

A revolution made in Bangladesh



There is a long procession marching forward, in perfect symphony, each step a beat attuned to a rhythm yet to be understood. The line snakes forward silently, converging with another of the same nature, heading towards a pre-destined path; that of a unique form of unity and conformity based on opposing ideals of individuality. The line that we see stretching before us, threatening to tear the very borders that constrain us at their seams, suddenly breaks the silence. They utter, they mutter, under their breaths at first before the voices amplify into a cacophony of demands and desires. They are here. They are all here. And they are all Made in Bangladesh.

Made in Bangladesh, another desi brand making the waves, comes from the same individuals who brought you Ajo, the café that revolutionised the café scene. Like the café, Made in Bangladesh has already carved an identity for itself, far removed from all other brands. Made in Bangladesh isn't just another clothing line but rather it is a cult; a cult movement borne out of necessity. While the Rana Plaza tragedy may have added an ugly sheen to the made in Bangladesh tags, Made in Bangladesh, the brand, is all set to add the gloss back in the way it belongs. "Made in Bangladesh is a lot of things. It is a constantly evolving concept, because our views aren't constant and neither should anything else be," Khaled Mahmud, the proprietor explains. A genius in his own right, Khaled isn't your average profit driven entrepreneur; he is a thinker first and foremost, who firmly has his eyes set on the prize and Made in Bangladesh is yet another feather in his cap.

Made in Bangladesh thrives on the fact that there is a change coming. This change will envelop not only our minds, but rather our classes and social structures. The future demands flexibility and Made in Bangladesh is made to serve that very concept. "Our products, as you can see yourselves, are not exactly local or global. Rather, they are glocal, a mixture pleasing for both local and global audiences," Khaled explains. Made in Bangladesh has a diverse product line, from t-shirts, jute bags, photo frames, notebooks and a lot more. They aren't the most glamorous of products, but they have the same earthy feelings that remind one of things they are fond of and make them feel nostalgic. Top it off with the fact that Made in Bangladesh is bold and stylish and you have quite the concoction.

Made in Bangladesh, unlike others, have their own take of most abstract notions that dominate most design labels. When MIB speaks of individuality, they mean individuality with a touch of uniformity.

The products serve as spokespersons for their own brand, explaining how every individual is generally the same but there are differences to celebrate. For instance, everyone may have the same bag but the elements inside may differ. The same with a photoframe or even a t-shirt. It is basically not what you wear but how you wear it. At the same time, MIB makes it a point to remind everyone of their Bangladeshi roots whilst ushering a brand new metropolitan era. It is a dilemma in and of itself, contradicting ideas in a way to create even brand new ideas that can marry the problems

and the solutions that come up. It is also a thought provoking process because evolution has not time and place and the assembly line is no different in this record.

The products are made using an upcycling process, using factory wastes and such. The assembly process though is a highly critical and much scrutinised phase, ensuring the best of all materials used. A team of designers sit and discuss each design and a Total Quality Management process of sorts is used throughout. Once the product reaches completion, it is guaranteed to be flawless.

Made in Bangladesh mimics the very nature of all Bangladeshi products. They are made with care, dedication and are repre-

sentatives in their own way of Bangladesh's very own heritage. Made in Bangladesh is a powerful social statement and it is designed to be just that; an ever evolving and growing notion of what it means to be Bangladesh. A simple bag has in its stitches the stories of colonial suppression and nationalism. The fabrics sing hymns of what was and what is to come. Made in Bangladesh is a movement by itself and it never fails to acknowledge that it is what it is because the people, the jonota, have given it its very identity.

Made in Bangladesh is located at House 50, Rd 10/A, Dhanmondi, Dhaka.

By Osama Rahman

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