impact while lowering costs. A 20KW solar system power essential operations such as lighting, security, and emergency systems, while a 500,000-gallon rainwater harvesting pond supports water conservation and resilience. Servo motors in sewing machines, LED lighting, maximum natural daylight use, and high-efficiency conduits ensure lower energy consumption, while boiler economizers recycle steam, reducing demand. Waste is carefully segregated and sent to certified processors. These initiatives have helped Evitex achieve LEED Platinum certification and consistently strong performance under the Higg FEM framework, positioning it among the global leaders in sustainable manufacturing.

What sets Evitex apart, however, is its holistic approach to responsibility. While many factories focus narrowly on compliance, Evitex embeds worker welfare and community development into its core strategy. Inside the factory, workers benefit from on-site daycare, a modern canteen serving nutritious meals, APON Bazar facilities offering affordable daily essentials at subsidised prices to the workers, allowances for differently-abled workers, and regular health, safety, and skill development training. The company also champions gender empowerment, enabling women



operators to move into supervisory roles. Worker engagement is institutionalized through active Worker and Safety Committees, fostering collaboration and inclusion.

Beyond the gates, Evitex contributes to broader social impact. The Evince Model School educates over 1,200 children with a 100% SSC pass rate, while local orphanages, daycares, and mosques benefit from targeted support. Through Evince Agro, the company supplies organic produce at subsidized rates to its workforce, directly improving nutrition and affordability.

The apparel industry is evolving rapidly, and Evitex is preparing for a future where sustainability and responsibility will be non-negotiable expectations. With a strong commitment to technology, inclusivity, and sustainability, Evitex Dress Shirt Limited is not just manufacturing garments, it is shaping a new paradigm for the RMG sector. In a world demanding accountability and agility, Evitex Dress Shirt stands as a proof that Bangladesh can lead with sustainability, scale with innovation, and inspire confidence among global buyers. **A**

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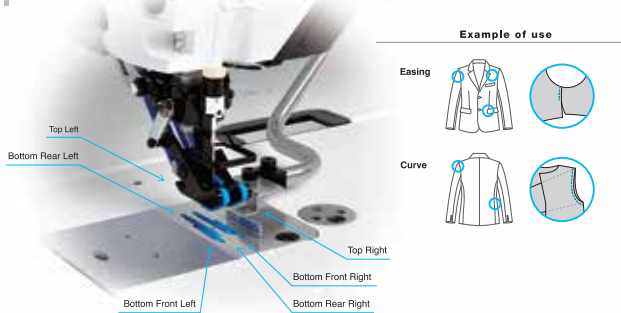


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Export-Import Dynamics of Bangladesh's RMG Sector

Toward a Value-Driven Future



The ready-made garment (RMG) sector is the backbone of Bangladesh's economy, contributing over 80% of export earnings and employing millions. As global apparel trade undergoes shifts in fiber composition, product demand, and tariff structures, Bangladesh stands at a crossroads. It has retained its position as the world's second-largest apparel exporter after China, but now faces pressing challenges: over-concentration on cotton-based basics, dependency on preferential market access, and the need to rebrand beyond the "low-cost producer" label. This article examines

Bangladesh's recent export performance, its cotton import dynamics and negotiations with the United States, and the strategic directions required to achieve value-driven growth. Bangladesh's RMG exports reached \$39.35 billion in FY2024–25, growing 8.8% year-on-year. Knitwear rose nearly 10% to \$21.16 billion, while woven garments expanded 7.8% to \$18.19 billion. In July 2025, the first month of FY2025–26, exports surged 24.7% year-on-year, reflecting strong momentum despite global uncertainties. The European Union absorbed nearly half of these exports, while the United States accounted for 19%, once again proving to be a strategic market. In some other major destinations such as Canada and the UK also grew,

showing Bangladesh's broad reach. Yet the success hides a structural vulnerability. T-shirts, trousers, sweaters, shirts, and jackets, these five items still comprise nearly 79% of total apparel exports. This concentration provides efficiency but reinforces Bangladesh's global image as a supplier of low-tier basics. Globally, Bangladesh commands about 7.4% of apparel exports, second only to China, according to data from the WTO. In the U.S. cotton apparel market, it was the second-largest supplier in 2024 with a 14% share, just behind Vietnam. However, U.S. tariffs at 20% on Bangladeshi garments pose a major challenge. To address this, trade bodies are lobbying for reciprocal arrangements, notably duty-free access for garments made from imported U.S. cotton. Since Bangladesh already imports significant volumes of cotton, which is about \$361 million annually, this arrangement could create a mutually beneficial cycle. By scaling up U.S. cotton imports four to five times and re-exporting the garments duty-free, Bangladesh would both deepen bilateral trade ties and strengthen its competitive edge in a critical market. Cotton consumption underpins Bangladesh's RMG success but also exposes its vulnerabilities. With negligible domestic production, the country imported \$7.91 billion worth of cotton and cotton-based textile inputs in FY2023–24. Raw cotton alone made up \$3.5 billion, feeding a vast spinning industry, while yarns and woven fabrics contributed another \$2–3 billion. India remained the top supplier at \$2.37 billion, followed by China (\$1.86 billion). Brazil (\$569 million) and several West African exporters such as Benin, Burkina Faso, and Mali have also become important players. The U.S. share remains modest at 5%, but strategically vital, both for its high-quality cotton and for the tariff-linked negotiations. This diversification of suppliers reduces dependency, while also leaving space to shift a greater portion toward U.S. imports as leverage in trade talks. The heavy reliance on cotton, however, shapes both risk and



