

সিপিবি'র সমাবেশ

যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের সঙ্গে বাণিজ্য চুক্তি বাতি'লের দাবি

■ সমকাল প্রতিবেদক

যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের সঙ্গে সম্পাদিত বাণিজ্য চুক্তি বাতি'লের দাবি জানিয়েছে বাংলাদেশের কমিউনিষ্ট পার্টি (সিপিবি)। নেতারা বলেছেন, নির্বাচনের আগমুহুর্তে অন্তর্বর্তী সরকার যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের সঙ্গে এই দাসত্বমূলক চুক্তি স্বাক্ষর করেছে, যা চক্রান্তমূলক ও দেশবিরোধী অপকর্ম। এই অসম বাণিজ্য চুক্তির জালে বাংলাদেশকে আটপেটে বেঁধে ফেলা হয়েছে।

গতকাল সোমবার রাজধানীর পুরানা পল্টন মোড়ে সিপিবি ঢাকা মহানগর দক্ষিণ জেলা কমিটির উদ্যোগে পদযাত্রা-পূর্ব সমাবেশে নেতারা এসব কথা বলেন। যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের সঙ্গে বাণিজ্য চুক্তি বাতি'লের দাবিতে সিপিবি ঘোষিত দেশব্যাপী বিক্ষোভ কর্মসূচির অংশ হিসেবে এদিন পুরানা পল্টন মোড় থেকে নবাবপুর পর্যন্ত পদযাত্রা কর্মসূচি অনুষ্ঠিত হয়।

সিপিবি ঢাকা মহানগর দক্ষিণ জেলা কমিটির সভাপতি সাইফুল ইসলাম সমীরের সভাপতিত্বে পদযাত্রার আগে সমাবেশে বক্তব্য দেন সিপিবি'র প্রেসিডিয়াম সদস্য জলি তালুকদার, কন্ট্রোল কমিশন সদস্য অধ্যাপক ডা. আবু সাঈদ, জেলা কমিটির সাধারণ সম্পাদক মঞ্জুর মঈন, সম্পাদকমণ্ডলীর সদস্য জামশেদ আনোয়ার তপন, ত্রিদিব সাহা, সদস্য হযরত আলী, মুর্শিকুল ইসলাম শিমুল প্রমুখ।

নেতারা বলেন, মার্কিন চুক্তিতে যেসব নন-ডিসক্রোজার ক্লজ রয়েছে, তা এ চুক্তিকে অসম ও জবরদস্তিমূলক মুচলেকায় পরিণত করেছে। এটি একটি অধীনতার দলিল, যা স্বাক্ষর করার মধ্য দিয়ে অন্তর্বর্তী সরকার বাংলাদেশের সার্বভৌমত্ব বিলীন করেছে। এ চুক্তি করার কোনো এখতিয়ার ওই সরকারের ছিল না। ফলে চুক্তি কার্যকর হওয়ার আগেই তা বাতিল করতে হবে। অবিলম্বে এ চুক্তি বাতিল না হলে দেশব্যাপী বৃহত্তর আন্দোলন গড়ে তোলা হবে।

সমাবেশ শেষে পদযাত্রা শুরু হয়ে নবাবপুর গিয়ে শেষ হয়। পদযাত্রা চলাকালে পল্টন মোড়, শহীদ নূর হোসেন স্কয়ার, রমনা ভবন, ফুলবাড়িয়া টার্মিনাল, নবাবপুর মোড় ও গুলিস্তানে পথসভা অনুষ্ঠিত হয়।

একই দিন সিপিবি ঢাকা মহানগর উত্তর রাজধানীর উত্তর আজমপুর রেলগেট থেকে আজমপুর স্কুলের সামনে পর্যন্ত পদযাত্রা করেছে। মহানগর উত্তর সভাপতি হাসান হাফিজুর রহমান সোহেলের সভাপতিত্বে ও সম্পাদকমণ্ডলীর সদস্য জহিরুল ইসলামের সঞ্চালনায় পদযাত্রা-পূর্ব সমাবেশে বক্তব্য দেন মহানগর উত্তরের সাধারণ সম্পাদক লুনা নূর, মোতালেব হোসেন, ডা. সাজেদুল হক রুবেল, লাকী আক্তার, হামিদ হোসেন প্রমুখ।

