



Haridooa river near the BSCIC industrial estate in Narsingdi's Kararchar area now closely resembles a cesspool as local factories keep polluting the waterbody in absence of appropriate treatment facilities. In addition, heaps of waste can be seen littering the entire BSCIC area.

PHOTO: JAHIDUL ISLAM

BSCIC ESTATE IN NARSINGDI

Businesses displeased with inadequate facilities

JAHIDUL ISLAM, Narsingdi

Industrial estates under the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) aim to facilitate cottage, micro, small and medium businesses by providing them a safe place to operate along with all the required services.

However, investors are losing interest in initiating new projects at the BSCIC area in Narsingdi as it suffers from poor drainage and waste management systems, inadequate roads, lack of security and gas connections, load-shedding and insufficient firefighting measures.

Established in 1986 on 15.39 acres of land in the district's Kararchar area, the estate lacks even a bordering fence to prevent break-ins while the already dilapidated roads become submerged when it rains due to poor drainage.

During a visit to several establishments in the industrial area, this correspondent found that four units were bereft of any firefighting equipment while three had carbon dioxide cylinders, but the employees had no idea how to use them.

Besides, thanks to the development of industries amid the absence of waste treatment facilities and apathy

of authorities concerned, the Haridooa river has lost its appeal as the waterway is now being choked by pollution, locals say.

Not only is the river appalling to look at, the reeking water is nowhere near suitable for household or agricultural use, let alone for drinking.

BSCIC authorities say they have started several combined development projects to solve these problems in addition to a number of ongoing initiatives, which will solve 80 per cent of the issues once complete.

But seeing as the industrial estate has been facing these problems for so long, many entrepreneurs have shifted their businesses away from the area.

Sharif Ahmed, an employee of Raptex Towel Industries, said the unit is unable to operate at full capacity as power outages occur at least three times daily on average.

The BSCIC allotted 95 plots at the estate to 35 businesses, of which five are loan defaulters, four are in poor health and two have stopped their activities.

So, only 24 units are actually still operating from the BSCIC area, sources said.

Space at BSCIC estates is leased by industries for a period of at least 99 years with most production units taking up



three to four plots, which is why it seems as though there may be vacancies.

Towels, textiles, medicine, baby food and lacquer are produced at the BSCIC area in Narsingdi, which employs about 6,000 people at its various factories.

Some 80 per cent of the towels and textiles produced by the 24 existing units are exported to 10 countries in Europe, including Italy, Spain and England.

"But we are facing various difficulties for the lack of security, poor drainage system and other issues," said Kamal Hossain, deputy director of Ravidian Textial BD Limited.

Hossain then said that entrepreneurs like him invested in the BSCIC industrial estate in hopes of having access to more modern facilities that available elsewhere.

"But the reality is different. Still, the business environment will improve a lot if the authorities add security, waste management facilities, and reconstruct the roads and drainage system," he added.

Echoing the same, Sobroto Saha, deputy director of Loup Industry, said they require stable electricity supply and gas connections at new units.

"New industries are demanding gas connections,

but the authorities are yet to pay heed," Saha added.

Harunur Rahsid, general secretary of the BSCIC Industry Owners Association, said the allegations of poor infrastructure are true.

Due to the lack of a fence, both farm and wild animals and even passers-by can easily enter the BSCIC area and create a chaotic situation.

Besides, the plot allotment is smaller than what is being demanded as it is tough to ensure a modern facility in limited space.

In addition, the authorities need to install a warehouse, effluent treatment plants (ETPs), and sufficient car parking space.

Mamun-or-Rashid, assistant general manager of the BSCIC's Narsingdi office, said energy and gas connections are being maintained by the Palli Biddut Samity and Titas Gas Transmission and Distribution Company Limited.

"So, we can just make requests as we do not have power to ensure connections at the industrial area," he added.

Rashid went on to say that development projects are ongoing for reconstructing the drainage system and other required infrastructure.

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BATBC clocks Tk 1,324cr profit in Jan-Sep

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

British American Tobacco Bangladesh Company Ltd clocked Tk 1,324.08 crore in profit in January-September on the back of higher sales.

It was up nearly 15 per cent from Tk 1,156.14 crore the multinational company raked in during the nine-month period a year earlier.

Thus, the earnings per share (EPS) were Tk 24.52 for January-September, compared to Tk 21.41 in the same period a year ago, according to the unaudited financial statements.

Higher sales drove up the profits. Gross revenue rose 25 per cent to Tk 7,933 crore in July-September and 9 per cent to Tk 26,571 crore in January-September.

The cost of sales was up 49 per cent in the third quarter and 20 per cent in the nine-month period. The net finance expenses more than doubled to Tk 44.86 crore in January-September.