perception. Around 75% of Bangladesh's RMG exports are cotton-based. While this dominance has brought economies of scale, it exposes the sector to volatility in cotton markets and perpetuates its branding as a cheap producer. The consequence is evident in unit values: cotton basics often fetch just \$2–3 per piece, whereas non-cotton outerwear, sportswear, or technical garments can earn \$10–15 each. At the global level, cotton apparel's share has fallen to about 42%, while man-made fiber (MMF) garments now account for more than 50% of trade. Demand is growing fastest for athleisure, sportswear, outerwear, and technical textiles. Yet Bangladesh has been slow to adapt, with only about 25% of exports in non-cotton categories, compared to 40–50% in Vietnam. This suggests that while Bangladesh meets much of the world's demand for basics, it captures only a small fraction of the high-value segment. For Bangladesh to sustain its growth and reach the often-cited target of \$100 billion in RMG exports by 2030, it must transition from volume to value. For new investors, the opportunities lie precisely here. Expanding backward linkages into polyester, viscose,

spandex, and recycled fibers would allow Bangladesh to produce high-value garments locally rather than relying on imports. Investing in product diversification, lingerie, sportswear, outerwear, and functional apparel can help to tap higher-margin markets. At the same time, leveraging Bangladesh's reputation as the home of the world's largest number of green garment factories offers a chance to reposition the country as a premium, ethical sourcing hub.

In conclusion, Bangladesh's RMG sector has proven resilient and competitive, but its future hinges on strategic shifts. Increasing U.S. cotton imports to secure reciprocal tariff relief, diversifying beyond cotton-based basics, and rebranding toward high-value, sustainable products are critical steps. For policymakers, this means negotiating favorable trade deals and supporting investment in synthetic textiles. For investors, it means targeting backward linkage industries and higher-end product segments. If these strategies align, Bangladesh can evolve from the world's factory for basics into a value-driven global apparel leader. **A**

Design Renaissance of Bangladesh's Fashion Industry

Threads of Transformation

*The Missing Piece: Why Design Innovation Could Transform
Bangladesh's Garment Industry*



For decades, Bangladesh has been the backbone of the global apparel industry, stitching garments for the world's most recognizable brands. The country's factories hum with precision, producing over \$45 billion worth of exports annually. Yet, for all its industrial prowess, a critical question looms over the nation's economic future: Can Bangladesh remain competitive in a world where fashion no longer values only cost, but creativity, speed, and sustainability?

A VISION BEYOND THE LOOM

On a humid August morning in Dhaka, the hum of sewing machines blends with the street sounds of vendors selling tea and ripe guavas. Inside a modest studio in the city's industrial heart, Rokaiya Ahmed Purna leans over her sketchpad, sketching bold lines that speak of heritage, nature, and transformation.

Her designs are deeply rooted in Bangladesh's identity — motifs inspired by folk art, embroidery echoing the

Sundarbans' wild beauty, and colors that mirror the country's six vibrant seasons. But for Rokaiya, this isn't just fashion. It's a call to reimagine Bangladesh's role in the global garment industry — not just as a manufacturing powerhouse, but as a creative leader.

"For years, we've been seen as a global hub for production," she says. "But the world is changing. Creativity, speed, and sustainability are now the drivers. And that's where design in Bangladesh must rise." Rokaiya is part of a growing movement that believes design is Bangladesh's next frontier. Working with global brands like Marks & Spencer, Calvin Klein (under PVH), and UNESCO, she's mastered sourcing, development, leadership, and supply chain efficiency. Her journey reflects both the power, and the limitations of an industry built on volume — capable of producing millions of garments yet often lacking its own voice.

"We could make anything, perfectly," she says. "But it wasn't ours. No story. No innovation. Just someone else's vision."

Now, she's helping shift that narrative. From local studios to global boardrooms, Rokaiya is advocating for a future where 'Made in Bangladesh' means design excellence, not just mass production. It's a vision that blends tradition with innovation — and one that could redefine the country's place in the fashion world. To push Bangladesh beyond the "Made in Bangladesh" label and into the realm of creative leadership

Beyond Volume: The High Cost of Being "The World's Factory"

Bangladesh's garment success story is rooted in scale and efficiency and credibility. Millions of workers—churn out basic apparel at prices few countries can match. But the global fashion landscape is shifting. Consumers demand individuality over uniformity; brands seek suppliers who can collaborate on innovation, not just execute orders.

Currently, less than 5% of Bangladesh's exports involve original design input, leaving the nation vulnerable to price wars and buyer migration to more design-forward competitors like Turkey or Vietnam.

"We've proven we can make clothes for the world," "Now we must prove we can design them too—or risk being left behind."

THE MISSING PIECE: WHY DESIGN MATTERS NOW MORE THAN EVER

Why Design Innovation Is an Economic Imperative

Design is not merely about aesthetics; it is economic strategy. Original design allows suppliers to command premium prices, forge strategic partnerships, and reduce dependency on low-margin mass production. McKinsey's State of Fashion 2025 report underscores this: brands increasingly favor suppliers who provide end-to-end solutions, including product development and trend alignment.

