



Terry towel makers such as this one at the BSCIC industrial estate in Kishoreganj are exporting their products to various markets, inspiring other entrepreneurs to set up their own units in the process. However, the area still lacks a boundary wall, proper drainage system and adequate gas supply.

PHOTO: MD AMINUL ISLAM

KISHOREGANJ BSCIC ESTATE

Terry towel makers taking their products abroad

But the area still lacks key infrastructure, services

MD AMINUL ISLAM, *Mymensingh*

Terry towel makers at an industrial estate of the Bangladesh Small and Cottage Industries Corporation (BSCIC) in Kishoreganj have shrugged off the coronavirus-induced economic downturn as production has reached pre-pandemic levels amid growing orders from abroad. Their success in shipping quality products to different local and global markets is also an inspiration for other entrepreneurs at the estate, which has good communication with Dhaka and Chattogram, according to BSCIC officials. AKM Mahfuzur Rahman Bappi, proprietor of the Maanuri Textile Mills, said the towels they produce are mostly shipped to the US, UK, Saudi Arabia and Canada. Bappi, also a director of the Bangladesh Terry Towel and Linen Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BTLMMEA), then informed that his factory, which employs around 500 workers, produces up to Tk

5 lakh worth of goods for export each month. He now plans to open a new unit considering the growing demand and has ordered 50 power looms from China to this end. "I will invest more than Tk 10 crore over the next year to set up the new enterprise, which will need some 200 workers," the BTLMMEA director added. However, the industrial area still has its short comings as it lacks key infrastructure, such as a boundary wall, and stable gas supply. Mohammad Hanif, manager of Vergo Fashion Ltd, which only produces towels for export to countries such as Japan and those in Europe, said their business has been going well these days. He then demanded that a boundary wall be set up immediately as incidents of robbery and drug abuse sometimes occur. "I informed the BSCIC officials on different occasions, but no solution is yet to be seen," he added.

Entrepreneurs also urged for better coordination and relations between themselves and estate officials. In addition, many plots have remained unused for years and so, reallocating them for productive businesses would be a great support for thousands in the area and across the country as well, said Abu Shama, a local businessman. Established in 1987 on some 20 acres of land, the Kishoreganj estate has 66 industrial units covering 150 plots. Of these units, 33 units are currently operational, BSCIC sources say. The estate is facing other problems too, including poor inner road networks and drainage systems, which should be upgraded for running smooth business in the area. SM Aslam Kabir, estate officer of the industrial area, said they recently held a meeting with plot owners to discuss their problems. He also said only Tk 10,000 is allocated each year for a cleanliness drive, but the

amount is too scanty for this purpose. Some entrepreneurs say they suffer due to unstable utility services. Md Morshid Mia, proprietor of Dayal Food Products, said he faced losses of around Tk 20 lakh in the last seven years for having to burn wood to run his factory in absence of adequate gas supply. Unable to make up costs, Morshid ultimately rented out his factory. Sheikh Md Sohrab Uddin, assistant general manager of the Kishoreganj BSCIC, said they have already informed the higher authorities about the problems at the estate. Regarding the vacant plots, Uddin said they asked the plot owners on various occasions to start their business but many of them did not respond yet. Also, BSCIC officials regularly contact gas and electricity suppliers and also discuss the problem at district coordination meetings to render improved utility services in the industrial area.

