

Productivity stressed for RMG industry

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Textile experts yesterday advised Bangladeshi entrepreneurs to take initiatives to enhance productivity and the quality of goods if they want to exploit potential for the garment industry.

The apparel industry has flourished in Bangladesh, but real gains will erode if the industry does not address a few crucial issues such as low productivity, inconsistent quality and social responsibility, said Rajesh Bheda, principal of Rajesh Bheda Consulting, India.

In a presentation on "Competitiveness through Productivity and Quality" at a seminar organised by Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) at Sonargaon Hotel, Bheda said the productivity levels of Asian apparel industry, especially in Bangladesh, had been low compared to the global benchmark performance.



Professor Nasrin Khondaker, research director of the Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific, speaks at a seminar on productivity and quality of RMG yesterday. Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association organised the seminar at Sonargaon Hotel.

Referring to a "competitive enhancement programme" by BGMEA, he said the programme would improve the productivity levels in the BGMEA member factories.

The pilot phase of the programme showed that labour productivity in five factories was up to 30 percent higher than the previous productivity level.

"Based on our limited exposure to the Bangladesh apparel industry, we see tremendous scope of improvement in the area of quality in

the manufacturing units here," Bheda said.

He said Bangladesh's apparel industry had tremendous untapped potential in the areas of productivity and quality.

In another presentation, Vandana Bhandari, professor of the National Institute of Fashion Technology in India, stressed diversification of designs. She asked the businessmen to invest more in designs to invent new designs.

Professor Nasrin Khondaker, research director of the Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific, emphasised industrial relations in the garment sector saying it had always been a "joint industry".

She said industrial relations in Bangladesh were deteriorating and stressed more investment in training for workers.

Nasrin asked the garment owners to provide workers with more incentives and share profits with them.



Regency gets new chief of marketing

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Dhaka Regency has appointed Neena Ahmed as head of marketing for the hotel, according to a press statement released yesterday.

Ahmed worked for 23 years in hospitality industry in North America. She began her career in 1986 with TAJ International Group of Hotels in the US.

Prior to joining Dhaka Regency, Ahmed was the director of sales at Watergate Hotel in Washington DC.

Distribution of resource to ease Monga

Study suggests

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The survey was jointly conducted by BUP and ActionAid Bangladesh.

The low-income generation forced people to migrate from the areas and take up odd jobs such as day labour and rickshaw pulling.

The survey revealed that flood, river erosion and fertiliser crisis are the other problems that add to the food crisis in the northern region.

A lack of savings practice among people in the region also worsens the crisis, the survey found.

The report suggested the government initiate some income-generating activities in the period.

Industrialists should set up some agro-processing plants to generate employment in the region, it suggested.

Commodity prices mixed on recession fears

AFP, London

Juncker, said on Friday.

On Thursday the Bank of England slashed British borrowing costs by a massive 1.5 percentage points to 3.0 percent, a sign that Britain was set for a deep recession of its own, according to economists.

The US unemployment rate rose to its highest level since 1994 in October as it touched 6.5 percent, official data showed Friday, while analysts forecast it to increase further in Barack Obama's first year as president.

Meanwhile the economy of the 15 nations sharing the euro will "very probably" be in recession next year, the chairman of the eurozone finance ministers, Jean-Claude

Juncker, said on Friday.

On Thursday the International Monetary Fund on Thursday

said that advanced economies would contract in 2009 for the first time since World War II.

The IMF said advanced economies would now shrink by 0.3 percent in 2009. The organisation had previously predicted 0.5 percent growth.

A decline in oil prices mean-while gained momentum on Wednesday after US figures showed US gasoline (petrol) stockpiles had jumped 1.1 million barrels last week, con-

tinuing market expectations for a drop of 600,000 barrels a

barrel and eventually reach 200

dollars by 2030.

In a report on the global energy outlook, the agency said it predicted the price to average 100 dollars from 2008 to 2015.

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