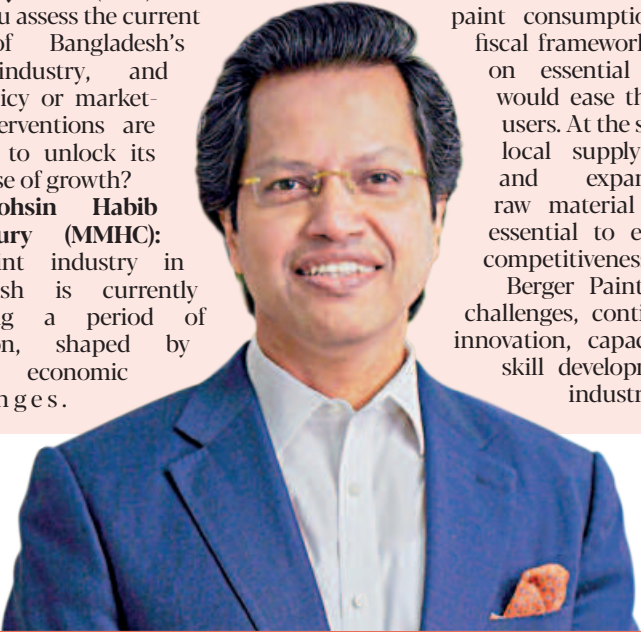


A Complete Solution for ALL YOUR PAINT NEEDS

The Daily Star (TDS): How would you assess the current state of Bangladesh's paint industry, and what policy or market-level interventions are essential to unlock its next phase of growth?

Md Mohsin Habib Chowdhury (MMHC): The paint industry in Bangladesh is currently navigating a period of stagnation, shaped by broader economic challenges.



MD MOHSIN HABIB CHOWDHURY
COO & Director, Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited

and real estate — key sectors that drive paint consumption. Revisiting the fiscal framework, especially duties on essential building inputs, would ease the burden on end-users. At the same time, building local supply chain resilience and expanding domestic raw material sourcing will be essential to enhance long-term competitiveness.

Berger Paints, despite various challenges, continues to invest in innovation, capacity building, and skill development to stimulate industry momentum.

A key pillar of this strategy is the Berger Experience Zone (BEZ) — a network of dedicated outlets that function as design consultation hubs, offering homeowners personalised and immersive painting experiences. Currently operating across 17 locations, with plans to expand to all 64 districts, these centres offer a unified platform for expert colour advice, surface evaluation, and access to our complete Express Painting Service. From shade selection and surface preparation to professional application using advanced tools, this service ensures a cleaner, faster, and high-quality finish for both walls and furniture. Additionally, customers can

to inclusive market leadership. In a diverse and evolving economy like Bangladesh, where purchasing power varies widely across consumer segments, the ability to serve both value-conscious buyers and discerning premium customers is central to long-term competitiveness. Berger addresses this through a carefully tiered portfolio that spans economy, mid-range, and high-end categories — each product line engineered to deliver performance and durability suited to local climate conditions and usage patterns.

Maintaining affordability, however, in the face of rising input costs — particularly from imported raw materials — requires operational discipline and innovation

flagship innovation, EcoCoat — South Asia's first anti-pollution paint. Developed with advanced Air Purifying Hybrid (APH) Technology, EcoCoat actively absorbs and neutralises harmful airborne pollutants such as CO₂, NO_x, SO_x, methane, hydrogen sulphide, and formaldehyde, thereby improving indoor air quality by up to 90%. The product is entirely lead-free and formulated with green-certified biocides, making it a safe and environmentally responsible choice for both interior and exterior applications.

Beyond this, Berger is leading a strategic transition towards safer, low-VOC, and APEO-free formulations. We are phasing

After experiencing negative growth in the previous fiscal year, the sector recorded a flat performance last year — a clear reflection of subdued demand. Persistent inflation, foreign exchange instability, import constraints, and policy uncertainty have collectively dampened investment appetite and delayed consumer spending, particularly on construction and home improvement.

The recent increase in Supplementary Duty on paints from 5% to 10% has further eroded affordability, while ongoing geopolitical tensions continue to raise the cost of raw materials and logistics. These factors have intensified pressure on operational margins and slowed overall industry momentum.

To stimulate recovery, a coordinated response is required. Stabilising the macroeconomic environment is critical, as is targeted policy support for construction

But for the sector to recover and thrive, a coordinated and forward-looking policy environment is imperative — one that enables businesses to operate with confidence and consumers to engage without hesitation.

TDS: How is your company responding to the growing demand for personalised and aesthetic paint solutions?

MMHC: Consumers are no longer simply purchasing paint — they are investing in meaningful experiences that express personal identity and elevate living spaces. The demand for personalisation, functionality, and design integrity is redefining the way homeowners and developers approach home improvement. In response, Berger Paints has evolved its value proposition beyond products to become a complete solutions provider, offering seamless, end-to-end services that combine aesthetic excellence with professional execution.

explore our Illusions range of designer textures at these centres — curated options that transform ordinary walls into striking accent features, enabling deeper expression of individual taste and spatial aesthetics.

In parallel, our Berger Design Studio (BDS) delivers comprehensive interior design services, guiding customers from vision to execution. Through BDS, we aim to democratise access to high-quality design by making it both affordable and aspirational. These integrated offerings reflect Berger's broader commitment to delivering not just products, but transformative experiences — empowering consumers to turn their homes into meaningful reflections of personal style and modern living.