For Bangladesh, this represents an untapped frontier. If the nation could increase its share of value-added, design-driven exports by even 10%, analysts project billions in additional GDP annually. Moreover, design innovation enhances resilience—cushioning the industry against fluctuations in global demand, trade policy shocks, and the growing shift towards nearshoring in Western markets.

Closing the Knowledge Gap: Building a New Creative Class

The challenge is not talent scarcity—it's opportunity scarcity. Bangladesh teems with creative potential, from the centuries-old heritage roots connect with the global design knowledge and trends to a younger generation eager to engage with global fashion. What's missing is access: to advanced training, market intelligence, and meaningful industry pathways.

For decades, design education in

Bangladesh has lagged behind industrial needs. Curricula remain outdated, disconnected from the digital tools and trend analytics driving modern fashion. This has created a gulf between the nation's manufacturing strength and its creative capacity.

Bridging this gap requires systemic investment in knowledge:

- **Global Trend Literacy:** Designers must learn to interpret and anticipate international market signals, from seasonal colors to evolving consumer values.
- **Digital Competence:** 3D sampling, AI-driven forecasting, and virtual prototyping are now baseline skills in competitive markets.
- **Sustainability Integration:** Designers must move beyond compliance to innovation—embedding eco-friendly materials and circular processes at the concept stage.

Such an empowered design workforce would not only elevate Bangladesh's export offering but reposition its role in global supply chains—from passive producer to creative collaborator.

From Skill Deficits to Market Leadership

The implications of closing these gaps are profound. Factories with in-house design teams can reduce lead times by up to 40%, according to World Bank data, by eliminating lengthy back-and-forth cycles with buyers. Original collections co-developed with clients often command 15–30% higher margins than basic commodity garments.

This is not conjecture; nations that have embraced design-led transformation have reaped its rewards. Turkey's rise as a fast-fashion hub, for instance, is built on its ability to deliver trend-responsive products in record time. Bangladesh can achieve similar results—at even greater scale—if it chooses to integrate creativity as deeply as it has mastered efficiency.

Sustainability: From Obligation to Opportunity

Another critical dimension where design drives competitiveness is sustainability. For too long, environmental and ethical considerations have been treated as costly obligations—something to be done to retain buyers, rather than to attract them. But in today’s market, sustainability sells. Consumers are willing to pay premiums for products with verifiable ethical and environmental credentials.

Designers are central to this shift. Decisions about materials, processes, and product lifecycles are made at the design stage. By training a generation of designers fluent in circular design, Bangladesh can transition from being a reactive player to a proactive leader in sustainable fashion—an area where the next phase of global competition will be fought. Sustainability not as a compliance burden but as a competitive differentiator. Through FIIP’s Sustainability & Circularity Lead, factories gain access to eco-material innovation, impact KPIs, and integration strategies that align with global buyer priorities. “Sustainability is no longer optional, “It’s the currency of the future fashion market. We can either lead or be left behind.”

The Ripple Effect: Beyond GDP

The benefits of embracing design-led growth extend far beyond economics:

- **Cultural Capital:** A strong design identity allows Bangladesh to export not just products but culture, transforming “Made in Bangladesh” into a mark of creativity and heritage.
- **Social Mobility:** New creative roles diversify employment opportunities, empowering women to ascend from sewing lines to design studios, reshaping the gender dynamics of the industry.
- **Global Influence:** As Bangladesh contributes innovation rather than simply capacity, it gains leverage in international trade and branding.



This is not a distant dream but a near-term possibility. The country already possesses the raw ingredients: a skilled workforce, rich cultural traditions, and industrial infrastructure envied by many. What it needs now is the vision to integrate creativity as a national priority.

A Call to Action: Redefining “Made in Bangladesh”

Transformation will not happen overnight. It requires coordinated action:

Policy Support: Incentives for design investment, IP protection, and R&D funding.

Industry Commitment: Factories must embed design teams, not treat creativity as a peripheral service.

Global Partnerships: Collaboration with international brands, schools, and mentors to accelerate skill transfer.

Cultural Branding: A concerted effort to promote Bangladeshi design narratives globally.

“This is about rewriting our story,” says Rokaiya. “For too long, we’ve been the invisible hands behind global fashion. It’s time to become visible minds—leading the ideas, not just making them”

As the global fashion industry pivots towards innovation and accountability, Bangladesh stands at a crossroads. It can cling to the comfort of cost-based competitiveness—or seize the moment to become a creative force shaping the future of fashion.

A New Identity for “Made in Bangladesh X Design in Bangladesh”

The upcoming Design in Bangladesh Global Fashion Summit, spearheading, is poised to be a turning point. With BGMEA and BIDA as strategic partners, the summit will convene global buyers, sustainability pioneers, and local innovators in Dhaka to reimagine what Bangladesh can contribute to the garment industry more and can also include the world. The time for incremental change is over; this is about transformation. It is existential to ensure that its next chapter isn’t just about making clothes but making history. **A**

Rokaiya Ahmed Purna is an International Fashion designer / Industry advocate / Lecturer / UNESCO Youth Delegate and Founder, Design In Bangladesh.

