

WALTON AIMS TO LEAD SUSTAINABLE

Green Industrial Revolution

MD. TANVIR ANJUM

Senior Executives Director & Business Coordinator to MD, Walton Hi-Tech Industries PLC.



The Daily Star (TDS): What specific green practices or innovations helped your factory secure the Green Factory Award 2025?

Tanvir Anjum (TA): At Walton, sustainability isn't just a checkbox—it's a guiding principle that runs through the heart of our operations. Securing the Green Factory Award 2025 is a true honour for us, and it reflects the collective effort of our teams, especially the EHS department, which has worked relentlessly to embed environmental consciousness throughout the organisation.

One of the key milestones has been the installation of our 6.5 megawatt rooftop solar plant, which is already generating renewable power for our operations. But we're not stopping there—we aim to expand this to 50 megawatts by 2026. It's an ambitious goal, but one we're fully committed to.

We've also made significant strides in energy efficiency by deploying technologies such as BLDC fans, inverter-based ACs, LED lighting, and motion-sensor systems. These small changes, when scaled across an industrial footprint, have a substantial impact.

Considering our strong commitment to achieving the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Walton adopted the 'Goal Zero' initiative, which implies zero harm to people, the environment, and property, as well as zero net carbon emissions. Thus, we have integrated green manufacturing practices. As part of this integration, several projects have been implemented—and others are ongoing—in coordination with UNDP. We have already completely phased out the use of CFC

and HCFC gases in refrigerators and air conditioners. By using low-global-warming refrigerants like R600a, we have reduced over 330,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions.

Another area we've focused on is waste and resource management. Every year, we recycle over 8,000 tonnes of plastic and safely dispose of more than 62,000 units of e-waste. Our effluent treatment plants processes more than 330 million litres of wastewater annually, with a 75% reuse rate. That's not just sustainability—it's smart business.

We've also digitalised many of our processes, significantly reducing paper usage—saving the equivalent of over 15,000 trees. All of these initiatives are backed by international certifications such as ISO 14001, ISO 45001, and LEED, which validate our commitment to global environmental standards.

TDS: How has embracing green practices benefited Walton as a company?

TA: It's had a transformative impact—operationally, environmentally, and culturally.

On the operational front, shifting to solar power and optimising water reuse through our ETP system has led to notable reductions in utility costs. These are smart investments with long-term savings. Environmentally, we've significantly cut emissions by using low-GWP refrigerants like R600a, R32, and R410a, and by recycling thousands of tonnes of plastic, metal, and e-waste every year.

These efforts haven't gone unnoticed. Nationally, we've been recognised with the Green Factory Award in both 2023 and 2025, the UNDP SDG Brand Champion Award

2025, the Excellence in ESG Investment Award, and the National Environment Award 2018—each reflecting our leadership in sustainable manufacturing.

Internationally, we've received the British Safety Council International Safety Award and the RoSPA International Safety Award—both highly regarded recognitions of our workplace safety standards and environmental risk management on a global scale.

But perhaps the most meaningful change is internal. These achievements have created a deep sense of pride among our workforce. Employees know they're contributing to a purpose-driven organisation—and that pride translates into stronger performance, innovation, and long-term commitment. For us, sustainability has become a competitive edge as well as a responsibility.

TDS: What challenges did you face while implementing these sustainable practices?

TA: Like any meaningful transformation, it wasn't easy. The first major hurdle was financial. Installing rooftop solar systems, setting up high-capacity effluent treatment plants, and integrating smart energy systems required significant capital investment. These were not decisions we took lightly—but we knew they were essential for the long term.

Another challenge was technical know-how. Many of the green technologies we adopted weren't readily available in the local context, so we had to invest in training and international collaboration. Upskilling our teams was crucial to ensure we could operate and maintain these systems effectively.

