সমকাল

19 OCT 2025

আলুর ব্যবহার ও রপ্তানি বাড়াতে আন্তর্জাতিক প্রদর্শনী

সমকাল প্রতিবেদক

▶ দেশে প্রথমবারের মতো এ ধরনের আয়োজন করা হচ্ছে

▶ ঢাকায় ১২ ও ১৩ ডিসেম্বর অনুষ্ঠিত হবে

দেশে গত ২০২৪-২৫ মৌসুমে আলু উৎপাদন হয়েছে এক কোটি ৩০ লাখ টন, যা চাহিদার তুলনায় ৪০ লাখ টন বেশি। চাহিদার অতিরিক্ত আলুর যথাযথ ব্যবহারের ব্যবস্থা না থাকায় ক্ষতির মুখে পড়েছেন কৃষক। হিমাগার খরচসহ ২৫ টাকায় প্রতি কেজি উৎপাদনের বিপরীতে বিক্রি করছেন ১২ থেকে ১৩ টাকা। উদ্বৃত্ত আলুর বহুবিধ ব্যবহার, সঠিক সংরক্ষণ, প্রক্রিয়াজাতকরণ এবং রপ্তানি বাড়াতে দেশে প্রথমবারের মতো দুই দিনব্যাপী আলুর আন্তর্জাতিক প্রদর্শনী করতে যাচ্ছেন হিমাগার মালিকরা। রাজধানীর ইন্টারন্যাশনাল কনভেনশন সিটি বসুন্ধরায় (আইসিসিবি) আগামী ১২ থেকে ১৩ ডিসেম্বর অনুষ্ঠিত হবে 'আলু উৎসব ২০২৫' নামে প্রদর্শনী। বাংলাদেশ কোল্ডস্টোরেজ অ্যাসোসিয়েশন (বিসিএসএ) সূত্রে এ তথ্য জানা গেছে।

বিসিএসএ জানিয়েছে, প্রদর্শনীর মাধ্যমে নতুন ব্যবসায়িক সুযোগ সৃষ্টি হবে। শিল্প খাতে পারস্পরিক সহযোগিতা বাড়বে এবং জাতীয় ও আন্তর্জাতিক পর্যায়ে আলু রপ্তানির সম্ভাবনা আরও জোরদার হবে। আন্তর্জাতিক বাজারের চাহিদা ও মান নিয়ন্ত্রণের নিয়ম সম্পর্কে জানা যাবে। আলুর উচ্চফলনশীল জাত, জলবায়ু সহনশীল চাষাবাদ পদ্ধতি এবং আলু চাষের জৈব কলাকৌশল, আধুনিক কোল্ডস্টোরেজ, সৌরশক্তিচালিত সংরক্ষণ মডেল এবং দীর্ঘ সময় আলু ভালো রাখার প্যাকেজিং প্রযুক্তি, অটোমেশন, রোবটিকস ও সাপ্লাই চেইন ব্যবস্থাপনায় ব্লকচেইন সম্পর্কে ধারণা পাওয়া যাবে।

খাতসংশ্লিষ্টরা জানান, আলু উৎপাদনে বিশ্বে বাংলাদেশ সপ্তম। কিন্তু সঠিক সংরক্ষণ, প্রক্রিয়াজাতকরণ এবং রপ্তানির যথাযথ অবকাঠামো ও নীতিমালা না থাকায় এ খাতের পূর্ণ সম্ভাবনা কাজে লাগানো যাচ্ছে না। বিশাল সম্ভাবনা বাস্তবে রূপ দিতে এবং কৃষক, উদ্যোক্তা ও শিল্পপ্রতিষ্ঠানগুলোকে আন্তর্জাতিক প্ল্যাটফর্ম দেওয়ার জন্যই প্রথমবারের মতো আয়োজন হচ্ছে 'আলু উৎসব ২০২৫'। এতে সহযোগিতা করছে বাণিজ্য মন্ত্রণালয়, কৃষি মন্ত্রণালয়, বিসিএসএ, বাংলাদেশ এগ্রো-প্রসেসরস অ্যাসোসিয়েশন (বাপা) এবং অন্যান্য অংশীদার সংস্থা।