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Small Steps, Big Impacts on Health of Workers



When it comes to workplace safety, it is often associated with expensive investments—fire systems, retrofitting, and certifications. But what if the most powerful improvements didn't come from million-dollar projects, but from almost negligible or cost-free actions? Here are some low-cost but smart solutions.

Iron and folic acid tablets: Each tablet costs less than the price of a cup of tea, yet their impact is transformative. A nutrition program in Bangladesh reduced anemia among female garment workers significantly. Healthier workers mean fewer sick days, sharper concentration, and higher productivity, □a win-win situation for both business and society.

Air Flow and Ventilation: Air circulation is more than comfort; it is one

of the major health factors. Stuffy air with high CO₂ levels causes fatigue, headaches, and slower reaction times. Factories often shut ventilation in winter to reduce drafts, but this harms workers. However, installing exhaust fans at ceiling corners or near heat sources, combined with cross-ventilation from windows or pedestal fans can be a fix to such problems. Additionally, there are low-cost carbon meters available in the market that help to trace the carbon dioxide presence on the floors. The investment is minimal, but the payoff is much sharper, leading to a healthier workforce.

Sunlight, Vitamin D, and Productivity: Garment workers spend long hours indoors, making Vitamin D deficiency a hidden epidemic. Sometimes this leads to fatigue, bone weakness, and low immunity. The solution is as simple as a 10-minute sunlight break. For busy



days, alternate lines can go for short breaks. If outdoor space is limited, a roof-top or balcony seating area with sunlight access can be arranged. Furthermore, creating shaded open-air spaces for tea breaks also costs almost nothing but restores energy and long-term health.

Adapting Smartly with Climate Change: Rising temperatures and heatwaves threaten factory productivity, where high-cost cooling isn't the only answer. Factories can introduce hydration points on every floor, shaded rest areas, and rooftop greenery to reduce indoor heat. These micro-adaptations protect workers and demonstrate climate resilience. These attributes are increasingly valued by buyers also.

Women's Health: Dignity and Efficiency: The majority of the RMG workers are women, yet menstrual health is often overlooked. Hygiene corners offering sanitary pads at cost price, combined with basic awareness sessions reduce absenteeism and infections. The

costs are negligible, but the message to workers is priceless.

Ergonomics and Micro-Breaks: High-volume production factories often resist giving long breaks, but scientific micro-breaks solve the dilemma. Instead of full pauses, workers can do 30 to 60 second stretches at their stations every 2 to 3 hours. Additionally, posters with simple exercises or rotational breaks by line allow both SMEs and large factories to adopt this without slowing production. This reduces musculoskeletal disorders and fatigue while maintaining output.

Mental Wellbeing: A few potted plants in production spaces, corridors, or rest areas improve air quality and reduce stress. Rooftop gardens double as climate adaptation, cutting indoor heat while giving workers calming spaces. The cost is small, but the social impact is big.

Peer Safety Champions: Training a few workers as safety ambassadors

creates accountability without extra costs. Peer reminders on safe machine handling, mask use, menstrual health, mental health, or fire safety build a culture of responsibility from the ground up. Therefore, it is important to understand that these initiatives aren't charity, they are in fact smart business moves. Healthier workers deliver higher productivity, absenteeism drops, and turnover reduces. Buyers now demand proof of responsible business conduct, and factories that integrate these micro-interventions signal foresight, responsibility, and climate resilience. Workplace safety in the RMG sector is not just about preventing accidents, it's about creating an environment where workers thrive. From iron tablets to sunlight breaks, ventilation to hydration, hygiene corners to green spaces, each initiative costs little but changes lives. So, in a sector under the global spotlight, the message is clear: *sometimes the smallest steps create the biggest impact.* 🌱

Upcoming Exhibitions & Events

September - November 2025

10-13

September, 2025



TEXTECH Bangladesh International Expo 2025

Location :
Bangladesh China Friendship
Exhibition Center, Dhaka
Yarn, Fabrics & Accessories
Edition: 24

<https://textech-bangladesh.com/>

15-17

September, 2025



Texworld Apparel Sourcing 2025

Location :
Paris –Le Bourget Exhibition
Center, Paris, France
Finished Apparel and Fashion
Accessories
Edition: 57 | Founded: 2012

www.texworld-paris.fr.messefrankfurt.com



20-23

September, 2025



READY TO SHOW

Location :
Fiera Milano-Rho, Milan ,Italy
Garments, Knitwear, Accessories.
Founded: 2001

www.readytoshow.it

26-27

September, 2025



4th New York international Trade Fair & Chamber Expo 2025

Location :
Marriot Marquis, Time Square,
New York, USA
Apparel and Fashion Sourcing
Edition: 4th