The tobacco product manufacturer also posted a 40 per cent year-on-year growth in profit to Tk 409.86 crore in the July-September quarter. It was Tk 294.30 crore in the identical quarter a year prior.

The EPS was Tk 7.59 in July-September against Tk 5.45 in the same quarter of 2021.

"The EPS increased for higher profit after tax driven by growth in volume," said BATBC in a filing on the Dhaka Stock Exchange (DSE) yesterday.

The net operating cash flow per share rocketed to Tk 39.55 in January-September riding on higher cash collection from sales. It was Tk 1.20 during the same period in 2021.

The net asset value per share was Tk 77.65 on September 30 and Tk 68.13 on December 31.

BATBC's board of directors has declared a 100 per cent interim cash dividend based on the third-quarter financial statement, the filing added.

Shares of the company closed at Tk 518.70 on the DSE yesterday.

Marico's profit up 8.4pc in Jul-Sep

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Marico Bangladesh Limited reported an 8.4 per cent year-on-year higher profit in the July-September quarter.

The manufacturer of Parachute oil raked in a profit of Tk 97.18 crore in the quarter, up from Tk 89.62 crore in the same three-month period of 2021.

Earnings per share were Tk 30.85 in July-September, which was Tk 28.45 in the same quarter last year, according to the audited financial statements.

Marico Bangladesh made a Tk 200.06 crore profit in the April-September period. It was Tk 197.60 crore in the same half of 2021.

The EPS was Tk 63.51 for April-September, slightly up from Tk 62.73 in the identical six-month period of 2021. Shares of Marico Bangladesh were unchanged at Tk 2,421.50 on the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday.

Tata Steel team visits GPH Ispat plant

STAR BUSINESS REPORT, Ctg

A delegation of India's leading steel manufacturer Tata Steel Ltd visited the factory of GPH Ispat at Sitakunda upazila in Chattogram yesterday.

"We have come to experience how they (GPH Ispat) are making world-class steel products with state-of-the-art technology," said Santosh Kumar Maurya, head of engineering for steel making at Tata Steel.

The Indian team visited the project under the supervision of Primetals Technologies, a global engineering and plant construction company.

"GPH has been playing an exemplary role in the steel sector at home and abroad. We are fortunate that the delegation of Tata Steel visited our plant," said Mohammad Almas Shimul, additional managing director of GPH Ispat.

Yanmar to set up display centre for agri machinery

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Japanese agricultural machinery manufacturer Yanmar will establish a display centre in Bangladesh in collaboration with ACI Motors to showcase its latest harvesters, tractors, transplanters and seeding machines.

Farmers, entrepreneurs, agriculturists, students and government officials will be able to better inspect the machinery, which in turn will not only support institutions under the agriculture ministry but also expand farm mechanisation.

The agriculture ministry will decide the display centre's location, said the company organising a programme at InterContinental Dhaka yesterday to make the announcement.

Yanmar Agribusiness President Nagamori Masuda handed over two types of tractors, three types of combine harvesters, two types of transplanters and potato harvesters to Agriculture Minister Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, who was present at the event as the chief guest.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh ITO Naoki was the special guest while Dr Arif Dowl, managing director of ACI, and other higher officials of ACI Motors were present.

Yanmar was founded in Osaka, Japan in 1912. Currently it supplies modern agricultural machinery to 130 countries.

The company says its vision is to ensure "A Sustainable Future" by providing the most advanced agriculture technologies and machineries to farmers.

Its parent company, Yanmar Holdings Company, had a capital of 90 million yen and 20,727 employees as of March 31, 2020. Meanwhile, its net sales stood at 795.4 billion yen while profit at 15.7 billion yen.



An endless line of customers are seen waiting for their turn to buy sugar at subsidised rates from an open-market-sales truck in front of the Bangladesh Secretariat in Dhaka yesterday. Normal retail prices of the sweetener have gone beyond the reach of most consumers due to a supply crunch.

PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HUQ

Unique Hotel's profit surges 142pc in FY22

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Unique Hotel & Resorts Limited's profit rose 142 per cent year-on-year to Tk 94.21 crore in the financial year that ended on June 30.

It generated a profit of Tk 38.86 crore in 2020-21.

The company reported earnings per share of Tk 3.20 for 2021-22, against Tk 1.32 a year earlier.

The net asset value per share rose to Tk 84.73 in the last financial year from Tk 81.27 in 2020-21, while the net operating cash flow per share slipped to Tk 0.60 from Tk 1.10 a year ago.

The board of directors of Unique Hotel has recommended a 15 per cent cash dividend for 2021-22.

Shares of Unique Hotel rose 6.39 per cent on the Dhaka Stock Exchange yesterday.