



Supply chain revolution expanding Bangladesh's access to global retail markets

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AKM FAHIM MASHROOR

With fertile lands and a rich agricultural heritage, Bangladesh produces food products like rice, lentils, oil seeds, spices, tropical fruits, and ready-to-consume snacks. Historically, much of this produce has been consumed domestically, with limited processed exports. The biggest setback Bangladeshi producers and exporters have faced is the same old supply chain issue. Lack of knowledge, unfriendly government authorities and policies have been holding back entrepreneurs from reaching out to the global market with our homegrown commodities.

With the help of structured, reliable export channels, Bangladesh has the opportunity to scale up its agricultural exports, creating value for farmers, entrepreneurs, and the economy at large. Government figures show that Bangladesh wastes over 3.7 million tonnes of food yearly due to poor storage, transportation, and distribution. Redirecting even a fraction of this wastage into export channels through integrated platforms could yield significant foreign exchange and reduce domestic market pressure.

For instance, the Gulf region, home to millions of South Asian expatriates and a rapidly diversifying consumer base presents a lucrative and largely untapped opportunity.

Demand for regional food and other commodities is growing in countries like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, driven by both the diaspora and local consumers' eagerness to explore diverse cuisines. Reflecting this growing demand, Bangladeshi firms secured \$34.5 million in confirmed orders and held discussions for an additional \$29.1 million in potential exports at the recent Gulf Food Fair, held in Dubai, last February. This highlights the region's strong appetite for Bangladeshi products.

Many ventures have tried to export Bangladeshi goods to the global market till now but have been undone by the most important issue of international and continental business, supply chain management. For instance, Aadi shop BD was a popular name for getting Bangladeshi products worldwide. This business became popular during the COVID-19 era but fell short of gaining traction due to third-party suppliers like FedEx and restrictions made during the pandemic. For these reasons, getting products from self-motivated exporters with an internally managed supply chain is the last resort for non-resident Bangladeshis.

In this context, ShopUp is connecting small retailers directly with farmers, mills, and manufacturers, helping to streamline supply chains and improve domestic distribution

efficiency. The distribution network and supply chain management employ more than seven thousand people and serve over 3.1 crore people across Bangladesh. The recent merger with Saudi Arabia's B2B platform Sary to form SILQ aims to expand into the fast-growing Gulf region, which features high income levels, a young population, and strong smartphone usage.

As part of this merger, a direct distribution channel to the Saudi market has been created, allowing Bangladeshi goods to reach retail shelves directly, beyond just arriving at ports. SILQ aims to boost cross-border trade by linking Bangladeshi producers with other Gulf and South Asian markets too by removing export barriers such as bureaucratic delays and pricing challenges. This initiative is designed to support the global growth of small and medium-sized businesses and build a modern, transparent, and efficient international trade ecosystem.

The impact of these types of ventures can be significantly effective. One such story is that of Hafizur Rahman, a Bangladeshi expatriate entrepreneur who used the platform to export muri (puffed rice) to Saudi Arabia. Hafizur has created a puffed rice brand named "Anaas", named after his elder son and successfully established it in

Saudi Arabia. Currently, this brand is very popular among Bangladeshi migrants and already competing with other major puffed rice brands in the Saudi market.

This story shows how Bangladeshi producers, no matter how small, can now look beyond borders and sell directly to international markets with the help of digital platforms and streamlined distribution. It also breaks the stereotype that exports require massive capital or access to elite networks. With more platforms like this, products and businesses will go international based on product quality and demand rather than political or bureaucratic influence.

However, to fully realise this potential, it's important to acknowledge the regulatory hurdles, quality control issues, and export readiness challenges that many small producers still face. With the enthusiasm of entrepreneurial Bangladeshi youth, anything can be achievable if the right policy support is done. A collaborative framework between government agencies, business platforms, and international partners could dramatically accelerate Bangladesh's emergence as a competitive agricultural and industrial exporter.

The author is the Founder and CEO of BDjobs.com.

JOBS SPOTLIGHT

Banglalink

Business Development Manager, Toffee

Deadline: July 3

Eligibility:

• BBA/ BSc and/ or MBA/ MS/ Arts from a reputed university with majors in Marketing/ Finance/ Computer Science/ Business Policy & Strategy.

Minimum experience: 5-7 years



BRAC-Aarong

Officer, Capacity Building, Social Compliance and Producer Development

Deadline: July 3

Eligibility:

• Bachelor's degree from a reputed university (preferably in BBA with a concentration in HRM, Marketing, Accounting, or Finance)

Minimum experience: 1-2 years



Healthcare

Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

System Admin, MIS

Deadline: July 5

Eligibility:

• BSc in Computer Science and Engineering (CSE) or any equivalent degree from a reputed university with prior experience in a similar role.

Minimum experience: 3 years



Helen Keller Intl. Bangladesh

MEAL Officer

Deadline: July 6

Eligibility:

• Master's degree preferably in Statistics, Business Administration, or Development Studies. Having a Masters in Public Health is an advantage.

Minimum experience: 5 years



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Nvidia insiders sold over \$1 bln in stock amid surge: report

NEXT STEP DESK

Nvidia insiders have sold more than \$1 billion worth of company stock over the past year, with over half of those sales occurring in June as the chipmaker's shares reached record highs, according to a recent Financial Times report. The selling activity comes as Nvidia's market valuation recently surpassed Microsoft to become the world's most valuable company.