Realigning our supply chain was also

complex. Finding vendors who aligned with our sustainability standards for raw materials, packaging, and components required strategic evaluation and strong collaboration. Navigating the regulatory landscape—with its layers of environmental compliance and clearance processes—was complex, but we approached it systematically. With a clear roadmap and unwavering focus, we were able to address these challenges effectively and move forward with confidence.

TDS: What are your plans for expanding Walton's green initiatives?

TA: Our vision is bold—we want Walton to set the benchmark for green industrial transformation, not just in Bangladesh, but across the region.

In the short term, we are laser-focused on expanding our solar power generation to 50 megawatts. At the same time, we're upgrading our water recycling infrastructure to reach 100% reuse of treated wastewater.

We're also working towards electrifying our internal logistics—replacing fossil fuel-based vehicles with electric ones. And we're scaling up our contributions to carbon and plastic credit programmes to further integrate into the circular economy.

On the product side, our R&D team is actively designing more energy-efficient appliances, with a focus on eco design principles—considering environmental impact from the very beginning of the product lifecycle.

We're also committed to process digitalisation, automation, and real-time ESG monitoring. These are not just efficiency tools; they are enablers of responsible

industrial growth.

TDS: What kind of government or policy support would help you scale your green efforts further?

TA: To truly scale industrial sustainability in Bangladesh, we need strategic government backing.

First, we'd welcome green investment incentives—such as low-interest loans, tax rebates, and subsidies specifically for renewable energy, water reuse, and recycling initiatives. These would not only support businesses like ours but also encourage more industries to follow suit.

Secondly, we need streamlined regulatory processes. Obtaining environmental clearances and certifications is often slow and complex. Time-bound, transparent procedures would significantly accelerate green implementation without compromising environmental integrity.

We also encourage the formation of public-private partnerships focused on green innovation, as well as national-level investment in workforce training for environmental management and compliance.

And finally, we'd strongly advocate for a comprehensive national e-waste policy—to ensure industries adopting circular models are supported and rewarded, and that we have a level playing field.

With the right support, Bangladesh can emerge as a global leader and a role model in sustainable manufacturing—and at Walton, we're proud to be part of that mission. In fact, "Walton—Impacting the Community, Impacting the Future, Impacting You."

Greener, Efficient and WORKER-FRIENDLY FACTORY

MAJOR MD MOTAHER HOSSAIN, (RETD)

DGM (Head of HR and Admin), KDS Textile Mills Ltd



The Daily Star (TDS): What specific green practices or innovations helped your factory secure the Green Factory Award 2025?

Md Motaher Hossain (MMH): At KDS Textile Division, we have implemented a wide range of green practices that contributed to us receiving the Green Factory Award 2025. In terms of energy efficiency, we use renewable energy sources such as solar panels, wind, and biogas. We have installed high-efficiency lighting systems including LED lights, and we use energy-efficient machinery combined with automation.

To manage our energy consumption, we operate with energy monitoring and management systems across our facilities.

In the area of water conservation, we have established rainwater harvesting systems, along with technologies that allow us to recycle and reuse water. Low-flow fixtures are installed throughout our operations to reduce water consumption, and we operate on-site wastewater treatment plants (ETPs) to ensure responsible water discharge.

Our waste management strategy is based on the principles of reduce, reuse, and recycle. We have systems in place for the safe disposal of hazardous waste and composting of organic waste to ensure nothing goes to landfill unnecessarily.

To improve air quality and control emissions, we use low-emission fuels and clean technologies. We also have systems for controlling dust and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), along with proper ventilation and air filtration infrastructure.

Our building design follows eco-friendly standards. We use sustainable construction materials and have integrated LEED

certification criteria. Our facilities include proper insulation, natural lighting systems, and passive cooling designs. We have also introduced green roofing and rooftop gardens as part of our sustainability efforts.

Worker health and safety is a major component of our sustainability vision. We ensure good indoor air quality and maintain ergonomic workplace designs. We've taken measures to reduce noise levels and ensure safe use of machinery. In addition, we provide worker-friendly amenities such as canteens, rest areas, and medical facilities.