25-28

September, 2025



3rd Saudi Fashion & Tex Expo 2025

Location :
Jeddah International Exhibition
& Convention Center, Jeddah,
Saudi Arabia
Apparel and Fashion Sourcing
Edition: 3rd

www.saudifashiontexexpo.com

29-01

Sep.-Oct. 2025



Apparel Textile Sourcing Canada

Location : The International Center,
Toronto, Canada
Apparel and Textile products, Fabrics,
Fashion accessories and home textiles,
Sustainable materials and technological
innovations
Edition: 10th | Founded: 2015

www.appareltextilesourcing.com

01-03

October 2025



Fashion World Tokyo- Autumn Edition

Location :
Tokyo Big Sight, Tokyo, Japan.
Apparel and Fashion Sourcing
Edition: 16

www.fashion-tokyo.jp/autumn

01-02

October 2025



Australia Bangladesh Business Expo 2025

Location :
Sydney International Convention & Exhibition Center, Australia

www.austliabangladeshbusinessforum.com/trade-expo

09-11

October 2025



Dhaka International Textile & Apparel Expo 2025

Location :
Bangladesh China Friendship Conference Center, Agargoan , Dhaka
Textile & Apparel Expo
Edition:1st

www.facebook.com/p/DTA-Dhaka-Int-Textile-Apparel-Expo-61575997102285

24-26

October 2025



Made In Bangladesh Expo 2025

Location :
Crown Plaza Hotel, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Apparel & Fashion

23-25

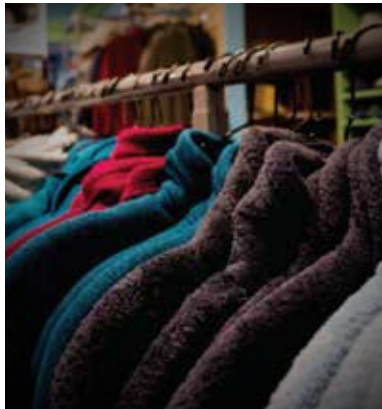
October 2025



Bangladesh China Green Textile Expo 2025 (BCGTX)

Location :
ICCB, Dhaka
Manmade fibre, Yarn & Fabrics, Accessories
Edition: 1st

www.savor-bcgtx.com/



18-19

November, 2025



Fashion SVP London 2025

Location :
Olympia London, London, UK
Apparel & Fashion Sourcing

www.fashionsvp.com

18-20

November, 2025



Global Sourcing Expo 2025

Location :
Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Center, Melbourne, Australia
Apparel and Fashion Sourcing
Edition: 10 | Established: 2010

www.globalsourcingexpo.com.au

19-21

November, 2025



AFF TOKYO 2025

Location :
Tokyo Big Sight Tokyo, Japan
Apparel and Fashion Sourcing
Edition: 46

www.asiafashionfair.jp

25-27

November, 2025



ISPO Munich

Location :
Trade Fair Center Messe München, Munich, Germany
Finished Apparel and Fashion Accessories
Edition: 56 | Founded: 1970

www.ispo.com/en/munich



26-28

November, 2025



World Trade Expo 2025

Location :
Jeddah International Exhibition Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Apparel and Fashion Sourcing

05-26

December, 2025



India International Mega Trade Fair (IIMTF)

Location :
Science City Ground Kolkata, India
Apparel and Fashion, Home Textile, Agriculture, Jute Etc.

www.megatradefair.com

JUKI - Driving Innovation in the RMG Sector

JUKI's latest sewing machines, including the DX-01, PS910, DDL-8000C, and LK-1900C, are transforming garment production with advanced features that combine Japanese precision and cutting-edge technology. Equipped with AI, IoT, robotics, and digital automation, these machines simplify operations, reduce reliance on skilled labor, and deliver faster changeovers with greater accuracy. Energy-saving direct-drive motors reduce electricity use by up to 60 per cent, while "dry-head" technology minimizes oil stains and fabric waste. All models carry JUKI's ECO-PRODUCTS label, reflecting strict sustainability standards and a commitment to reducing carbon footprints.

Beyond machinery, JUKI offers full digital integration through its system division JaNets (JUKI Advanced Network System), providing solutions such as real-time monitoring IoT system, digitized quality check, as well



as smart hanger system, all aligned with Industry 4.0. In Bangladesh, several factories have already demonstrated the benefits of adopting JUKI's advanced solutions, gradually becoming paperless along with it achieving up to 15 per cent productivity increase.

Built for durability, ergonomics, and ease of use, JUKI machines ensure long-lasting value for manufacturers

while supporting worker safety and comfort. With its robust global service network and reputation for reliability, JUKI remains the trusted partner for the RMG sector, enabling businesses to achieve speed, sustainability, and future-ready innovation.

Contact JUKI Bangladesh

Email: info@juki.com.bd

Phone: +880-1911341215

Website: www.juki.co.jp

Brother Smart Innovation for Smarter Factories

Brother has been at the forefront of transforming garment manufacturing with innovative sewing technologies designed for the evolving needs of the RMG sector. In recent years, Brother introduced advanced features such as the Nexio IOT syStem, Digi-Flex Feed technology, and needle breakage prevention functions, helping factories improve efficiency, reduce downtime, and achieve greater precision. Brother's IoT-enabled machines provide real-time monitoring, cycle time tracking, and defect analysis while reducing up to 40 percent of an Industrial Engineer's data collection workload. This allows engineers to focus on productivity improvements, speeding up learning curves and driving overall efficiency. The 10T platform, fully compatible with Industry 4.0, enables smart monitoring, predictive maintenance, and cloud-based performance tracking—accessible anytime, anywhere. What makes Brother unique is its 10T system's ability to connect directly to machines of any brand while seamlessly integrating with ERP



solutions. This ensures centralized, transparent reporting and eliminates manual errors. In Bangladesh, several factories have successfully adopted the system, with one transforming into a fully paperless, digitally managed "smart factory" after expanding from pilot lines to full factory-wide integration. With Strong after-sales support, customized training, and remote diagnostics via platforms like

WhatsApp and Microsoft Teams, Brother continues to be a trusted partner in delivering speed, reliability, and future-ready solutions for the global apparel industry. Brother International Singapore Pte Ltd. Dhaka Liaison Office. Email: ashiq@brother.com.sg Phone: +8801713067856 Website: <https://industrialsewingmachine.globall.brother/en-ap>

Current BGMEA Board Steps In to Address RMG Industry Challenges



A BGMEA delegation, including President Mahmud Hasan Khan and Vice President Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, met with the Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank (BB) on 24 August 2025 at the BB office in Dhaka to discuss the challenges faced by garment exporters and to seek immediate steps to address them.