TDS: How do you balance affordability and quality for different market segments?

MMHC: Affordability and quality are not opposing priorities — they are twin imperatives that define Berger's approach

across the value chain. To this end, Berger has implemented lean manufacturing practices, energy-efficient production systems, and optimised logistics frameworks to reduce overheads without compromising product integrity. We have also undertaken formulation re-engineering to incorporate locally sourced alternatives wherever feasible, allowing us to maintain consistent quality standards while insulating against global supply shocks.

TDS: What key innovations is your company prioritising to maintain a competitive edge in the rapidly evolving paint and home improvement sector?

MMHC: In an industry increasingly shaped by climate imperatives and conscious consumer behaviour, we are reimagining not only what paint can do, but what it should stand for — as a product, a process, and a platform for responsible progress.

At the forefront of this vision is our

out non-green preservatives and replacing solvent-based paints with water-based alternatives that reduce carbon footprint and support healthier indoor environments.

This commitment extends across operations. Berger has launched a circularity initiative that converts Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) sludge into raw material for bricks, supporting waste minimisation and the circular economy.

We also recognise that innovation must empower people, not just products. The Berger Training Institute (BTI) was established to professionalise the painting application sector in Bangladesh and uplift associated livelihoods.

To expand impact and reach, BTI has partnered with BRAC, Save the Children, BMET, Probash Bondhu Limited, and the World Bank's ASSET project to offer migrant-bound crash courses preparing painters for overseas employment opportunities.

Inside Bangladesh's Burgeoning Paint Industry



construction and home improvement.”

Still, the broader picture remains one of resilience. The industry, composed of some 42 local firms and five multinational giants, now generates over BDT 100 crore in annual revenue and directly supports employment across the value chain—from factory floors to retail showrooms and painter communities.

The paint sector as a whole produces nearly 33 crore litres of paint annually, with industrial applications accounting for 65 percent and domestic use for the remaining 35 percent.

The sector's strength lies not just in quantity, but in its ability to innovate. Companies are pushing the boundaries of what paint can do—introducing eco-friendly formulas, AI-based shade recommendations, and immersive digital tools for home customisation.

“Innovation at Berger is deeply rooted in our commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship,” adds Chowdhury. “It's about offering value beyond the product.”

That sentiment is echoed by others in the field. Shayaan Seraj, Director of Aqua Paints, part of the Elite Group, explains how technology is reshaping customer experience: “Our InstaColor machines offer thousands of shades, with AI-driven mood and lighting suggestions. We provide on-site sampling, 2D/3D mock-ups, and even textured finishes like exposed brick to cater to contemporary interior trends.”

But painting walls isn't just about

what's in the can. It's also about the hands that apply it. That's why companies are increasingly investing in the professional development of painters—offering training in techniques, safety, and even colour psychology.

“At Dulux, we're going beyond product sales,” says Syed Salahuddin Abu Naser, Business Director of Dulux Paints Bangladesh under ACI Formulations. “We train painters and contractors not just in application but in providing aesthetic guidance—so that from mixing to finishing, expertise is embedded at every stage.”

Despite the enthusiasm, challenges loom large. The industry is highly import-dependent, with nearly all raw materials sourced internationally. That makes it vulnerable to global price fluctuations and currency crises—issues that have intensified over the past two years.

Another concern is market maturity. With per capita paint consumption still hovering around 1.4 kilograms—well below neighbouring countries—companies are focusing on affordability to drive volume.

“We maintain a tiered product portfolio to serve every income group,” says Budhaditya Mukherjee, Regional Head of Asian Paints International. “From economy emulsions to premium finishes, our commitment to quality remains constant.”

While most of the current production serves local

demand, there are growing ambitions to turn Bangladesh into a regional manufacturing hub for paints and coatings. Some firms are already gearing up for export.

“We've got the infrastructure to serve both domestic and industrial segments—whether it's powder coating for machinery or colour for living rooms,” says R. N. Paul, Managing Director of RFL Group, which owns Rainbow Paints. “We're optimistic that Bangladesh can become a global supplier in the near future.”

Meanwhile, Nippon Paint Bangladesh is blending Japanese precision with local relevance. “We see this market as dynamic and full of potential,” says Rajesh Sircar, the company's General Manager. “Our role is to empower people to realise their dream spaces—whether through colour, protection, or inspiration.”

As Bangladesh continues to build upwards and outwards, the paints and coatings industry remains a quiet but critical partner—adding more than just colour to the nation's development. It adds confidence, creativity, and a finishing touch to the country's growth story.

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Though officially classified as a luxury item, paint is no longer seen as a mere aesthetic add-on. It has become essential to modern construction—shielding structures from the elements, improving longevity, and defining the character of homes and workplaces alike.

That evolution is no accident. As Bangladesh strides toward middle-income status, spurred by rapid urbanisation, infrastructure megaprojects, and a property boom, the demand for paints has surged. Or at least, it did—until recently.

“We're now navigating a period of stagnation,” says Md Mohsin Habib Chowdhury, Chief Operating Officer of Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited and President of the Bangladesh Paint Manufacturers Association. “Last year we saw flat growth following a negative trend the previous fiscal year. Persistent inflation, foreign exchange instability, import constraints, and policy uncertainty have all combined to delay consumer spending—especially in

KEY STATISTICS

Total market size of paint and coating industry
BDT 6,000 crore

Annual growth
6 %

Per capita consumption
1.4 litres

Annual total production
33 crore litres