We have also secured several environmental certifications, including ISO 14001, LEED, and IFC EDGE, demonstrating our compliance with both national and international green standards. Sustainability monitoring and reporting are conducted regularly through environmental audits, carbon footprint tracking, and transparent public reporting of our environmental performance.

TDS: How has adopting green practices benefited your company?

MMH: Adopting green practices has resulted in significant benefits for our company. From a cost-saving perspective, improved energy efficiency has reduced our electricity and fuel expenses, while our water conservation measures have lowered utility costs. Our efforts in waste reduction and recycling have also cut down on disposal fees and raw material costs.

Our brand image and public reputation have also improved. More and more customers prefer eco-friendly brands, and by demonstrating environmental

responsibility, we have strengthened public trust, increased customer loyalty, and improved our marketability. Certifications such as LEED and ISO 14001 have helped us stand out in a competitive marketplace.

Environmentally sustainable operations have also given us a competitive advantage by helping us attract eco-conscious clients and investors. These practices have opened doors to green markets and allowed us to qualify for government contracts that require sustainability credentials.

We have also benefited by staying ahead of environmental regulations, reducing the risk of penalties, legal action, or shutdowns due to non-compliance. Internally, a clean and green workplace has contributed to better employee health, morale, and productivity. We have found that this helps us attract and retain talent, especially among younger professionals who prioritise sustainability in their workplaces.

Moreover, implementing green initiatives has spurred innovation and efficiency across our operations. These practices often lead to process improvements and encourage creative problem-solving. We are also developing new sustainable products and services that align with global demand.

Ultimately, all of these actions support our long-term sustainability goals by conserving natural resources and reducing our exposure to climate-related risks and supply chain disruptions.

TDS: What challenges did you face in implementing sustainable practices?

MMH: The most significant challenge was the high initial investment required.

Installing solar panels, energy-efficient machinery, and water treatment systems demanded considerable capital, which made decision-making difficult at the outset.

Another challenge was the lack of awareness and expertise. Many employees did not fully understand the long-term benefits of sustainability, and we faced a shortage of skilled professionals or consultants to support the implementation process.

There was also some resistance to change. Employees and even some members of management were reluctant to move away from traditional practices due to concerns about disrupting current operations or harming short-term profitability. However, with patience and consistent communication, we managed to overcome these barriers.

TDS: What are your plans for further expanding and strengthening green initiatives within your operations?

MMH: We have several plans in place to strengthen our green initiatives. We aim to plant more trees within our premises and expand our rainwater harvesting systems. We are planning to install additional solar panels to further increase our reliance on renewable energy.

We also plan to provide more targeted training programmes for our employees, ensuring that sustainability practices are well understood and embedded across the workforce. Increasing awareness among staff about the importance of maintaining green practices will remain a core part of our environmental strategy moving forward.

TDS: What kind of policy or institutional support would you like to see from the government to help scale up your green efforts?

MMH: Government support is crucial if we are to scale our green initiatives meaningfully. Tax incentives would be particularly helpful. For instance, tax deductions or exemptions for investments in energy-efficient machinery, solar panels, and rainwater harvesting systems would encourage more companies to adopt green practices. We also recommend reduced import duties on green technologies.

In terms of financing, subsidised loans or grants from government banks for green upgrades would be highly beneficial. Establishing Green Investment Funds or public-private partnerships could also provide a much-needed financial cushion for industries willing to transition.

We believe the government should establish clear national standards for waste management, energy efficiency, emission limits, and resource usage. It should also mandate Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for all new factories or significant expansions.

To address the skills gap, the creation of technical training centres would be immensely valuable. These centres could offer vocational programmes in sustainable manufacturing, environmental engineering, and green supply chain management. Collaborations with universities and NGOs to support research and development in green technologies would also help promote innovation in this space.