Unilever, YPSA hold plastic-free Karnaphuli campaign

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL) and the Young Power in Social Action (YPSA) have teamed up under a campaign to conserve the once-powerful Karnaphuli river and raise awareness about plastic pollution. On Saturday, the YPSA and UBL organised a plastic cleanup and awareness-raising programme in Chattogram as part of the initiative – Not Throwing the Plastic into River – by involving 100 youth volunteers and UBL employees. Considered as the lifeline of economic operation in Bangladesh, the Karnaphuli river is a victim of unchecked pollution, according to a press release of UBL. Many people who gather near Karnaphuli New Bridge on holidays and weekends frequently discard single-use plastic items into rivers, contributing to river pollution and the clogging of the riverbed with plastic. So, in the presence of Nurul Hoque, counselor of the ward no. 35, Md Arifur Rahman, chief executive of the YPSA, and Md Sanaullah Mallick, employee relations lead of UBL, the cleanup initiative started from Karnaphuli bridge and volunteers engaged with local people to raise awareness on the harmful aspects of throwing polythene and other plastic into the river and environment. On the occasion, Shamima Akhter, director for corporate affairs, partnership and communication at UBL, said Unilever Bangladesh and the YPSA initiated plastic waste collection from 41 wards of the Chattogram City Corporation from the beginning of 2022. "Raising awareness about plastic waste is another important step to bringing a sustainable solution." Under the initiative, 3,200 tonnes of plastic waste have so far been collected from the city. Md Arifur Rahman said, "Our Chattogram city has lost its beauty due to various pollution, including the dumping of plastic waste everywhere. As a result, the Karnaphuli riverbed is being filled with plastic items, endangering our ecology and contaminating water." He called upon volunteer organisations to raise awareness about the plastic catastrophe.

PRICES OF KEY ESSENTIALS IN DHAKA CITY			
	PRICE (DEC 12, 2022)	% CHANGES FROM A MONTH AGO	% CHANGE FROM A YEAR AGO
Fine rice (kg)	Tk 62-Tk 75	2.24 ↑	8.73 ↑
Coarse rice (kg)	Tk 47-Tk 52	1.2 ↑	6.45 ↑
Loose flour (kg)	Tk 60-Tk 65	2.46 ↑	73.61 ↑
Lentil (kg)	Tk 100-Tk 110	2.44 ↑	20 ↑
Soybean (litre)	Tk 175-Tk 180	2.9 ↑	25.44 ↑
Potato (kg)	Tk 22-Tk 35	9.62 ↑	10.94 ↑
Onion (kg)	Tk 45-Tk 55	-4.76 ↓	-23.8 ↓
Egg (4 pcs)	Tk 36-Tk 38	-19.57 ↓	13.85 ↑

SOURCE: TCB



ASM Shahidullah Khan, chairman of ONE Bank, inaugurated a branch at Tekerhat of Madaripur on Sunday. Zahur Ullah, vice-chairman and executive committee chairman, Shawket Jaman, director, Aurangzeb Chowdhury, independent director, and Md Monzur Mofiz, managing director, were present.

PHOTO: ONE BANK



Internet and telecom service provider ADN Telecom declared 10 per cent cash dividend at the 19th annual general meeting held last week. Asif Mahmood, chairman of the company, Md Moinul Islam, Md Mahfuz Ali Sohel and Niaz Ahmed, directors, Ghulam Rasool and Khondkar Atique-e-Rabbani, independent directors, Henry Hilton, managing director, Zahir Ahmed, board adviser, Mohammed Abdul Alim, chief financial officer, and Mohammad Monir Hossain, company secretary, were present.

PHOTO: ADN GROUP



Mohammad Almas Shimul, additional managing director of GPH Ispat, presented certificates to construction workers who took part in a daylong skills enhancement training at a restaurant in Agrabad of Chattogram on Sunday. A total 260 construction workers of the port city received the training, jointly organised by GPH Ispat and the Institute of Engineers Bangladesh (IEB), Chittagong Center.