বিসিএসএর সভাপতি মোস্তফা আজাদ চৌধুরী সমকালকে বলেন, আলু শুধু একটি সবজি নয়; বরং এটি শিল্প ও রপ্তানির একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ উপাদান। এ সম্পর্কে সচেতনতা তৈরি প্রদর্শনীর অন্যতম উদ্দেশ্য। এ ছাড়া আলু উৎপাদন থেকে প্যাকেজিং পর্যন্ত সব পর্যায়ে আধুনিক প্রযুক্তি ও যন্ত্রপাতির সমাহার থাকবে। প্রদর্শনীর মাধ্যমে কৃষক, রপ্তানিকারক, প্রক্রিয়াজাতকরণ শিল্পের উদ্যোক্তা, প্রযুক্তি সরবরাহকারী এবং বিদেশি ক্রেতাদের মধ্যে বাণিজ্যিক সম্পর্ক স্থাপন করা হবে। দেশের আলু প্রক্রিয়াজাত শিল্প এবং কোল্ড চেইন অবকাঠামোতে দেশি ও বিদেশি বিনিয়োগ উৎসাহিত করার চেষ্টা থাকবে। তিনি বলেন, যথাযথ নীতি গ্রহণ করা হলে আলুর বহুবিধ ব্যবহার বাড়ানো সম্ভব। এতে উৎপাদিত আলু নষ্ট বা অপচয় হবে না। বিকল্প কাজে ব্যবহারের মাধ্যমে চাষির লোকসান কমানো সম্ভব হবে।

বিসিএসএ সূত্রে জানা গেছে, রেকর্ড পরিমাণ আলু উৎপাদন হওয়ার কারণে এবার প্রচুর আলু অবিক্রীত থাকার শঙ্কা রয়েছে। গত ৩০ সেপ্টেম্বর পর্যন্ত দেশের ৩৪০টি কোল্ডস্টোরেজে সংরক্ষিত আলুর পরিমাণ ছিল ৩২ লাখ ৭৪ হাজার টন। এর মধ্যে খাওয়ার আলুর পরিমাণ ২৩ লাখ ৩০ হাজার টন, বীজ আলু ৯ লাখ ২০ হাজার টন এবং শিল্পে ব্যবহারের আলু ২৩ হাজার টন।

The Financial Express

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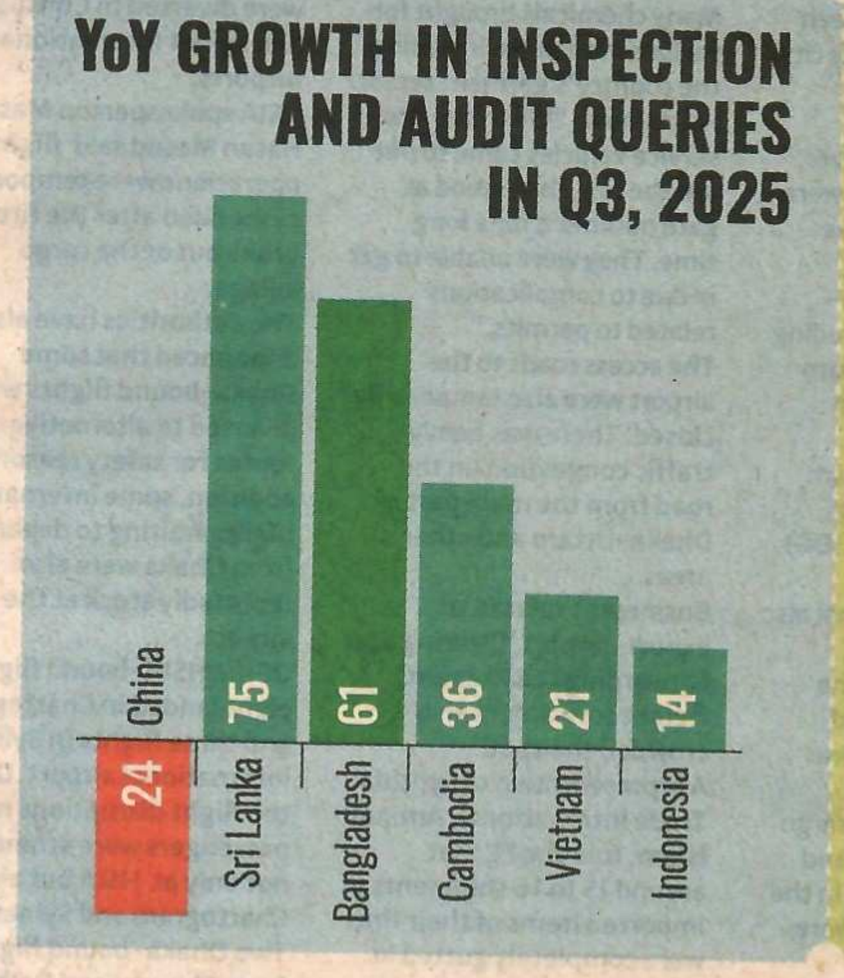
Bangladesh witnesses sharp rise in US buyer audits amid shift from China

