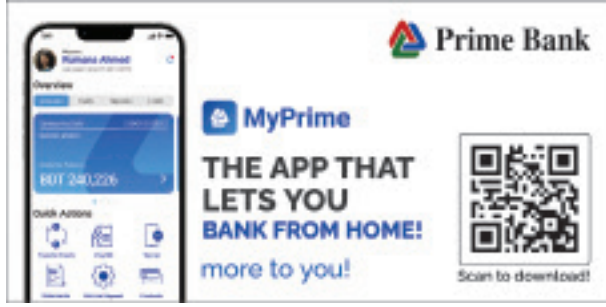


star BUSINESS



Visitors observe the workings of machinery on the opening day of the 17th Dhaka International Textile & Garment Machinery Exhibition 2023 at International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka yesterday. Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, Yorkers Trade & Marketing Service Company, Hongkong, and Chan Chao Int'l Company, Taiwan are jointly organising the exposition.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Textile, machinery market growing fast in Bangladesh

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh has become one of the important hotspots for textile and garment machinery amidst the quest of entrepreneurs to improve productivity and cater to orders of apparel shifting from other countries.

The sales of textile and garment machinery, now more than \$4 billion in Bangladesh, are growing by 20 per cent annually because of high demand.

These were estimates of machinery suppliers attending the 17th Dhaka International Textile & Garment Machinery Exhibition 2023 at the International Convention City Bashundhara in Dhaka. The four-day event began yesterday.

The event, one of South Asia's biggest textile and garment machinery expositions, is taking place in Dhaka after a gap of three years due to the severe fallout of Covid-19.

The Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA), Yorkers Trade & Marketing Service Company, Hongkong, and Chan Chao International Company, Taiwan are jointly organising the

exposition.

"Bangladesh is a good market for my company. And the business of my company has grown despite the pandemic," said Gianpiero Valsecchi, sales area manager of Santoni, an Italian textile machinery producer with operations in China.

In the past two years, his business grew 40 per cent year-on-year in Bangladesh in spite of the pandemic's impacts because a lot of businesspeople unable to travel abroad had booked machinery online.

"Bangladesh will continue to grow its textile and garment business as global clothing retailers and brands are relocating work orders here from other countries."

"Currently, the demand for clothing items is a bit low because of the Russia-Ukraine war but it will also be reversed soon."

Thomas Streicher, area sales and product manager of Trutzschler, a German machinery company, also said Bangladesh was one of the markets bearing the most potential for his company.

International retailers and brands are coming here with a lot of work orders and Bangladesh has the advantage of having a competitive labour force and good know-how, he said.

"We delivered a lot of machines here and we are

Umeda, chief executive officer of Shima Seiki (Hong Kong).

Umeda's company has supplied 20,000 machines to 200 local customers over the past seven years.

For the pandemic and the war, European consumers are having

in Dhaka for the first time in 2004, Bangladesh was the fourth largest apparel supplier worldwide.

"Now the country has emerged as the second-largest garment exporter. This indicates the strength of the sector."

The demand for machinery making use of man-made fibres is growing in Bangladesh as local entrepreneurs are putting in a lot of investment in the artificial textile industry to grab a bigger share of the market.

Some 1,200 companies from 35 countries are participating in the four-day event, according to Judy Wang, executive director (overseas) of Chan Chao International Company.

Mainly the machinery making use of advanced technology to enable high productivity is being showcased as the nature of productivity in the industries has changed over the last couple of years, she said.

"So, many companies are interested to invest in Bangladesh," she said, adding that this was why the country was popular with international retailers and brands.

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very much optimistic that the Bangladesh market will grow a lot in the future."

His company mainly supplies spinning machines and so far, the company supplied 600 machines to customers in Bangladesh.

"Of course, Bangladesh is the number one destination for my company as the sales are increasing with high demand from the customers," said Ikuto

to pass difficult times which also slowed down sales a bit in Bangladesh, he said.

"In spite of a lot of challenges, the business is growing for my company in Bangladesh, although the growth has slowed down to some extent."

Akai Lin, overseas director of Chan Chao International Company, co-organiser of the exhibition, said when his company held the exposition

REFINANCE SCHEME

Cinema hall owners get more time to apply for loans

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Cinema hall owners in Bangladesh will be able to apply by December this year for loans under the central bank's Tk 1,000 crore refinance scheme as the deadline has been extended by a year.