PHOTO: GPH ISPAT

EU could face gas shortage next year, IEA warns

REUTERS, Brussels

The European Union has enough gas for the winter but could face a shortage next year if Russia cuts supplies further, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Monday, urging governments to act faster to save energy and expand renewables. Despite Russia slashing gas deliveries this year, Europe has averted a severe shortage and started the winter with brimming gas storage tanks - thanks in part to emergency EU measures to fill storage, plus a lucky spell of mild weather and high gas prices that dampened demand for the fuel. But next year may pose an even tougher test than the energy crunch that has this year

seen fuel bills soar for European households and forced industries to temporarily close to avoid crippling gas bills. If Russia was to cut the small share of gas it still delivers to Europe, and Chinese gas demand rebounded from COVID-19 lockdown-induced lows, the EU could face a gas shortfall of 27 billion cubic metres (bcm) in 2023, the IEA said. Total EU gas consumption was 412 bcm in 2021, according to EU data. "This is a serious challenge," IEA Executive Director Fatih Birol told a press conference with the European Commission in Brussels, adding the shortfall would have been around 60 bcm without the EU's emergency response measures.



A total of 40 Khulna-based female entrepreneurs engaged in handicrafts manufacturing, catering and running boutique shops took part in a three-day training organised by Standard Chartered Bangladesh and SME Foundation recently. Mishaal Abu Imam, head of Business Banking Products of the bank, Muhammad Khairuzzaman, Khulna branch manager, and Md Masudur Rahman, assistant general manager of SME Foundation, were present at the programme's closing ceremony.

PHOTO: STANDARD CHARTERED BANGLADESH



MTB Foundation and Jahangirnagar University organised a ceremony at the latter's Wazed Miah Science Research Centre recently to provide scholarships to 33 students of three departments under the Samson H Chowdhury Memorial Scholarship Programme. Anika Chowdhury, director of Mutual Trust Bank (MTB) and chairman of Samson H Chowdhury Memorial Scholarship Programme Sub-Committee, Syed Mahbubur Rahman, managing director and CEO of the bank, and Samia Chowdhury, chief executive officer of MTB Foundation, were present.

PHOTO: MUTUAL TRUST BANK

Stocks extend gains

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The market started the session with a slow movement for a while but it accelerated after the mid-session and the momentum continued till the end since investors continued to make fresh investments in the major stocks. The stocks sustained the buying interest in all the major sectors, said the brokerage house. Among the sectors, jute rose 7.5 per cent and paper was up 3.8 per cent. On the other hand, tannery and ceramic both fell 0.3 per cent. Investors' activity was mostly concentrated on pharmaceuticals, which accounted for 27.2 per cent of the day's turnover, while the IT sector represented 12.3 per cent and the paper sector made up 9.5 per cent of the total transactions. Bangladesh Monospool Paper Manufacturing Company Limited was the top gainer, advancing 8.75 per cent. Jute Spinners, Kohinoor

Chemicals Company (Bangladesh), Sonali Aansh Industries, Paper Processing & Packaging, and Anwar Galvanizing all rose more than 8 per cent. Eastern Lubricants Blenders suffered the sharpest fall on the day, declining 9.09 per cent. Salvo Chemical Industry was the most-traded stock with its shares worth Tk 35 crore transacted. Bashundhara Paper Mills, Intraco Refueling Station, Orion Infusion, and Orion Pharma also saw significant transactions. The Caspi, the all-share index of the Chattogram Stock Exchange, edged up 86 points, or 0.47 per cent, to end the day at 18,458. Of the 142 securities that traded on the bourse in the port city, 43 advanced, 17 declined, and 82 showed no price movement. Turnover surged nearly 25 per cent to Tk 5.88 crore.

Global Heavy Chemicals'

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The net operating cash flow per share returned to a positive Tk 0.07 in the first quarter of 2022-23 from a negative Tk 0.30 in July-September of 2021. The net asset value per share fell to Tk 53.22 on September 30 from Tk 53.68 on June 30. A concern of Oposon Group, GHCL produces import substitute

industrial chemicals like caustic soda, hydrochloric acid, bleaching powder, chlorine, sodium hypochlorite, and chlorinated paraffin wax. It also exports chlorine to India on a regular basis, according to the website of the company. GHCL shares were unchanged at Tk 35.10 on the DSE yesterday.