

Rather than using brand new fabric, Hoque collects discarded garments from a second-hand market in the city and aesthetically places them into brand new, sustainable, hand-woven, designer pieces.

Deeper into the conversation, Hoque revealed his concern about the current pandemic situation, saying that if the rate of pollution was not reduced in time, it would soon be too late and we may never be able return back to the good old days of a clean, carefree world.

"Nature has its own way to retaliate, if we don't clean up our act soon, and continue polluting the environment at the current rate, then another disaster is just lurking around the corner," concluded the expert designer.

When we speak of sustainable fashion, we cannot exclude accessories like jewellery, bags and shoes. Designer Hosna Emdad, of Kristung jewellery, makes sure there's no gap in our understanding. "Fashion is incomplete without jewellery

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and to advocate sustainable fashion would only mean endorsing sustainable jewellery as well, and that's where Kristung comes to materialise," said Hosna Emdad.

"Kristung is also the name of a stunning mountain in Bandarban, where 'Kris' means tiny birds and 'Tung' means mountains in the local dialect. I fell in love with the name right when I heard it, immediately naming my brand after the majestic mountain."

Kristung jewellery deals with eco-friendly items like bamboo, jute and even locally sourced yarn to make artistic ornaments. "To make it more sustainable, I have engaged previously unemployed women to empower them and make them contribute to the country's economy whilst flexing their creativity," Hosna reflected.

Designer Tasfia Ahmed runs her namesake brand as a sustainable



initiative, and works to promote the local fabric industry, and the uniqueness of our craftsmanship associating it with modern and contemporary designs, which are more relatable to the young buyers of today.

"Sustainable fashion is not only about how we source the fabric or the yarn, it is a much bigger issue. It includes everything from fair trade to economic welfare of the artisans. How we are able to raise their standard of living by giving them work and fair wages in return of their good work. It even includes the aspect of child labour, something so heinous, yet

occurring rampantly within our country," Tasfia said.

Inquired what prevented us as buyers from making sustainable purchases; Tasfia emphasises two major points — being culturally inappropriate and unschooled about our heritage stories.

"We must know how much harm we are doing to the world with our erratic purchases. Plus, we must educate ourselves about our culture and traditions, so that we can bring back our passion towards local clothing, designs and styles, which are unique rather than mindlessly follow what the global media

bombards us with," she explained.

Fashion was never a linear concept, where we like something, wear something and dispose of it as soon as we bought it. If we do not consciously stop filling our wardrobes with sustainable clothing, if we do not question our designers, labels and brands about the clothes that we wear, how they were made and who made them, then there will never be a fruitful ending.

This is probably where the designers need to be more innovative and use the age-old handloom in newer ways and incorporate it into modern, contemporary designs to make it more attractive to the younger buyers of today. Every design needs to tell a story, about the background of the textile or maybe even the livelihood of the artisans. This will help educate the buyers and help them make a connection with sustainable products.

Finally, we must always remember

A bird's eye view into slow fashion

Slow Fashion advocates a more sustainable and conscious approach to fashion; clothes are made out of environmentally friendly materials, including recycled items. This business model emphasises on promoting local skills, craftsmanship and reduced consumption rate. The end products, often comparatively higher in price, have an extended longevity — meaning it is valued more and does not fall out of 'trends' as quickly as fast fashion. Production process of slow fashion demands improved salaries.



that fashion has always been a circular concept, where everyone in the process is connected to one another. If we as buyers do not value our heritage, our crafts, or our environment, then there will never grow an industry that supports a cleaner, better world. Because after all, what is demanded is supplied.

By Mehrin Mubdi Chowdhury
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