

# LOOKING AT The Khadi Festival

The Khadi Festival took place on 11-12 December at the Radisson Blu Water Garden Hotel in Dhaka and promised a night of unique collections featuring Khadi mixed with Bangladeshi folk motifs.

Organised by the Fashion Design Council Bangladesh, the show went off in spectacular fashion and definitely delivered on its promise of a great fashion gathering!

The show started off with Maheen Khan who talked about safeguarding Khadi, which was a part of our history and culture.

"This heritage textile needs our support to improve, both in quality and quantity. Our two day event will showcase designers with gallery style insulations.

The two fashion shows – one on each day – will present equally strong and a diverse group of designers.

"The main purpose will be to

how it epitomises self reliance, the spirit of independence and the fight against colonialism.

"It is a concept which is transformative. It transforms through growth and employment. It is inclusive because it brings the marginalised people in the mainstream of economic activity. It is definitely sustainable and can be integrated with both the social economic and the environmental dimensions," he added.

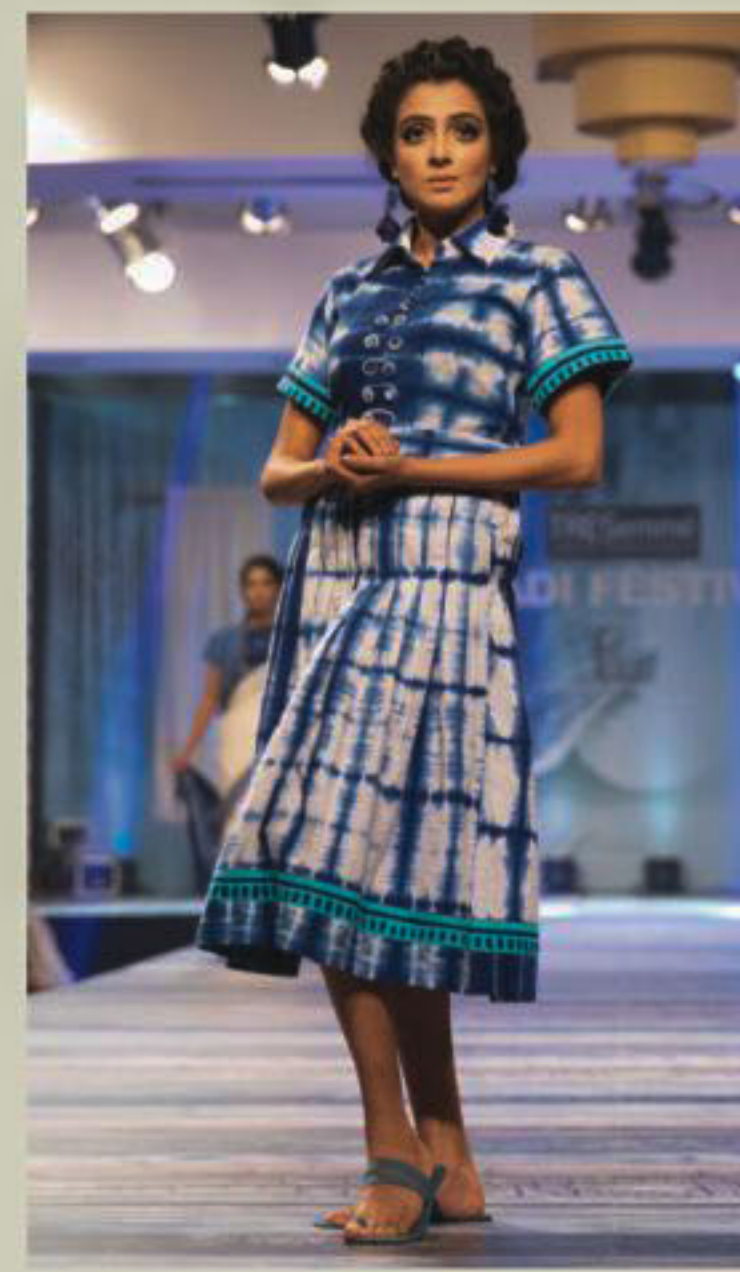
Others who spoke for Khadi at the inauguration include Asaduzzaman Noor, honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs; Norwegian Ambassador in Dhaka Merete Lundemo and Defence Attaché at the Indian High Commission in Dhaka, Brig. J S Nanda.

The inauguration was followed by a short documentary, which focused on Khadi and the process in which it is made. Soon after, the fashion show was

blend of cotton and Khadi. Following Sarkar was Afsana Ferdousi Wormey who used shitol pati as her theme for the Khadi Festival. Her motifs directly came from shitol pati which she further customised and reshaped to help merge her western style with an eastern look.

Farah Anjum Bari who has designed for Royal dignitaries, airlines, international brands and Miss World 2001 was up next. Her Khadi collection was heavily inspired by kagoj kata which is a technique of making motifs using "hand cut paper." She was followed by Rimi Nayak – the face of Rimi Nayak India, a women's wear label – who is currently working to revive the Bengali letterform through explorations of Bengali typography. Her unique style which was featured in leading fashion magazines like Vogue, Verve and many more was present in her collections at the Khadi Festival. Following her was Shaibal Shaha who featured pitha designs in Khadi and Farah Diba, junior member of the FDCB.

Nearing the end of the show, Debarun Mukherjee, Nawshin Khair and Sharukh



focus on Khadi as a green fabric; a rich heritage which is present in all the faculties of our art. But it is the vocabulary of our folk art that speaks the language of this nation and in keeping with this idea, each designer has developed their collection with a single, decorative folk tradition," said Maheen Khan.

She also talked about the importance of green, clean energy textiles and how the daily use of Khadi could help revive it significantly and safeguard it from early extinction.

She was swiftly followed by Debapriya Bhattacharya, President of the Gandhi Ashram Trust who thanked the Fashion Design Council and talked about how Khadi builds on our heritage,

underway.

It started off with FDCB's own Kuhu. Her designs were created to showcase the soft and fluid fabric of Khadi. She used shokher hari as her motif.

"I used bright colours of the shokher hari to create funk and fun in my styles," she said.

Emdad Hoque, Vice President of FDCB was up next and his designs were inspired by the hath paakha. Influenced by their geometric designs he used the forms on his collection of red and black with an off-white base.

Following Emdad Hoque was Sayantan Sarkar, a graduate of NIFT and a very popular and upcoming designer in India. His collection was

inspired by the kokeshi dolls from Northern Japan, woven on a

Amin took centre stage and sported colourful collections of Khadi.

Finally, Maheen Khan took centre stage. Her collection showcased original inventive cuts that were layered and inspired from the drawings of paper cutting art of Bangladesh. It was an amazing way to bookend a very successful and polished night of fashion in Dhaka!

Amongst the designers who were present on the second day of the Khadi Festival were Humaira Khan, Shabana Ali, Santanu Das, Biplob Saha, Paromita Banerjee, Lipi Khandker and many more.

The designer collections that stood out include the work of Chandana Dewan and Tenzing Chakma. They both presented amazingly polished designs. Chandana Dewan used haat pakha motif in her designs which included both Western and traditional wear.

**By Naveed Naushad**  
**Photo: Sazzad Ibne Sayed**