The ready-made garment (RMG) industry is the main source of Bangladesh's export earnings. However, this industry faces challenges related to banking, bonds, customs, and other policy-related complexities.

To overcome these obstacles and drive the sector forward, the current board of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has undertaken several initiatives.

Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, Vice President of BGMEA, has been working on key issues such as financial policy support, banking, bonds, and customs for the sector. Since the assumption of office by the current BGMEA board on June 16, 2025, Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury has been actively engaged with policymakers to resolve problems and create an enabling environment for sustainable growth. Following are some of the key proposals of BGMEA that are vital for the industry:

Supply of Goods and Services from Bonded to Non-Bonded Enterprises

Currently, supplying goods or services from bonded indirect exporters to non-bonded direct exporters requires a bond license. This rule excludes many small enterprises. BGMEA has proposed to the National Board of Revenue (NBR) to remove this requirement so that smaller, non-bonded factories can sustain their export capacity.

Simplifying the FOC-Based Import of Raw Materials

At present, importers can bring in only 50% of raw materials under Free of Cost (FOC) arrangements based on the previous audit period. BGMEA has proposed allowing businesses to import 100% of raw materials under FOC without conditions. If implemented, this would boost productivity and ensure timely delivery of export orders.

Simplifying the Revolving Method under FOC Imports

BGMEA has proposed that raw material imports be approved based on buyers' export orders, thereby reducing repeated approvals, costs, and speeding up operations.

Easing the Subcontracting Process

The current requirement of prior approval from the Bond Commissionerate for subcontracting causes delays and harassment. BGMEA has proposed reverting to the earlier system, where only a BGMEA certification would suffice to carry out subcontracting activities.

Allowing Non-Bonded Enterprises to Handle Washing, Printing, Dyeing, and Embroidery for Bonded Enterprises



Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury
Vice President of BGMEA

Since bonded factories cannot get approval to outsource these activities to non-bonded firms, and VAT is compulsory, bonded companies face higher costs and penalties. BGMEA has proposed allowing such outsourcing with VAT exemptions. This would reduce costs while benefiting local small service providers.

Stopping Unjustified Cutting Supervision

Customs and bond authorities often impose cutting supervision merely on suspicion, disrupting production. BGMEA has requested that such measures be taken only on the basis of evidence.

Resolving HS Code-Related Harassment

Complexities in HS code allocation create delays in raw material clearance. BGMEA has proposed that clearance be granted based on the raw materials mentioned in the Utilization Declaration (UD) against buyers' export orders.

Revising Wastage Rates in Woven Garments

The wastage rate set for woven garment production does not reflect

actual conditions. BGMEA has requested NBR to revise the rate so that businesses are not unfairly penalized.

Initiatives for the SME Sector

Easier Access to Loans

SMEs face major challenges in making new investments and setting up factories. BGMEA has proposed that Bangladesh Bank provide low-interest loans and make capital supply easier.

Support for Struggling SMEs

For SMEs facing financial losses, BGMEA has proposed measures such as easier loan rescheduling, exemption from cheque-related lawsuits, and assistance in liquidating mortgaged properties.

Setting Up an SME Corner

To provide dedicated services to SME entrepreneurs, BGMEA plans to establish a special SME corner at its Uttara office. This will allow small entrepreneurs to access separate facilities and operate more smoothly.

Initiatives Related to Bangladesh Bank

Facilities for Distressed

Borrowers – Discussions going on regarding simplifying loan repayment procedures.


Enhancing Pre-Shipment

Credit Support – Proposals to increase both the size and duration of the refinancing scheme.

Reconstruction of Distressed

Enterprises – Special policy support under discussion to help restructure businesses and financial systems.

Increasing Cash Incentives on

Exports – Proposals to raise the rate of cash incentives on exports to maintain global competitiveness. 

News in Pictures

Deputy Head of Mission at the Embassy of the Netherlands, Thijs Woudstra, met with BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan and Board Members, including Salim Rahman, Inamul Haq Khan, Vidiya Amrit Khan, and Md Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, at the BGMEA Complex in Dhaka on June 23, 2025. Discussions focused on enhancing the RMG sector's global competitiveness through collaboration in circular fashion, recycling, energy efficiency, and innovation.



A Japanese government delegation led by YODA Gaku of METI met with BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan to discuss the proposed Japan-Bangladesh Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Mahmud Hasan Khan urged continued duty-free access in the post-LDC period and flexibility in rules of origin. BGMEA Vice President (Finance) Mijanur Rahman and other board directors were present at the meeting held at the BGMEA Complex in Dhaka on 26 June 2025.

