

Fast fashion, fat margins

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year before. Vietnam, by comparison, received \$84.6 for the same product after a smaller price adjustment of just 6 percent.

SYSTEMIC UNDERVALUATION

A 2022 report by the International Trade Centre (ITC) underscored the pattern of systemic undervaluation of Bangladeshi garments.

Men's woven cotton trousers exported from Bangladesh earned an FoB price of \$7.01 per piece, which was 9.2 percent below the global average of \$7.72. Vietnam received \$10.76 for the same item, while Sri Lanka and India fetched \$8 and \$8.41.

Similarly, men's cotton jeans made in Bangladesh were sold at \$7.81 per piece, 7.2 percent below the global average of \$8.41, while Vietnamese jeans sold for \$11.55.

Even in niche categories like man-made fibre bras, Bangladesh was paid considerably less, with exporters earning \$3.19 per unit compared to Vietnam's \$6.06.

Only two Bangladeshi products -- women's cotton trousers and men's cotton T-shirts -- were sold at slightly above the global average.

Women's cotton trousers earned \$6.43 apiece, exceeding the world average of \$5.22 by 23.3 percent, while men's T-shirts fetched \$1.47, roughly 23.1 percent higher than the

global benchmark.

Still, these figures were dwarfed by the earnings of countries like Turkey and Peru, which received up to four times more for similar items.

According to the ITC, which has a joint mandate with the World Trade Organization and the United Nations, these pricing gaps represent an entrenched imbalance in the global supply chain.

Industry insiders say Bangladesh's quality has improved, but its bargaining power remains weak.

RETAILERS CITE HIGH OPERATIONAL COSTS

Ehsan, owner of Fatullah Apparels, said jackets and outerwear produced in Bangladesh, often sold to retailers at FoB prices ranging from \$20 to \$25, regularly appear in stores for \$100 to \$110.

He added that some of the world's richest individuals have built their fortunes in fashion retail, with Bangladesh as a key production hub.

The profit chain often stretches beyond the retailers themselves.

Md Fazlul Hoque, managing director of Plummy Fashions Ltd, pointed out that a significant share of Bangladesh's garment exports is managed by intermediaries or third-party importers, who also take a cut before the goods reach retail shelves.

"Sometimes we sell a T-shirt at \$3.50, and it ends up in a branded

store for \$39," Hoque said. "Of course, it doesn't stay at that price forever -- discounting comes in later, but the markup is still substantial."

He added that while pricing can vary across seasons and product categories, the general rule of thumb remains: most garments are sold at three to four times their FoB value.

However, a European retailer, on condition of anonymity, disputed the claims of excessive markups. "Those suggesting a substantial markup on Bangladeshi garment items are gravely mistaken," he said.

In the garment supply chain, a European retailer must rent large warehouses to store goods, which is quite costly," he said, adding that transportation expenses also factor in.

"Renting retail space is another major expense, and ultimately, retailers and brands can sell, at best, 70 percent of the goods from a single consignment," he said. "Once the season ends, unsold items can no longer be offered to customers."

The retailer said that European companies pay higher wages than their Asian counterparts, which also affects profit margins. "Ultimately, European retailers earn less than 10 percent profit annually. The claims of high markups are exaggerated."

CALL FOR FAIR PRICING
Apparel industry advocates

and multilateral organisations are increasingly urging retailers to adopt more equitable pricing models.

The ITC noted in its report that while apparel manufacturing has grown more complex, involving design, logistics, and branding, the actual cut-and-sew operations, which remain concentrated in countries like Bangladesh, continue to be the least rewarded.

Khondaker Golam Moazzem, research director at CPD, said that China and Vietnam are getting higher prices for their garments by utilising diverse fabrics and innovative product designs, despite sharing the same HS codes as Bangladesh.

In contrast, Bangladesh's garment exports are heavily reliant on just five or six products, accounting for 70 percent of its total exports. This concentration creates unhealthy competition, tempting local exporters to undercut prices, said Moazzem.

He also pointed out that the industry's heavy dependence on cotton and limited use of man-made fibres are also obstructing better prices.

Bringing in more foreign investment could be a viable solution, as foreign investors usually have access to upmarket buyers and advanced technologies," said the CPD research director.

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"Following the US tariff imposition, we have responded quickly and responsibly."

