



BUSINESS

Canada recalls infant pyjamas made in Bangladesh

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Health Canada has recalled more than 200,000 George brand sleepers, a type of pyjama meant for infants, that were made in Bangladesh and sold from November 2022 to June 2023 citing choking and ingestion hazards.

The zipper pulls and foot grips may fall off or get removed through repeated washing, the government department for health-related resources of Canada explained on its website in early October.

As such, consumers should immediately stop using the recalled sleepers and check the style number printed on the collar to determine if they are impacted by this recall, it said.

Consumers can refer to the illustration provided for identifying impacted patterns and if affected, the sleepers can be returned to Wal-Mart stores for a full refund, it added.

The products were manufactured by Gazipur-based Unique Designers Ltd and distributed by PDS Far-East Ltd of Kowloon, Hong Kong

However, the regulator was yet to receive any reports of incidents or injuries in Canada as of September 21.

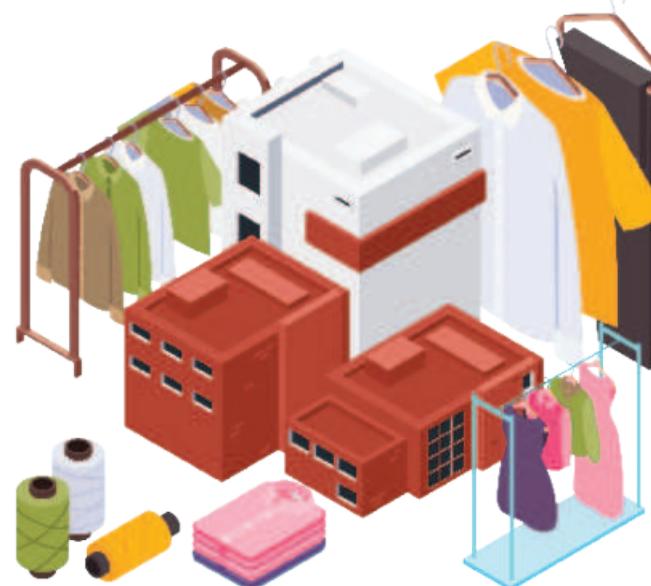
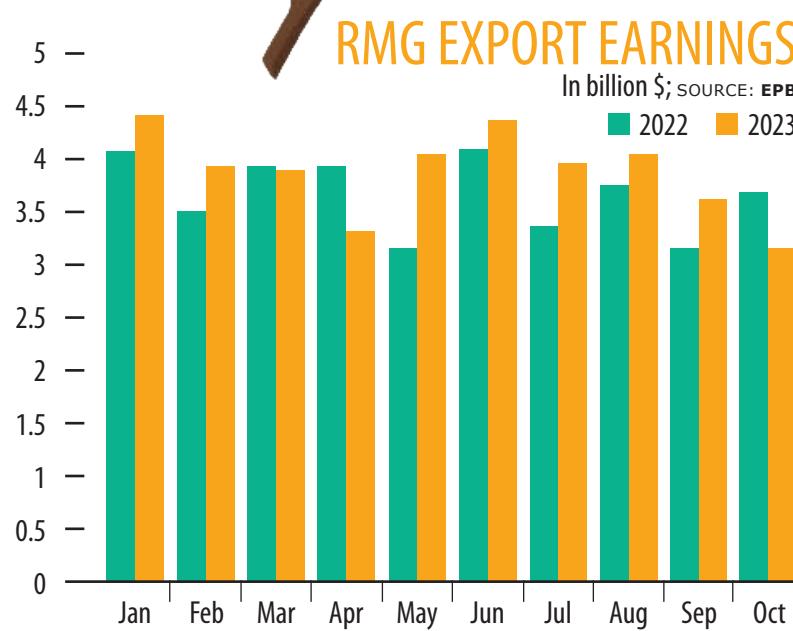
The products were manufactured by Gazipur-based Unique Designers Ltd and distributed by PDS Far-East Ltd of Kowloon, Hong Kong, according to a Canadian government website.