A BGMEA delegation led by First Vice President Salim Rahman met with Customs Bond Commissioner Mohammad Shafi Uddin in Chattogram on 26 June 2025. BGMEA Vice President Mohammad Rafique Chowdhury, and Directors Md. Mohiuddin Chowdhury, Sakeef Ahmed Salam, Md. Shaif Ullah, Enamul Aziz Chowdhury, S.M. Abu Tayyab, and Rakibul Alam Chowdhury were present at the meeting. The BGMEA leaders urged the Customs Bond Commissioner to ensure faster services by simplifying issues related to HS code inclusion for bonded goods, annual audits, FOC shipments, and other bond-related procedures.



Dr. Velkrishna, Member of the Committee of Administration of the Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL), along with Murali Balkrishna, Joint Director of TEXPROCIL, met with BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan at the BGMEA office in Dhaka on 26 June 2025. BGMEA Director Mohammed Sohel was also present during the meeting. The discussion focused on strengthening bilateral trade between Bangladesh and India, particularly in the ready-made garment and textile sectors.

Sebastien Bismuth, President of the renowned French fashion brand Celio, met BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan at the BGMEA office in Dhaka on 26 June 2025. The meeting centered on various issues of Bangladesh's ready-made garment industry, including its current state, future prospects, and pathways to achieving sustainable growth. The meeting was also attended by Morgan Delemazure, Offre and Buying Director, and Ms. Lucie Abt, Bangladesh Country Manager of Celio. From BGMEA, Vice Presidents Mijanur Rahman and Vidiya Amrit Khan, along with Directors Shah Rayeed Chowdhury and Nafis-Ud-Doula, were present.



At a joint press conference with major trade bodies on 28 June 2025, BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan stated that the NBR deadlock disrupted the RMG sector activities, urging swift resolution to protect the industry and the national economy.

Muhammad Wasif, Pakistan's Charge d'Affaires, paid a courtesy visit to Mahmud Hasan Khan, President of BGMEA on 29 June 2025. They were joined by Trade & Investment Attaché. Zain Aziz, along with BGMEA Vice President Md. Rezwana Selim, Directors Faisal Samad, Fahima Akhter and Samiha Azim. During the meeting, both sides discussed expanding bilateral trade and investment in the garments and textile sectors, exploring opportunities in textile waste recycling and jute fiber imports. President Mahmud Hasan emphasized Bangladesh's potential in jute and recycled textiles to support Pakistan's growing industry.



BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan paid a courtesy call on Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud bin Harun, Executive Chairman of the BIDA and BEZA, on 30 June 2025 at the BIDA office. During the meeting, the BIDA Chairman congratulated the newly elected BGMEA Board of Directors. The BGMEA delegation included Vice Presidents Mijanur Rahman, Vidya Amrit Khan, and Director Samiha Azim. He proposed allocating land in Chattogram at symbolic cost for small and medium garment factories and establishing an integrated garment zone. The BIDA Chairman welcomed the proposal and announced plans to form a joint committee with BGMEA to develop an action plan within a week.

BGMEA Directors Nafis-Ud-Doula and Shah Rayeed Chowdhury along with industry leaders met with John Lyttle, Managing Director of Marks & Spencer and Monique Leeuwenburgh, Director of Sourcing & Technology at Marks & Spencer (M&S), in Dhaka 2 July 2025. During the meeting, they discussed key issues and opportunities in the ready-made garment industry, including the growth potential of M&S's business in Bangladesh.



A delegation led by BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan met with Dr. Anisuzzaman Chowdhury, Special Assistant to the Chief Adviser on 2 July 2025. Also present at the meeting were Vice Presidents Mijanur Rahman, and Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, and member Md. Kamal Uddin. The discussion focused on current challenges facing the garment industry, issues related to banks and the NBR, the gas crisis, renewable energy, the efficiency of the Chittagong Port, trade licenses, complications in renewing ERC and IRC, and harassment under the DAP by RAJUK.

A delegation of BGMEA, led by its Director Faisal Samad, met with Commissioner of Customs Bond Commissionerate, Dhaka (South) Mohammad Hasmat Ali at his office where he requested the Customs Bond Commissionerate to expedite and simplify customs bond-related services and provide necessary policy support to maintain the competitiveness of the garment industry. Other members of the delegation were BGMEA Directors Sumaiya Islam and Kazi Mizanur Rahman.



BGMEA Directors Majumdar Arifur Rahman and Dr. Rashid Ahmed Hossaini led a humanitarian initiative of BGMEA to distribute relief among 500 flood-affected families in Fulgazi and Parshuram in Feni on 19 July 2025. The aid packages included food and daily essentials.

BGMEA paid tribute to its late Senior Vice President and Managing Director of Team Group Abdullah Hil Rakib at a memorial and prayer session held at the BGMEA Complex, Uttara on 26 July 2025. BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan presided over the event, joined by former BGMEA Presidents, current Board Members, family, and friends who remembered his contributions to the garment industry.



At a seminar organized by NSU's SIPG on 28 July 2025, BGMEA Director Faisal Samad emphasized the importance of US-Bangladesh trade relations for the RMG sector. BGMEA Directors Md. Hasib Uddin, Nafis-Ud-Doula, Shah Rayeed Chowdhury, and Branding Committee Chair Khan Monirul Alam Shuvo also spoke at the seminar.