On facilitating cotton imports from the US, Rahman said a warehouse could be established in Bangladesh to streamline delivery. He also highlighted a long term LNG import deal with the US that is expected to boost bilateral trade by nearly \$1 billion.

"Imports of US origin goods via third countries should be recognised as direct imports in trade discussions," he added.

Mahbubur Rahman, president of the International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICCB), urged the government to continue negotiations and criticised the US for unilaterally imposing tariffs. "This contradicts WTO norms."

He also expressed concern over weak public private dialogue and suggested diversifying exports beyond traditional markets by focusing on Asia, the Middle East, and Africa.

Abul Kasem Khan, chairperson of Business Initiative Leading Development (BUILD), called for exploring a free trade agreement (FTA) with the US. "Policy support is essential for export diversification," he said, also urging the formulation of a strategic roadmap for tapping new markets.

Md Mezbui Haque, executive director of the Bangladesh Bank, said the recent US tariffs could spark a price war, forcing local industries to increase efficiency. "Our competitiveness is already under pressure due to high financing and energy costs," he said.

To support exporters, the central bank is offering Export Facilitation (EF) funds at a subsidised 5 percent interest rate, Haque added.

Masrur Reaz, chairman and CEO of the Policy Exchange Bangladesh, termed the US tariff action "more political than commercial". He criticised the government's limited response beyond a formal letter and urged a more informed, strategic approach.

"Our import demand for US origin cotton, soybean, and LNG is growing -- these must be included in bilateral talks," he said. Reaz also underlined the need to improve logistics, noting that Bangladesh's costs are significantly higher than those of regional peers.

Shams Mahmud, a former DCCI president, cautioned that higher US tariffs could reduce demand for Bangladeshi products, intensifying competition for export orders.

He reiterated the need to count

US-origin goods imported via third countries as direct imports during trade negotiations. Mahmud also called for urgent improvement in the business environment, particularly in ensuring uninterrupted power supply to industrial zones.

Razeen Haider, director of the Bangladesh Textile Mills Association, said textile production has dropped nearly 45 percent due to declining gas pressure in factories. He added that while US cotton is of premium quality, it is costly and takes over three months to arrive, which deters importers.

"If the US establishes warehouse facilities here, our cotton imports could increase fourfold," Haider suggested.

Taskeen Ahmed, president of the DCCI, described Bangladesh as standing at a "critical crossroads" shaped by shifting global trade dynamics. He called for urgent reforms, including trade facilitation improvements, exploring FTAs, boosting digital competitiveness, and enhancing skills development.

"To navigate this uncertain landscape, we need immediate and long term actions," Ahmed said. "Most importantly, a well-coordinated public-private partnership is essential to tackle tariff challenges without delay."

Must proceed

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The launch event of five new card services by Mercantile Bank, in association with Mastercard, in the capital.

"We are committed to encouraging digital transactions as much as possible, as they ensure greater transparency and traceability," Ahmed said.

He added that although digital adoption is growing, it is important to address the concerns people face, such as excessive questioning by banks, which often hinders broader participation.

Credit cards, in particular, play a crucial role in facilitating remittances and driving financial inclusion.

"I extend my best wishes to both Mercantile Bank and Mastercard for their continued efforts in advancing private sector development and promoting digital transformation in the financial ecosystem."

Mati Ul Hasan, managing director of Mercantile Bank PLC, stated that the initiative aligns with their broader goal of supporting Bangladesh's transition toward a cashless, digitally empowered society.

Import activities hampered

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and representatives of importers were seen standing with files in hand, waiting for officers who were absent.

As per regulations, no consignment can be cleared without assessment and examination by customs officials.

The strike has also brought operations at the Chattogram VAT office, export processing zone customs, and the customs bond commissionerate to a halt.

"Assessment and examination activities at the custom house have remained suspended due to the pending strike. No official is carrying out these duties," said Mohammad Saidul Islam, deputy commissioner of Chattogram Custom House.

However, export services and airport operations remain unaffected, he added.

reflect the views of all stakeholders, and properly value the expertise and experience of NBR officials and employees," he said.

At the briefing, NBR Reform Unity Council sincerely apologised for the temporary inconvenience caused to taxpayers and service seekers.

"We believe that this temporary sacrifice will play an active role in serving the greater interest of the country and its people, as well as in ensuring sustainable reform of the revenue system," said the platform's representatives.

"Additionally, we want to make it clear that, if our demands are met, we will work beyond regular office hours to complete any pending tasks," they said.