Queries jump 61% YoY as importers diversify sourcing across South, Southeast Asia

MONIRA MUNNI



TRADE DYNAMICS SNAPSHOT

- US procurement from within the Americas (nearshoring) 8%
- 39% growth in Southeast Asia
- 26% growth in South Asia
- 54% rise in China's inspections in Brazil (showing Beijing's pivot to Latin America)
- US buyers diversifying amid tariff pressure
- Bangladesh emerging as a key sourcing hub despite overall demand slowdown
- Nearshoring still marginal as Asia remains indispensable

Bangladesh has emerged as one of the strongest performers among Asian sourcing destinations, recording a 61 per cent year-on-year rise in inspection and audit queries from US buyers in the third quarter of 2025.

The surge reflects American companies' continued shift away from China amid trade tensions and punitive tariffs.

According to the latest QIMA Barometer, published on October 14, overall US overseas procurement slowed during August and September, but Bangladesh and several neighbouring countries maintained steady growth in compliance inspections, underscoring Asia's central role in the United States' evolving sourcing landscape.

The report by Quality Inspection Management (QIMA), a leading provider of supply chain compliance solutions, attributes the rise to the ongoing realignment of US global sourcing, which is opening new opportunities for manufacturing hubs across South and Southeast Asia.

Nearly six months after the US introduced its 'Liberation Day' policy shift, the Q4 2025 QIMA Barometer found that inspection and audit activity by US buyers remained subdued in both August and September after peaking in July.

The barometer, titled "Despite US Tariff Posturing, World Favors Trade Over Wars," revealed that inspection and audit volumes in China fell by 24 per cent year-on-year in the third quarter of 2025, reflecting the combined effects of tariffs and deliberate efforts by US companies to de-risk their supply chains.

"Throughout the quarter, other Asian sourcing hubs worked to fill the gap. Southeast Asia and South Asia saw inspection activity rise by 39 per cent and 26 per cent YoY, respectively, with double-digit growth in demand recorded in Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka," the report noted.

Within the region, Sri Lanka recorded the highest growth, with inspection and audit demand soaring 75 per cent year-on-year, driven by renewed apparel orders as buyers diversified away from both China and India.

Cambodia, Vietnam, and Indonesia followed with growth rates of 36 per cent, 21 per cent, and 14 per cent, respectively.

Despite these positive trends, QIMA warned that the outlook for US sourcing in Asia remains uncertain.

The introduction of new "transshipment tariffs," aimed at curbing indirect exports from China through third countries, could disrupt trade with key Southeast Asian hubs such as Vietnam.

The report also noted that growing trade tensions with India in late August have already started to appear in sourcing data, raising doubts about whether the current pace of diversification can be sustained.

Meanwhile, America's much-publicised push for nearshoring and reshoring has shown limited progress.

QIMA data indicated that only 8.0 per cent of total US procurement in the third quarter of 2025 originated from within its own region, underscoring the continued structural dependence of American retailers and manufacturers on Asian suppliers.

While US demand weakened, China strengthened its trade links with emerging markets, particularly in Latin and South America.

Inspections and audits for Chinese textiles, electronics and homeware suppliers rose significantly in Brazil (up 54 per cent year-on-year), Uruguay (69 per cent), and Argentina (16 per cent), the report said.

European buyers, by contrast, maintained a steadier approach to sourcing.

Inspection demand across Southeast Asia has increased by 8.0 per cent year-on-year, led by Vietnam (21 per cent), Thailand (18 per cent), and Cambodia (10 per cent).

Closer to home, nearshoring partnerships around the Mediterranean posted solid gains in the third quarter of 2025, with inspection activity rising by 15 per cent in Morocco, 19 per cent in Tunisia, and 24 per cent in Egypt.

Egypt's strong performance, according to the report, reflected its growing role as a regional rival to Turkey, supported by significant foreign investment in its textile industry.

When asked about the QIMA findings, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Senior Vice-President Inamul Haq Khan said Vietnam and Cambodia, which cater to the higher-end segments of the apparel market, are performing particularly well.

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"As US consumers reduced their purchases, work orders slowed during the last quarter (July-September), but we hope the flow will pick up again in the final quarter of 2025," he added.

He also noted that Bangladeshi exporters face increasing competition in the European market, as both India and China are aggressively seeking to expand their business there following the imposition of high US tariffs on their exports.

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The Business Standard

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Bangladesh moves to sign FTA with EU to secure post-LDC trade privileges

TRADE - BANGLADESH

ABUL KASHEM

Commerce ministry will soon write to EU to decide next step

The interim government has launched an initiative to sign a free trade agreement (FTA) with the European Union, Bangladesh's largest export destination, in a bid to safeguard privileged access to its market after graduating from the least developed country (LDC) category in 2026.