H. E. Christian Brix Møller, Ambassador of Denmark to Bangladesh, paid a courtesy visit to Mahmud Hasan Khan, President of BGMEA at the BGMEA Complex in Dhaka on 28 July 2025. They had discussions on key issues of the ready-made garment industry of Bangladesh, including the current situation of the sector, evolving global market dynamics, emerging challenges, and strategic priorities to ensure sustainable growth. BGMEA Vice President Md. Rezwan Selim and Director Sheikh Hossain Muhammad Mustafiz were also present at the meeting.



Kazuiki Kataoka, Country Representative of the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), paid a courtesy visit to Mahmud Hasan Khan, President BGMEA, at the BGMEA Complex in Uttara on 30 July 2025. From BGMEA, Senior Vice President Inamul Haq Khan, Vice President Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, and Director Mohammad Sohel joined the discussions. The discussions focused on RMG exports to Japan, EPA negotiations, match-making efforts, and infrastructure development.

BGMEA organized a press conference on 2 August 2025 to brief the media about the overall situation of the ready-made garment industry and key issues of the sector. BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan spoke at the press briefing. Members of the BGMEA Board including vice presidents and directors were present.



A delegation from the Chinese Enterprises Association in Bangladesh (CEAB) and the China Trade Foreign Centre (CTFC) visited the BGMEA in Dhaka on 7 August 2025 to engage in discussions to explore bilateral trade growth opportunities between Bangladesh and China. BGMEA was represented by Director Shah Rayeed Chowdhury; M Sajedul Karim, Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Trade Fair; and Masud Kabir, Chair of BGMEA Standing Committee on Press, Publication and Publicity. The CTFC delegation included Xu Jiansheng, Operation Director; Ms. Cai Yiyi, Manager of the International Department; and Zhang Haoyu, Regional Specialist. While the CEAB was represented by Ge Zhenyu (Mike), Director / President of Textile and Garment Branch. The meeting focused on understanding the current and future sourcing priorities of BGMEA members in China.

Tristram Grey, Chief People and Corporate Affairs Officer of Kmart; Albert Yeung, Head of Ethical Sourcing; and Obyad Gazi, Ethical Sourcing Manager for Kmart Australia & New Zealand and Target Australia met BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka on 11 August 2025. BGMEA Senior Vice President Inamul Haq Khan, Vice President Md. Rezwan Selim, Vice President (Finance) Md. Mijanur Rahman, Vice President Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, Directors Faisal Samad, Nafis-Ud-Doula, and Sheikh Hossain Muhammad Mustafiz. Discussions included boosting apparel exports to Australia, trade fairs, and sustainable sourcing partnerships.



At the EU Trade Forum in Dhaka, organized by the Ministry of Commerce on 11 August 2025 and supported by GIZ, BGMEA Vice President Vidiya Amrit Khan stressed the need for government-backed data systems, financing, and skills development to support MSMEs in complying with the EU's Digital Product Passport (DPP) regulations.

A delegation from the U.S. Embassy in Dhaka met with Mahmud Hasan Khan, President of BGMEA at BGMEA Complex in Dhaka on 13 August 2025. The U.S.

Embassy delegation included Labour Attaché Leena Khan, Foreign Commercial Service Attaché Paul G. Frost, and Foreign Agricultural Service Attaché Erin Covert.

During the meeting, various issues of mutual interest were discussed, with a particular focus on strengthening bilateral trade relations between the United States and Bangladesh.



A courtesy meeting was held between Rear Admiral S. M. Moniruzzaman, Chairman of the Chattogram Port Authority, and BGMEA Board of Directors in Chattogram on 14 August 2025. Chaired by BGMEA First Vice President Salim Rahman, the meeting focused on a range of key port-related issues, including increases in store rent and tariffs, vessel berthing delays, operational challenges at the Patenga Container Terminal, LCL delivery bottlenecks, shortages of handling equipment. BGMEA Vice President Mohammad Rafique Chowdhur was also present at the meeting.

H.E. Michael Miller, EU Ambassador to Bangladesh and Head of the EU Delegation in Dhaka, met with Mahmud Hasan Khan, President of BGMEA, to discuss different issues, including labour law reforms, GSP+ facilities in the post-LDC era, and avenues for strengthening

EU–Bangladesh partnerships. The BGMEA President was joined by Senior Vice President Inamul Haq Khan; Vice President (Finance) Mijanur Rahman, Vice President Vidya Amrit Khan, and Md. Shehab Udduza Chowdhury; as well as Directors Mohammed Abdur Rahim, Faisal Samad, Sheikh Hossain Muhammad Mustafiz, and Dr. Rashid Ahamed Hossaini.



A delegation from the BGMEA met with H.E. Antonio Alessandro, Ambassador of Italy to Bangladesh, at the Italian Embassy in Dhaka on 17 August 2025. The meeting aimed at exploring avenues for expanding trade and investment between Bangladesh and Italy. The BGMEA side was represented by Vice President Vidiya Amrit Khan, Vice President Shehab Udduza Chowdhury, Director Shah Rayeed Chowdhury, M. Sajedul Karim, Chair of the Standing Committee on Trade Fair, and Masud Kabir, Chair of the Standing Committee on Press, Publication and Publicity. 

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Youngone New Insulation Innovation Win



ISPO TEXTRENDS AWARD F/W 2025/26



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