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# Star BUSINESS

DHAKA SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 15, 2013, e-mail:business@thedailystar.net

## Factory survey faces hiccups

The inspection that was supposed to begin today may be delayed by 7-10 days; stakeholders are yet to agree on a common action plan

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

After months of delays following the deadly Rana Plaza collapse in April, a comprehensive factory inspection was supposed to begin today to check structural flaws in buildings. But the process is grappling with setbacks and may take another 7-10 days to kick off, as stakeholders are yet to agree on a common checklist for the inspection guideline, according to Labour Secretary Mikail Shipar.

Under the initiative, the labour and employment ministry in collaboration with the International Labour Organisation will inspect 2,250 factories by 30 teams of experts led by Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

However, three separate platforms, including the one led by Buet, had earlier agreed in principle to follow a common action plan drawn by the government, but did not turn up later. The other platforms are global initiatives—one led by IndustriALL, an international trade union, and the other is North American Alliance, a platform of 20 US-based retailers and brands.

Initially the platforms that emerged after the Rana Plaza building collapse had a plan to inspect the factories under their own guideline. Shipar said they will sit tomorrow with the high-ups of North American Alliance, one of the global platforms, to discuss the common checklist. They have another meeting on the same day with the Economic Relations Division on the funds for the inspection, the secretary said.

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PALASH KHAN

Workers make CI sheets at the Appollo Ispat plant in Narayanganj.

## Appollo Ispat to bring in green tech to produce CI sheet

SARWAR A CHOWDHURY

Appollo Ispat Complex is bringing in an environment-friendly technology to produce lead- and acid-free corrugated iron sheet from next year. The non-oxidising furnace (NOF) technology of Germany will also help increase the CI sheet maker's efficiency and reduce cost of production, officials said.

The new technology, in addition to the existing continuous galvanising process, will be applied to an extension, construction of which is going on in the 17-acre factory area at Shimrail in Narayanganj. Once the new technology is introduced, hot roll (HR) coil -- the raw material for cold roll (CR) coil -- will be cleaned through heat, instead of caustic soda and acid.

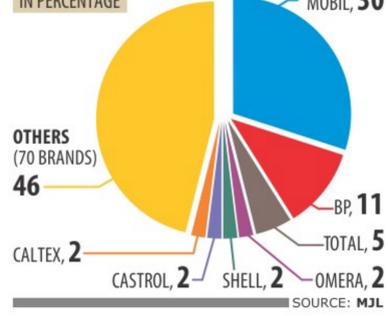
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## Power plants drive lubricant market

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

The lubricant market has been witnessing steady growth on the back of strong demand from automotive and industrial sectors. The market is now worth Tk 2,400 crore, which was Tk 1,200 crore five years ago. Annual domestic consumption now stands at around 100,000 tonnes, with the market growing at almost 3 percent a year, which is on par with India but behind China. "Lubricant consumption by the industrial sector, especially by power plants, has increased significantly in the last 2-3 years," said Sanaul Haque, chief executive officer of MJL Bangladesh that markets the Mobil brand of engine oil. The automotive sector accounts for 70 percent of total lubricant consumption in Bangladesh and the industries the remaining 30 percent, he added. Mobil is the market leader with its 30 percent share, followed by British Petroleum at 11 percent, French brand Total at 5 percent and Shell, Castrol and

MARKET SHARE OF LUBRICANT BRANDS IN PERCENTAGE



Caltex with 2 percent each. Omera Fuels, a sister concern of MJL Bangladesh, has a 2 percent share as well. The remaining 46 percent share of the market is held by over 70 brands. "The power sector has driven the growth of the lubricant market in the country for the last few years," said Mujibur Rahman, general manager of TotalGaz in Bangladesh. Cement, steel and fertiliser industries also consume a good amount of lubricants, he added.

## Passenger traffic to hit 10m in 2020: CAAB

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Bangladesh is likely to see robust growth in air traffic over the next seven years, thanks to its strategic location. "We expect a steady growth, both in terms of passengers and cargo goods, in the upcoming years," Air Vice Marshal Mahmud Hussain, chairman of Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh (CAAB), said. The number of passengers will hit 10.2 million and air cargo 360,000 tonnes in 2020, up 76 percent and 56.5 percent respectively from current levels, he said. "In about 10 years' time, the Asia Pacific region will probably become the largest air transport market in the world—we expect that to spill over to Bangladesh as well."

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