The report of the withdrawal was also posted on the website of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) along with other countries.

The Daily Star could not reach neither Unique Designers Limited nor Wal-Mart Canada Corp for comment.

In a statement, Faruque Hassan, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, highlighted misinterpretations such as "apparel made in Bangladesh is banned in the

READ MORE ON B3



Falling demand pulls down cotton, yarn imports

Lower gas supply, higher USD price also to blame

SOHEL PARVEZ and REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

Bangladesh's cotton and yarn imports nosedived in the first nine months of 2023 as falling demand in the global and local markets, erratic gas supply and the US dollar crisis weighed on textile millers.

The country's import of cotton to make yarn dipped 28 percent year-on-year to 9.87 lakh tonnes in January-September, according to figures from the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association (BTMA). Businesses imported 13.66 lakh tonnes of cotton during the identical period a year ago.

Likewise, yarn import fell 26 percent to 6.29 lakh tonnes in the nine months to September from 8.51 lakh tonnes a year prior.

The decline in the import of cotton and yarn by textile mills comes at a time when export receipts by the readymade garment industry, which generates more than 80 percent of the country's earnings from the external sector, have slowed.

In October, garment shipments slumped 14 percent, year-on-year. Overall, earnings from the apparel sector grew

nearly 6 percent to \$38.7 billion in January-October. It was \$36.6 billion during the same period in 2022, according to the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

the high prices of gas and cotton and the elevated level of the dollar price for the sharp depreciation of the taka for the widening losses of textile mills.

In January, the government raised the retail price of gas by

earner in the apparel industry, and 40 percent of the demand of woven garments, according to industry operators.

Monsoor Ahmed, chief executive officer of the BTMA, said export-oriented mills are facing difficulty in accessing the Export Development Fund (EDF) to import cotton and yarn because of the dollar shortage.

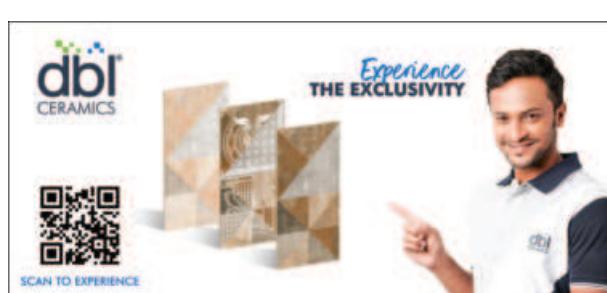
The Bangladesh Bank has raised the interest rate on the loans made from its fund with an aim to make borrowing costlier with a view to saving foreign currencies. The forex reserves have fallen by about 25 percent since the Russia-Ukraine war began.

Ahmed said the problem of domestic market-oriented spinning mills is more acute since they have to depend on banks to buy raw materials from the overseas markets.

"The increased price of dollars has driven up the cost of imports."

Many local market-oriented mills have suspended production because of the shortage of raw materials, said BTMA President Mohammad Ali Khokon.

READ MORE ON B3



A Matin Chowdhury, managing director of New Asia Group, a vertically integrated apparel manufacturing entity, said the demand has dropped 25 to 30 percent as a result of slowing global demand.

"There has also been a lot of disruption in production due to erratic gas supply. Local demand has declined too for the current economic condition."

Chowdhury, also a former president of the BTMA, blamed

14.5 percent to 178.9 percent to lessen its unsustainable subsidy burden amid a narrow fiscal space.

And the taka has lost its value by nearly 30 percent against the US dollar since January last year, making imports costlier, central bank data showed.

Local spinning and weaving mills meet nearly 90 percent of the requirement of textile raw materials for export-oriented knitwear, now the biggest export

Improving regional integration, making genuine political commitments and ensuring good governance are key to attracting foreign direct investment in South Asia, experts said.

Story on B4



BLOCKADE-STRIKE

Cargo transport slows, cost rises

DWAIPAYAN BARUA, Ctg

Transport of export and import cargo to and from the Chattogram port started to face disruptions while transport costs have started rising well before opposition parties began enforcing a countrywide two-day blockade yesterday.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) also called a dawn-to-dusk strike in Chattogram district yesterday which affected cargo movement to and from the port as well as private inland container depots (ICDs).