সমাবেশ থেকে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের সঙ্গে বাণিজ্য চুক্তি বাতি'লের দাবিতে ঢাকা মহানগর উত্তরের সাত দিনব্যাপী বিক্ষোভ কর্মসূচি ঘোষণা করা হয়। কর্মসূচিতে রয়েছে— আগামী ১ এপ্রিল বাড্ডা, ২ এপ্রিল হাতিরঝিল, ৩ এপ্রিল মোহাম্মদপুর, ৪ এপ্রিল তেজগাঁও এবং ৫ এপ্রিল কাফরুল ও মিরপুরে সমাবেশ ও পদযাত্রা।



মার্কিন শুল্ক ও এলডিসি উত্তরণের চাপ আসবে

বাংলাদেশ নিয়ে ডব্লিউইজে

ওয়ার্ল্ড ইকোনমিক জার্নালের (ডব্লিউইজে) প্রতিবেদনে বলা হয়েছে, একক বাজারের ওপর নির্ভরশীলতা বাংলাদেশের জন্য ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ।

অর্থ-বাণিজ্য ডেস্ক

যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের বাণিজ্যনীতি ও শুল্ক কাঠামোয় পরিবর্তনের কারণে বাংলাদেশের রপ্তানিতে উল্লেখযোগ্য প্রভাব পড়ছে। বিশেষ করে তৈরি পোশাক খাতের ওপর উচ্চ নির্ভরতার কারণে এ প্রভাব আরও তীব্রভাবে অনুভূত হচ্ছে। এ ছাড়া স্বল্পোন্নত দেশের (এলডিসি) তালিকা থেকে উত্তরণের ফলে বাংলাদেশ নতুন ধরনের বাণিজ্যঝুঁকির মুখে পড়তে পারে।

ওয়ার্ল্ড ইকোনমিক জার্নালের (ডব্লিউইজে) এক প্রতিবেদনে এ কথা বলা হয়েছে। প্রতিবেদন মতে, গত ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থবছরে বাংলাদেশের মোট পণ্য রপ্তানি ছিল ৪৮ দশমিক ২৮ বিলিয়ন বা ৪ হাজার ৮২৮ কোটি মার্কিন ডলার। এর মধ্যে ৮০ শতাংশের বেশি এসেছে তৈরি পোশাক খাত থেকে। যুক্তরাষ্ট্র বাংলাদেশের সবচেয়ে বড় একক রপ্তানি গন্তব্য। ২০২৪-২৫ অর্থবছরে দেশের মোট পোশাক রপ্তানির প্রায় ১৮ শতাংশই গেছে মার্কিন বাজারে। অর্থাৎ বাংলাদেশের রপ্তানি খাত অনেকটাই বড় বাজারগুলোর ওপর নির্ভরশীল হয়ে পড়েছে।

এদিকে বিশ্বব্যাংক পূর্বাভাস দিয়েছে, চলতি ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরে বাংলাদেশের অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি হতে পারে ৪ দশমিক ৮ শতাংশ। এরপর ২০২৬-২৭ অর্থবছরে তা আরও বেড়ে ৬ দশমিক ৩ শতাংশে উঠতে পারে। তবে যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের শুল্কনীতি, পরিবর্তনশীল বিশ্ববাণিজ্য পরিস্থিতি এবং স্বল্পোন্নত দেশ (এলডিসি) থেকে উত্তরণের কারণে বাংলাদেশের অর্থনীতি চাপে পড়তে পারে বলে সংস্থাটি আশঙ্কা প্রকাশ করেছে।

রপ্তানি উন্নয়ন ব্যুরোর (ইপিবি) তথ্যে দেখা যায়, চলতি ২০২৫-২৬ অর্থবছরের প্রথম সাত মাস জুলাই-জানুয়ারিতে দেশ থেকে ২৮ দশমিক ৪১ বিলিয়ন বা ২ হাজার ৮৪১ কোটি ডলারের পণ্য রপ্তানি হয়েছে, যা আগের অর্থবছরের একই সময়ের চেয়ে তা ১ দশমিক ৯৩ শতাংশ কম। একই সময়ে তৈরি পোশাক রপ্তানি হয়েছে ২২ দশমিক ৯৮ বিলিয়ন ডলার, যা আগের বছরের একই সময়ের তুলনায় ২ দশমিক ৪৩ শতাংশ কম।

