

Jordan's exports to Syria jump 341pc in first 10 months

RIYADH, Dec 25 (Arab News): Jordan's national exports to Syria rose to 203 million Jordanian dinars (\$286 million) in the first 10 months of 2025, marking a 341.3 per cent year-on-year increase, new figures show. According to foreign trade data issued by the Department of Statistics, Jordan's imports from Syria reached around 75 million dinars over the same period, up 47.1 per cent annually, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

Total trade between the two countries stood at 278 million dinars in the first 10 months of the year, compared with 97 million dinars in the same period of 2024.

The growth reflects closer bilateral ties, as Jordan has reaffirmed its commitment to supporting Syria's

recovery and reintegration, a relationship seen as important for reconstruction efforts as well as regional stability and economic cooperation. In May, the two sides also agreed to draft a comprehensive road map to guide future cooperation, with a focus on investment, joint ventures and reconstruction initiatives. "Trade relations between Jordan and Syria recorded notable growth over the last ten months of this year.



BGMEA sets new membership criteria to ensure factory safety, operational standards

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The apex body of the country's apparel sector has introduced a set of new criteria for granting membership, including minimum factory space and machinery requirements, aiming to ensure basic operational and safety standards.

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) said it will not register any garment factory located in shared buildings housing other establishments such as banks, insurance offices or markets.

However, if a building accommodates only garment units, new apparel factories may be approved for BGMEA membership, according to a notification issued by the trade body.

The decisions were taken at the BGMEA board's third meeting held on November 5 to promote a sustainable ready-made garment (RMG) industry for the country's socio-economic development, the notification issued on December 18 said. Under the new criteria, a woven or knit garment factory must have at least 100 machines, while a sweater factory must have a minimum of 60 machines. In addition, a factory must have a minimum floor space of 15,000 square feet to qualify for BGMEA membership. In cases of membership reinstatement, factories will be required to submit updated trade licences, tax certificates and factory licences along with clearance of all outstanding dues.

Asked about the decision, BGMEA Senior Vice President Inamul Haq Khan said the measures were taken to ensure minimum standards and to prevent untoward incidents.

He said fire incidents in BGMEA member

- ▶ Factories must have minimum 15,000 square feet space
- ▶ Woven or knit factories require at least 100 machines
- ▶ Sweater factories must have minimum 60 machines installed
- ▶ Shared buildings with banks, markets not eligible for membership
- ▶ Only buildings with garment units can gain membership approval

factories have declined significantly over the past several years, claiming that such incidents are now rare in BGMEA-listed units.

"We won't provide membership to any sick industry," he said, adding that BGMEA, as an owners' trade body, is often held responsible whenever an incident occurs in a garment factory, regardless of its membership status. Most non-compliance and wage-related issues are found in factories that are not BGMEA members but operate under national initiatives, he said, adding that it is the government's responsibility to oversee standards and compliance in such units.

Citing a recent fire incident at a chemical factory in the capital, Mr Khan claimed

that a nearby non-BGMEA garment factory caught fire from sparks originating from the chemical unit. According to BGMEA's official website, the association currently has around 4,500 member factories, of which about 40 per cent are knitwear and sweater manufacturers, while the remaining 60 per cent are woven garment manufacturers.

BGMEA member factories account for 100 per cent of woven garment exports, more than 95 per cent of sweater shipments and around half of the country's light knitwear exports. Bangladesh earned US\$39.34 billion from RMG exports in the last fiscal year (FY25), according to official data.

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China's export licences won't reduce excess steel exports, Japan lobby head says



TOKYO, Dec 25 (Reuters): Japan Iron and Steel Federation Chairman Tadashi Imai said on Thursday that China's planned export-licence requirement would not be effective in curbing steel export volumes or support a recovery in prices.

The world's largest steel producer, China, plans to roll out a licence system from 2026 to regulate exports of the metal, as robust shipments have fuelled a growing protectionist backlash worldwide.

"Our understanding is that this measure is intended to curb exports of substandard steel products, and we don't believe it will be an effective countermeasure for current issues such as suppressing export volumes or influencing market prices," Imai told a press conference, adding that the permits were aimed at controlling product quality.

Ballooning exports by Chinese steelmakers have become an international concern, with Japan among countries criticising Chinese firms for receiving government subsidies that

encourage overproduction and low-priced exports, worsening global market conditions.