The commerce ministry has completed a feasibility study showing that an FTA would benefit Bangladesh, paving the way for discussions when an EU delegation visits Dhaka this November.

"We've completed a feasibility study which shows Bangladesh will benefit from such a deal. Preliminary discussions have already taken place, and the EU is interested," Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman told The Business Standard.

He said the ministry would soon write to the EU to decide on the next step — whether Bangladesh will receive the EU's draft text or send its own. "The EU has signed FTAs with many countries, while we are also in talks with several partners," he added.

According to the Export Promotion Bureau, the EU accounted for $21.38 billion or 44% of Bangladesh's total exports in FY2023-24. EU data show that 94% of its imports from Bangladesh last year were textiles, while

The Business Standard

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machinery (35%) and chemicals (23%) dominated the EU's exports to Bangladesh.

Duty-free access for garments uncertain after 2029

Under the current Everything But Arms (EBA) scheme, Bangladesh enjoys duty-free access to the EU market, which will continue for three years after graduation, until 2029.

After that, Bangladesh is expected to qualify for the Generalised Scheme of Preferences Plus (GSP+). However, the GSP+ framework does not cover duty-free access for ready-made garments — meaning exports could face tariffs averaging 12%, eroding competitiveness in Bangladesh's main export sector.

Moreover, EU rules stipulate that if imports of a product from a particular country exceed 9% of the EU's total imports of that product, it loses GSP+ eligibility. Bangladeshi garments currently account for around 16.5% of the EU's apparel imports, which would disqualify the sector from GSP+ benefits.

As an LDC, Bangladesh currently enjoys relaxed "single-stage" rules of origin — allowing it to import fabric, stitch garments locally, and still qualify for duty-free access. Under GSP+, however, the stricter "double-stage" rule applies, requiring two of three stages (spinning, weaving, manufacturing) to be done domestically.

Dhaka has requested the EU to relax these rules, and although EU officials have verbally indicated flexibility, no formal commitment has yet been made.

Bangladesh remains the largest beneficiary of the EU's EBA scheme, with $19.94 billion worth of exports using the facility in 2023 at a 91% utilisation rate. EU investment stock in Bangladesh totalled $2.45 billion that year, while Bangladeshi investment in the EU stood at $110.88 million.

Experts divided over FTA vs GSP+ route

Trade experts say while an FTA could help sustain duty-free access, pursuing the GSP+ route first may be more pragmatic.

"If Bangladesh can retain GSP+ with duty-free access for garments without an FTA, that would be most advantageous," said Dr Abdur Razzaque, chairman of the Research and Policy Integration for Development (RAPID). "Otherwise, the FTA route will be necessary — though it requires reciprocal concessions and will take time."

He cautioned that if GSP+ benefits lapse before an FTA is concluded, Bangladesh should seek interim arrangements to preserve current preferences. "FTA negotiations can take years. For example, India's talks with the EU began in 2007, stalled in 2013, and only resumed in 2022," he said.

Hafizur Rahman, former director general of the finance ministry's WTO Cell and current FBCCI administrator, said the FTA initiative is prudent from a risk management standpoint.

"India is negotiating an FTA with the EU, and Vietnam already has one. Under the Vietnam-EU deal, garments must meet a two-stage origin rule to qualify for duty-free entry," he noted. "By starting talks early, Bangladesh can try to preserve its current single-stage advantage."

Former trade commission member Mustafizur Rahman said the EU has verbally assured that Bangladesh would continue to enjoy GSP+ and duty-free access for garments beyond 2029. "It would have been wiser to settle this issue before launching FTA talks," he added.

BGMEA President Mahmud Hasan Khan supported the initiative, saying, "Signing an FTA with the EU is essential, but ensuring that our garments retain duty-free access must be the top priority."

PCA signing also planned in November

Separately, the foreign ministry is preparing to sign a Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Partnership and Cooperation (PCA) with the EU next month.

The PCA aims to strengthen collaboration on human rights, good governance, democracy, labour standards, migrant protection, and gender equality. Officials said both sides held a virtual meeting on 9–10 October to finalise the draft.

An official involved in the talks said the EU insisted on clauses requiring Bangladesh to implement UN human rights conventions. "Bangladesh explained that it is in a political transition and a new elected government will take office early next year," the official said.

EU representatives reportedly expressed surprise at the objection, asking, "Why are you reluctant to commit to your own people's rights?"

Commerce Secretary Mahbubur Rahman clarified that the PCA and FTA are separate processes, even though both are expected to advance during the EU delegation's visit in November.