

Coatings for a NEW ERA

Bangladesh's paint industry has undergone a radical transformation over the last two decades, evolving from a seasonal, functional trade into a sophisticated, Tk 6,000-crore industrial pillar. As the nation moves toward a USD 500 billion economy, the demand for high-performance coatings is surging. However, while the industry's trajectory remains upward, it is currently navigating a complex landscape of macroeconomic volatility, shifting consumer aspirations, and a critical drive toward local value addition.

TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

Despite its rapid development, Bangladesh's paint market is characterised by significant "under-penetration." While regional peers like India and Sri Lanka record per-capita paint consumption above 3 kg, and ASEAN markets reach up to 8 kg, Bangladesh remains below the 2 kg mark. This gap represents a massive growth runway for manufacturers.

"Bangladesh is not over-consuming paint; rather, it is still under-consuming an essential protective material," says Md. Mohsin Habib Chowdhury, COO & Director of Berger Paints Bangladesh Limited. He emphasises that as only one-third of the population currently lives in urban areas, the bulk of the country's housing and infrastructure-led demand is still ahead. "Paint is often seen only as a decorative product, whereas in reality, it safeguards buildings, machinery, and infrastructure from corrosion, erosion, and

long-term deterioration."

This shift in perspective, from aesthetics to protection, is driving the industry's expansion into specialised segments like marine coatings, industrial powder coatings, and textile chemicals.

NAVIGATING MACROECONOMIC HEADWINDS

The industry's growth, however, has not been without friction. The sector is currently grappling with high import dependence, exchange-rate volatility, and rising raw material costs. Paint manufacturing relies heavily on imported resins, pigments, and additives, making it vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions.

The pressure is further compounded by recent policy changes, including the increase of supplementary duty on locally manufactured paints from 5 per cent to 10 per cent. Industry leaders

argue that such measures treat paint as a luxury rather than a necessity for asset preservation.

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