CEO Jensen Huang began selling shares this week for the first time since September, regulatory filings show, according to a Reuters report on the matter. The sales coincide with Nvidia's stock rebounding more than 60% from its April low, when markets reacted to global tariff announcements. The chipmaker's shares hit an all-time high last Wednesday after analysts predicted the company would benefit from a "golden wave" of artificial intelligence adoption.

While insider sales are common, the scale and timing of these transactions highlight how Nvidia executives are capitalising on the AI investment boom that has driven the company's valuation to historic levels, suggests the Reuters report. The stock's recovery reflects renewed market optimism that potential trade deals may mitigate earlier tariff concerns.



Time management essentials for new employees

SHAMS RASHID TONMOY

Starting a new job brings excitement and nerves in equal measure, often accompanied by that nagging question: "How will I get everything done?" Effective time management isn't about working harder - it's about working smarter. Here's how to hit the ground running without running yourself ragged.

Work with your body clock

Your brain isn't wired for peak performance all day long. Each of us has natural energy highs and lows - maybe you're razor-sharp first thing in the morning, or perhaps your best ideas flow after lunch. The key is to identify these personal productivity peaks and schedule your most demanding work during these golden hours while saving routine tasks for when your energy dips.

Research supports this approach - a Harvard Business Review study found that employees who strategically align tasks with their natural rhythms can reclaim up to 20% of their workweek (that's nearly an entire day) by focusing on high-value work during peak performance windows. It's not about working longer hours but working smarter by respecting your body's natural ebb and flow.

Master the art of prioritisation

Not all tasks are created equal. Use the Eisenhower Matrix to sort your workload: urgent/important tasks demand immediate attention; important but not urgent tasks go on your calendar; urgent but unimportant tasks should be delegated when possible; and anything that's neither can likely be dropped entirely. This simple system can reduce work stress by 30% while ensuring you're always focusing on what truly moves the needle.

Control your inbox

Constant email checking fractures concentration. Try checking messages just three times daily - morning, after lunch, and before leaving. Turn off notifications when focusing. You should be able to save up to 90 minutes daily by doing

this. Think of your email like scheduled office hours - you wouldn't let colleagues interrupt you randomly all day, so why let your inbox?

Take proper breaks

Resist the temptation to power through without stopping. The Pomodoro Technique (25 minutes work, 5 minutes rest) improves focus, especially when learning new information. Always take a proper lunch break - it boosts afternoon productivity by 30%.

Set healthy boundaries

While eager to impress, overcommitting leads to burnout. Instead of tackling everything at once, try: "I want to do this justice - could we revisit next week?" Employees who set healthy boundaries early not only protect their well-being but are more likely to receive promotions within the first two years. Remember, saying no to the wrong opportunities is how you ultimately say yes to the right ones.

Use existing tools well

Before chasing shiny new apps, master the tools you already have. Your company's calendar system is a hidden productivity powerhouse - learn to block focus time like a pro, colour-code different work streams, and set smart reminders for deadlines. Think of it like learning to drive a car properly before worrying about the stereo system.

Weekly reflection

Before wrapping up each week, invest just 15 minutes to review your progress. Ask yourself: Which tasks took longer than expected? When was I most productive? This simple habit - what productivity experts call the "weekly review" - not only accelerates your professional growth but also helps you better prepare for the coming week.

Remember, no one expects perfection from day one. Time management is a learned skill - what matters is showing consistent improvement. Implement these strategies gradually, and you'll soon find your rhythm at work. By focusing on these fundamentals, you'll transition from an overwhelmed newcomer to a valued team member with impressive efficiency.



Meta poaches more OpenAI researchers: report

NEXT STEP DESK

Meta Platforms, the parent company of Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram, is reportedly hiring four additional artificial intelligence researchers from OpenAI, according to a Saturday report by The Information. The latest recruits—Shengjia Zhao, Jiahui Yu, Shuchao Bi, and Hongyu Ren—will join Meta's AI division as the company expands its artificial intelligence capabilities.

The move follows Meta's recent hiring of three other OpenAI Zurich-based researchers—Lucas Beyer, Alexander Kolesnikov, and Xiaohua Zhai—as first

reported by The Wall Street Journal earlier last week. These personnel changes come as Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg prioritises building advanced AI systems, including his recently announced "superintelligence" initiative, suggests a report by Reuters on the matter.

The Information cited an unnamed source familiar with the matter, though Reuters could not independently verify the report. If confirmed, these hires would represent a significant expansion of Meta's AI research team as the company seeks to compete with OpenAI and other leaders in artificial intelligence development.

BIDA launches redesigned investor-centric website

The Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) launched a redesigned version of its official website on June 28, aiming to enhance investor experience and strengthen the country's investment narrative.

According to a press release by BIDA, the upgraded platform includes detailed insights into high-potential sectors identified through BIDA's Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Heatmap. It also offers improved navigation to key services, policy guidance, and designated focal points across ministries and agencies - serving both prospective and



existing investors. As part of the institutional refresh, BIDA has also introduced a revamped logo reflecting its renewed focus on its modern investor-oriented vision.