

CHECK IT OUT

# The 20th Dhaka International Trade Fair

The Dhaka International Trade Fair is one of the most popular events in Bangladesh providing the best of consumer products amidst a festive and fun-filled environment. It is being held at Sher-E-Bangla-Nagar, Dhaka city, from 1 January 2015 and will close on 31 January, 2015. Thousands of people come to the fair to enjoy a wonderful day and shop for the finest of products from Bangladesh and beyond.



**T**HE first thing you could do when you enter the fair is to find out the layout map of all the stalls and make a plan of where you would like to go. It would be helpful if you wear your comfy pair of walking shoes as you would have to walk a lot. It is quite chilly this winter, so keeping a shawl and hat would be a great idea. You could bring empty bazar bags from your home to carry your purchased items easily. There are ATM booths where you can withdraw money if you need extra cash. If you are a shopping enthusiast, making a mental note about which direction you want to go and where amenities such as washrooms, ATM booths and food stalls are located, would help you successfully explore the fair.

Many companies are exhibiting the latest products with special discounts for the trade fair. Furniture companies such as Akhter Furniture are offering discount of 15 percent on its products. Hatil has discount of 5-20 percent on its products countrywide. The products feature modern, functional as well as antique collections. Plastic furniture products seemed quite popular as company pavilions of RFL and NPoly, were brimming with interested customers. Furniture companies are displaying latest models with lucrative deals, and you should definitely check out the pavilions if you are planning to buy furniture or looking for inspiration of an interior décor.

Electronic companies such as Sony and Walton are also having a heavy customer flow. The latest cell phones, home and kitchen appliances and LED TVs are available. Walton has 7 percent discount on electronics and home appliances, 5 percent discount on motorcycles and 2-25 percent discount on cell phones. Sony has discount of 16 percent



on 40" and 42" LED TV for Grameen Phone Star clients. In addition, special discounts are available for Action Cam, digital cameras and Sony Xperia. Electronic products are a highlight of the Dhaka International Trade Fair as one can visit so many different stores and choose the perfect product.

The foreign pavilion is a leading attraction for customers as it brings outstanding products from all over the world. Indian and Pakistani stalls have handloom pashmina shawls, shalwar kameez suits, saris, jewellery and shoes. According to sellers, Thai and Irani fruits and spices such as rambutan, mangoes, dates, cashew and pistachio nuts, cardamom, cumin and dried pickles are being sold quite profitably. Turkish crystals, hanging balls, vases, lamps, rugs and cushion covers

are a major attraction for customers. Prices range from Tk 4,500 to Tk 2 lakh for Turkish interior décor items. Indian kitchen utensils and appliances such as frying pans, cutlery and vegetable/fruit cutting machines are also seeing large number of customers. The foreign products are enchanting, beautiful and useful, for which the pavilion is a must see for many customers.

The nationwide political unrest is creating a huge loss for companies as there is a notably low turnout of customers at the fair. An owner of an Indian stall, Ganesh Overseas, said that this is his eighth time in the trade fair and his stall has handloom Kashmiri products. However, he is disappointed because sales are down due low turnout of customers during the country wide political

unrest.

He said that every year he has customers who come from outside Dhaka, such as Chittagong and Jessore, to buy his products, but this year he feels that people are insecure and scared to get out. The stall fair and expenses were approximately Tk 5 lakh, but he doubts if he will be able to make any profit. His concern echoed in the comments from many sales executives and stall owners. They are looking forward to the remaining two weekends as people seem to come more often during weekends. For both local and foreign companies, the political unrest has become a major reason of disappointment.

The Dhaka International Trade Fair is an enormous opportunity for businesses to build network and sell the most outstanding products. For customers, it is an opportunity to take family and friends out, enjoy music, delicious food, and indulge in an amazing shopping escapade.

The sellers and security guards have assured that state-of-the-art-technology has been installed for strengthening security systems. RAB, Bangladesh Police, BGB and other security forces are monitoring activities so that people can safely shop and appreciate their time at the fair. Various kinds of discounts and deals are being offered to attract customers and it is expected that discounts will rise in the upcoming weeks of the fair.

The entry fee is Tk 30 for adults and Tk 20 for minors and the fair is open from 9am to 10pm. It is a peak time to take advantage of all the incredible discounts and wide variety of products available. The biggest trade fair in South Asia is waiting for you to relish a spectacular shopping experience.

**By Nileema Huda Khan**  
**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**