The federation forecast Japan's domestic steel demand from the construction and manufacturing sectors would remain flat in the fiscal year starting in April, with crude steel output expected to be unchanged from the current year.

The Japanese trade and industry ministry predicted this week that Japan's crude steel output for the current year would fall 3.2 per cent to 80.33 million metric tons, the lowest since fiscal 1968.

Asked about the impact from US tariffs, including a 50 per cent levy on steel and a 15 per cent tariff on Japanese goods, Imai, who is also president of Nippon Steel, said the tariffs would cut about 20 billion yen (\$130 million) from his company's profit this fiscal year, with exports to the US halving from a year earlier.

"But the overall impact, including indirect effects from the 15 per cent tariff on automobiles, was smaller than we had anticipated," he said.



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সমকাল

রপ্তানিতে আরও তিন বছর নগদ সহায়তা চান বস্ত্রকল মালিকরা

■ সমকাল প্রতিবেদক

রপ্তানি উৎসাহিত করতে সরকারের দেওয়া নগদ সহায়তা আরও অন্তত তিন বছর অব্যাহত রাখার অনুরোধ জনিয়েছে বস্ত্রকলের মালিকদের সংগঠন বিটিএমএ। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংকের গভর্নর ড. আহসান এইচ মনসুর ও অর্থ সচিব মো. খায়েরুজ্জামান মঞ্জুরদারের কাছে পাঠানো আলাদা চিঠিতে এই অনুরোধ জানান বিটিএমএ সভাপতি শওকত আজিজ রাসেল। কেন এই অনুরোধ করা হচ্ছে, তা তুলে ধরা হয়েছে চিঠিতে।

গতকাল বুধবার পাঠানো চিঠিতে বিটিএমএর পক্ষ থেকে বলা হয়, রাশিয়া-ইউক্রেন যুদ্ধ, বৈশ্বিক অর্থনৈতিক মন্দা, বৈদেশিক মুদ্রার বিপরীতে টাকার মূল্যমানের পতন, গ্যাসের দাম ২৫০ শতাংশ ও শ্রমিকের মজুরি ৭০ শতাংশ বেড়েছে। এর সঙ্গে সাম্প্রতিক সময়ে দেশের রাজনৈতিক অস্থিরতা, শ্রমিক অসন্তোষ, প্রয়োজনীয় গ্যাস ও বিদ্যুৎ সরবরাহের অভাবে মিলগুলো সক্ষমতা অনুযায়ী উৎপাদন করতে পারছে না। এ কারণে বস্ত্রকলগুলো আর্থিক ক্ষতির মুখে রয়েছে। এসব কারণে রপ্তানিতে নগদ সহায়তা আরও অন্তত তিন বছর বাড়ানো জরুরি হয়ে পড়েছে।

প্রসঙ্গত, পণ্য রপ্তানিতে প্রণোদনার বর্তমান সময়সীমা আগামী ৩১ ডিসেম্বর শেষ হবে। বাংলাদেশ ব্যাংক সর্বশেষ গত জুলাই মাসে প্রণোদনা কমিয়ে নতুন সার্কুলার জারি করে। এর পর থেকে রপ্তানিমুখী বস্ত্র খাতে শুষ্ক বস্ত্র ও ডিউটি ড্র ব্যাকের পরিবর্তে বিকল্প নগদ সহায়তা ১ দশমিক ৫০ শতাংশ, ইউরো অঞ্চলে বস্ত্র খাতের রপ্তানিকারকদের জন্য বিদ্যমান দেড় শতাংশের অতিরিক্ত বিশেষ সহায়তা দশমিক ৫০ শতাংশ, রপ্তানিমুখী তৈরি পোশাক খাতের ক্ষুদ্র ও মাঝারি শিল্পের জন্য অতিরিক্ত সুবিধা ৩ শতাংশ রয়েছে। এ ছাড়া বস্ত্র খাতে নতুন পণ্য বা বাজার সম্প্রসারণে প্রচলিত বাজারের বাইরে অন্য বাজারের জন্য ২ শতাংশ ও তৈরি পোশাক খাতে দশমিক ৩০ শতাংশ বিশেষ নগদ সহায়তা রয়েছে।