Based on the opinions of the general members, the unelected

executive committee of the BCS Taxation Association has been declared illegal and dissolved, according to the platform.

On the other hand, as almost all members of the Executive Committee of the BCS Customs and VAT Association have resigned, it has also become ineffective.

In a statement, BCS Taxation Association said all activities of the organisation have been suspended indefinitely.

As before, international passenger services, export activities, and preparations for the national budget will remain out of the purview of today's strike.

Protesting officials are expected to announce fresh programmes at a press conference scheduled to be held at 3pm.

Shams Mahmud, a former DCCI president, cautioned that higher US tariffs could reduce demand for Bangladeshi products, intensifying competition for export orders.

He reiterated the need to count

BANGLADESH GAS FIELDS COMPANY LIMITED

(A Company of Petrobangla)

Birashar, Brahmanbaria

"গ্যাস জাতীয় সম্পদ। এর অপচয় রোধ করে জাতীয় দায়িত্ব পালন করছে।"

নেতৃত্ব ও পক্ষতা
বাধান আনন পরিবার
জাতীয় পুরাতন কেল্প

Date : 17-05-2025

e-Tender Notice

Reference no. 28.10.1213.806.00.343.25

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গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার

সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর

উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়কের কার্যালয়

সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), মানিকগঞ্জ।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি

১. মন্ত্রনালয়/ বিভাগ	সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর
২. এজেন্সি	সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর, ঢাকা।
৩. সংগ্রহক স্বাক্ষর নাম	১। উপ-তত্ত্বাবধায়ক, সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), মানিকগঞ্জ।
৪. সংগ্রহক স্বাক্ষর জেলা	মানিকগঞ্জ।
৫. যে কাজের জন্য দরপত্র	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরে সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), মানিকগঞ্জ এবং নিবাসীদের বাস্তু ও খাদ্যানুষাঙ্গিক, শিক্ষা, বাস্তু প্রসারণী এবং বিবিধ আলাদাল সরবরাহ।
৬. দরপত্র নথি ও তারিখ	৮১,০১,৫,৬০০,০৩৭,০৭,০০৮,২৫-২৬
৭. দরপত্র প্রকারের তারিখ	তারিখ: ১৫/০৫/২০২৫ খ্রি।
৮. সংগ্রহ পক্ষতি	ত্বরিত দরপত্র পক্ষতি।
৯. বাস্তু ও তহবিলের উৎস	৩০টি/ ২০২৫-২০২৬।
১০. দরপত্রের প্রাক্কেজ নথির	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরে সমাজসেবা অধিদপ্তর পরিচালিত সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), মানিকগঞ্জ ('ক' পুরুষ- বাস্তু- খাদ্যানুষাঙ্গিক প্রক্রিয়ান ও সমন্বয়ী, 'খ' পুরুষ- বাস্তু, প্রসারণী এবং অন্যান্য সরবরাহ এবং 'গ' পুরুষ- বিবিধ আলাদাল সরবরাহ।
১১. দরপত্রের প্রাক্কেজের নাম	২০২৫-২০২৬ অর্থবছরে সমাজসেবা কার্যালয়, সরকারি শিশু পরিবার (বালিকা), মানিকগঞ্জ।
১২. দরপত্র সিডিউল বিক্রয়ের শেষ তারিখ ও সময়	১০/০৬/২০২৫ খ্রি।
১৩. দরপত্র দাখিলের তারিখ ও সময়	১০/০৬/২০২৫ খ্রি।
১৪. দরপত্র দাখিল করার সময়	১০/০৬/২০২৫ খ্রি।
১৫. কার্যালয়ের নাম ও ঠিকানা	ক. সুরক্ষা দলিল বিক্রয়। ক. সুরক্ষা দলিল বিক্রয়।
১৬. দরপত্রের প্রাক্কেজের স্থান	ক. সুরক্ষা দলিল বিক্রয়। ক. সুরক্ষা দলিল বিক্রয়।
১৭. দরপত্রের প্রাক্কেজের মূল্য	১০/০৬/২০২৫ খ্রি। সকাল ৯.০০ ঘটিকা হতে দুপুর ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।
১৮. দরপত্র দাখিল করার সময়	১০/০৬/২০২৫ খ্রি। বেলা ১০.০০ ঘটিকা দরপত্রাতা বা তার মনোনীত প