Most importers are preferring not to take delivery of their cargoes from the port during blockades to avoid any risk of damage by protesters.

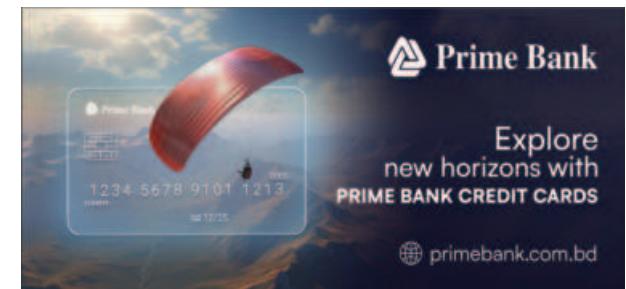
Transport of export cargo, particularly to the private ICDs here, from different parts of the country slowed a bit in the past 24 hours till yesterday morning.

According to Bangladesh Inland Container Depots Association (BICDA), the 19 private ICDs received 1,734 trucks or covered vans of export cargoes coming from Dhaka and other parts in the period.

It was 2,718 and 2,140 on the first two days of a three-day blockade enforced last week.

Several clearing and forwarding (C&F) agents alleged that the transport agencies are charging Tk 5,000 to Tk 8,000 higher citing risks of vandalism or arson attacks.

Dhaka-based garment manufacturer Far East Knitting and Dyeing Industry Limited apparently experienced the worst in this regard.



It imported around 100 tonnes of fabrics and other garment accessories from India for its factory in Gazipur and the cargoes were unloaded at the port a couple of days ago.

The factory owner wanted to take delivery of all the imported goods by Saturday prior to the blockade, but the C&F agent firm in Chattogram failed to hire an adequate number of covered vans by that morning.

READ MORE ON B2



Gold price hits new high

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Jewellers yesterday raised the price of 22-carat gold to Tk 104,626 per bhorti, a new high.

The new rate, up 1.7 percent from the previous high, will come into effect from today, the Bangladesh Jewellers Association (Bajus) said in a press release.

The rate was increased owing to a spike in pure gold prices, it said.

The previous high was hit on October 26 when the association set the price of the precious metal at Tk 102,876 a bhorti (11.664 grammes).

In July, the gold price crossed the Tk 100,000-mark for the first time.

Gold prices have been rising for more than a year influenced by hikes in the international market and volatility in the supply in the domestic market.

"The rate at which the price of gold is going up is quite worrying because sales are decreasing day by day," said Dewan Aminul Islam, vice president of the Bajus.

Although Bangladesh does not import any significant quantity of gold, its prices are almost linked with international trends.

Globally, spot gold rose 0.4 percent to \$1,994.28 per ounce on November 2, after hitting a session high of \$2,003.69, according to a Reuters article. It was higher than the \$1,650 seen in November last year but lower than the \$2,050 hit in May this year.

The price is expected to rise owing to the intensification of conflict in the Middle East.

In Bangladesh, the annual demand for gold stood between 20 tonnes and 40 tonnes. About 80 percent of the demand is met through smuggled gold.

Indian eggs finally arrive

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

The first imported consignment of eggs, which has become a much-talked item in recent months for high prices, entered Bangladesh yesterday.

Nearly 62,000 pieces of the protein item were brought into the country from India through Benapole land port.

The eggs arrived at the Benapole port in the evening. "We have already cleared the consignment," said Md Abdul Hakim, commissioner of Custom House, Benapole.

Custom House, Benapole Deputy Commissioner Othello Chowdhury said price of the imported eggs was quoted as \$2,956.40 as per invoice, meaning one dozen eggs cost 0.54 cents.

Accordingly, the price of each egg in Bangladesh stands at Tk 4.95.

READ MORE ON B3



Gold prices have been rising for more than a year influenced by hikes in the international market and volatility in supply in the domestic market.