

CABLE INDUSTRY RIDING HIGH ON GROWTH MOMENTUM

Cable industry in Bangladesh: A bright future ahead

In conversation with Mohammed Farhan Mosharraf, Chairman, Paradise Electric & Electronics Industries Limited & Director, Paradise Cables Limited

The government should forbid domestic cables from being used for industrial purposes. It should also set specific criteria as to who can produce what kind of cable products.

Despite being a vital product, cables get very little attention in Bangladesh. Little do most people know that a faulty cable can have devastating consequences. We are barely aware of the quality of cable products that we use in everyday life, shares Farhan Mosharraf in a discussion with The Daily Star.

He underscores the importance of certification by international cable certification bodies in ensuring product quality of a cable manufacturer. Certification is a continuous process. It requires a certified company to follow a rigorous quality control system on a regular basis in every segment of the industry, inter alia, source of raw material, production process, post-production quality control mechanism, and human resource management.

He further adds that a different level of technical capacity is required for manufacturing different types of cable products. For example, power cable or industrial cable requires a production technique and raw materials (conductor and insulator) superior to that of domestic cables. Unfortunately, this is not always the case in Bangladesh. There is also a lack of monitoring from the government side in this regard. Mr Mosharraf urges the government to set specific criteria as to who can produce what kind of cable products.

Again, many companies compromise the quality and safety standards to keep the price of their products low. It creates unfair competition in the cable market which ultimately affects the



Mohammed Farhan Mosharraf

quality producers because quality demands increased expenditure, adds Farhan Mosharraf.

On the safety issue, he explains that most short circuits happen due to low quality of cable. In many cases domestic cables are used in industries. This is simply unsafe. He says that the government should forbid domestic cables from being used for industrial purposes. The industry owners should also be made aware about this issue. Both the cable industry and the government should invest in creating mass awareness about cable-related safety issues, opines Farhan Mosharraf.

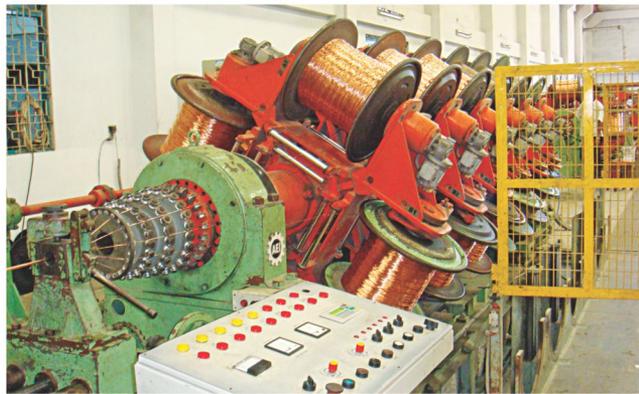
He emphasizes that the government should promote use of XLPE insulation instead of PVC insulation. It will ensure safety as well as reduce carbon emission from cable products. For the conductor, he recommends increased use of aluminium cable. It costs one-fourth of the price of copper and is of the same quality.

He anticipates a bright future of the

cable industry in Bangladesh. Since the demand of electricity is growing with the rapid development of the country, there is a huge scope of expansion for the cable industry. In fact, he thinks Bangladesh will need more cable companies to meet the future demand.

He also highlights the government of cable products. The export potential

should provide tax benefits to promote cable export. The local cable industry should also strive to attain international standards to compete in the foreign market. If these two conditions are met then cable products can become premier export items for Bangladesh in the future, concludes Farhan Mosharraf.



Quality: Customers' Safeguard



Ahmed Shawon

Electricity is the lifeline of modern civilisation. And only quality electric cables can ensure smooth and safe transmission and distribution of electricity. The quality of a cable can be guaranteed by using quality raw materials and following proper manufacturing process.

Unfortunately in Bangladesh, many cable manufacturers are indiscriminately using contaminated scrap copper as basic raw material for cable production. Scrap copper generally comes from shipbreaking yards and is contaminated by solder, iron, aluminium, etc. It is hardly possible to purify this copper by using traditional technologies. The so-called CCR (Continuous Casting & Rolling) Plant cannot fully purify the scrap copper by separating foreign materials. CCR Plants are also responsible for environmental pollution. As a result the copper rods made from scrap coppers for manufacturing cables have varying purity far below 99.99 percent and substantially reduced conductivity. When these rods are converted into conductors, their resistance property fails to meet the relevant international standards. The cables manufactured with these conductors get overheated above a certain load, and damage the insulation and cause short circuits often resulting in loss of lives and property.

Some corrupt manufacturers also compromise the quality of insulating materials of cables. These insulation materials cannot withstand the conductor's continuous

temperature resulting in melting of insulation and short circuits.

To ensure safety, customers can use the following cables which are available countrywide.

Low Smoke Zero Halogen (LSZH) Cables

LSZH cables prevent emission of halogen gases (fluorine, chlorine, bromine, iodine and astatine) during a short circuit or fire. These halogen gases cause suffocation which can lead to loss of human lives. Moreover, these cables generate low smoke. As a result, during a fire the main source of fire can be easily identified and necessary measures can be taken to douse the fire. LSZH is also internationally known as environment-friendly.

Heat-resistant Cables

This special type of cable is designed for safe operation at high temperatures (up to 550°C). These cables are made of glass fibre (each conductor is tapped by glass fibre) which absorbs the heat and prevents short circuits and fire. Heat-resistant cables are also known as 'industrial super safety cable'.

Flame Retardant Low Smoke (FRLS) Cables

FRLS cables emit very little smoke and toxic gases. They also retard the spread of fire. As a result, during a fire, if people are trapped they can be evacuated safely. Furthermore, sensitive electrical and electronic equipment remains safe. FRLS is also an eco-friendly cable.

To address budget constraints, customers should use high-quality aluminium cables instead of cheaper faulty scrap copper cables to meet industrial requirements. It will be both cost-effective and safe. Safety should be given the utmost priority in manufacturing as well as buying any cable product.

Ahmed Shawon is Head of Brand & Media, Paradise Cables Limited.



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