The Bangladesh Bank yesterday issued a notice to this effect. The deadline ended in December last year.

The refinance scheme was formed to help theatre owners set up new halls or renovate the existing ones.

In February 2021, the Bangladesh Bank asked hall owners to apply for the soft loans within March 2022, but many of them did not know about it on time.

Against the backdrop, the BB extended the deadline until December last year, but a large portion of the refinance fund was still unused.

In the notice yesterday, the central bank said a good number of cinema hall owners are now showing willingness to take funds from the scheme. So, it has extended the deadline.

Under the scheme, entrepreneurs will get Tk 10 crore to set up new halls and Tk 5 crore for renovation.

The scheme is aimed at bringing back the glory of Bangladeshi cinema.

The repayment period of the loan is eight years, including a one-year grace period. Installments have to be paid on a quarterly basis.

Of the refinance fund, Tk 500 crore will be given out in the first phase while the rest in the second phase.

Participating banks will get the fund from the central bank at a 1.5 per cent interest rate.

The interest rate for the end-users will be 5 per cent in cities and 4.5 per cent outside of metropolitan areas.

In Bangladesh, there were as many as 1,235 cinema halls in 1998. The number has nosedived significantly in the last two decades.

Only 60 halls were operational as of December 2021. However, the number doubles to 120 during Eid festivals, according to the Bangladesh Film Exhibitors Association, a platform for theatre owners.

In most areas, the owners have built multi-story shopping malls demolishing theatres, an entrepreneur said in 2021.

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STOCKS	
DSEX ▼	CASPI ▼
0.17%	0.14%
6,245.02	18,434.94

COMMODITIES	
Gold ▼	Oil ▼
\$1,834.69 (per ounce)	\$78.34 (per barrel)

ASIAN MARKETS			
MUMBAI	TOKYO	SINGAPORE	SHANGHAI
0.40%	0.37%	1.13%	0.39%
61,275.09	27,501.86	3,280.82	3,280.49

Govt to buy LNG at 16% lower price

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The government yesterday decided to buy 33,600 Million British thermal units (MMBtu) of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from JERA, a Japanese energy company, as it looks to ensure adequate supply ahead of the coming Ramadan and summer months.

Petrobangla, which manages the country's LNG imports, will get the fuel for \$16.5 per MMBtu, down by some 16 per cent from a previous purchase, according to the Cabinet Committee on Purchase.

Just two weeks ago, the state-owned Rupantarita Prakriuk Gas purchased LNG for \$19.74 per MMBtu from TotalEnergies, a French energy and petroleum company.

The offer from JERA, a major LNG reseller, is the lowest received from the spot market.

The LNG cargo of 33,600 MMBtu will be delivered between March 10 and 11.

The government will have to pay the equivalent of Tk 690.4 crore to the supplier, as per official documents.

Bangladesh depends on imported natural gas for about three-quarters of its power generation, but was forced to ration gas supplies last year as global prices were driven up by Russia's war in Ukraine.

Since the start of the year, LNG prices have plunged by more than 70 per cent from August's record \$70 MMBtu on slower demand and high inventory levels in Europe and North Asia.

At yesterday's meeting, the cabinet committee also gave the nod to the Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) to buy 1.10 crore litres of soybean oil from City Edible Oil Ltd at Tk 174.5 per litre.

Besides, a Turkish company will supply 8,000 tonnes of lentil to the state-run TCB.



Preparations are underway by the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry to host the Chattogram International Trade Fair on the Railway Pologround in the port city. The fair begins today to promote domestic products at home and abroad.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

Ctg trade fair begins today

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

The month-long Chattogram International Trade Fair begins in the port city today with a view to promoting and marketing local products at home and abroad.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Hasan Mahmud is expected to inaugurate the fair, which has been organised by the Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI) on the railway pologround.

This is the 30th edition of the fair. The CCCI has been holding the fair since 1993.

More than 300 companies from countries such as Bangladesh, India, Thailand and Iran will showcase their products in 400 stalls.

"Various established business groups will also take part in the show," CCCI

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