ডব্লিউইজের প্রতিবেদনে বলা হয়েছে, একক বাজারের ওপর নির্ভরশীলতা বাংলাদেশের জন্য ঝুঁকিপূর্ণ। যুক্তরাষ্ট্র বা অন্য বড় বাজারে বাণিজ্যনীতির পরিবর্তন হলে এ দেশের রপ্তানি আয় ও সামগ্রিক অর্থনীতিতে সরাসরি প্রভাব পড়বে।

মার্কিন নীতির পরিবর্তনে বাড়ছে চাপ

যুক্তরাষ্ট্রের বাণিজ্য কাঠামোয় সাম্প্রতিক পরিবর্তনে বাংলাদেশের রপ্তানির সামনে নতুন চ্যালেঞ্জ তৈরি হয়েছে। বিশেষ করে সরবরাহ ব্যবস্থায় কঠোর মান নিয়ন্ত্রণ, শ্রমসম্মান তদারকি জোরদার এবং বস্ত্রপণ্য

- ▶ বন্দর, জ্বালানি ও পণ্য পরিবহনের দুর্বলতা রপ্তানি ব্যয় বাড়াবে।
- ▶ বাংলাদেশের সামনে তিন চ্যালেঞ্জ—শুল্ক, বাজারঝুঁকি ও অবকাঠামো।

আমদানিতে সম্ভাব্য শুল্ক পরিবর্তনের মতো পদক্ষেপে রপ্তানিকারকদের ওপর চাপ বাড়বে। বর্তমানে বাংলাদেশ থেকে আমদানি করা পোশাকে গড়ে প্রায় ১৯ শতাংশ শুল্ক আরোপ করেছে যুক্তরাষ্ট্র।

বাংলাদেশে বিশ্বব্যাংকের সাবেক প্রধান গেইল মার্টিন ডব্লিউইজেকে বলেন, বাংলাদেশের অর্থনীতিকে শক্তিশালী করতে দ্রুততার সঙ্গে কার্যকর সংস্কার প্রয়োজন। আর্থিক খাত শক্তিশালী করা, বাণিজ্য সহজীকরণ এবং অভ্যন্তরীণ রাজস্ব সংগ্রহ বাড়াতে সাহসী ও জরুরি পদক্ষেপ নেওয়া দরকার।

এলডিসি উত্তরণে সুবিধা হারানোর শঙ্কা

স্বল্পোন্নত দেশের (এলডিসি) তালিকা থেকে বাংলাদেশের উত্তরণের সময় ঘনিষ্ঠে এসেছে, যদিও নতুন সরকার তা পেছানোর আবেদন করেছে। কিন্তু উত্তরণ তো একসময় হবেই। এমন বাস্তবতায় বাংলাদেশ নতুন ধরনের বাণিজ্যঝুঁকির মুখে পড়তে পারে বলে প্রতিবেদনে আশঙ্কা প্রকাশ করা হয়েছে।

ডব্লিউইজের মতে, বিদ্যমান বাণিজ্যসুবিধা ও শুল্ক রেয়াতের কাঠামো পরিবর্তনের কারণে বড় রপ্তানি বাজারগুলোতে বাংলাদেশের প্রতিযোগিতা সক্ষমতা কমেতে পারে। তাই বাজারে টিকে থাকার জন্য শ্রমসম্মান, পরিবেশগত ও পণ্যের গুণগত মান কঠোরভাবে বজায় রাখা আরও গুরুত্বপূর্ণ হয়ে উঠবে।

প্রতিবেদনে ঝুঁকি কমাতে কৌশল বদলানোর পরামর্শ দিয়ে বলা হয়েছে, উচ্চমূল্য সংযোজন খাতে রপ্তানি বাড়ানোর দিকে নজর দিতে হবে। এর মধ্যে চামড়া ও চামড়াজাত পণ্য, গুমুধশিল্প ও হালকা প্রকৌশল খাতের কথা উল্লেখ করা হয়েছে। পাশাপাশি বাণিজ্যচুক্তি নিয়ে পুনঃ আলোচনা, সরবরাহ শৃঙ্খলের স্থিতিশীলতা বৃদ্ধি ও পণ্যের মানোন্নয়ন—এসব উদ্যোগ নেওয়া উচিত।

অবকাঠামোগত ঘাটতিও বড় বাধা

ডব্লিউইজের প্রতিবেদনে বলা হয়েছে, রপ্তানিমুখী প্রবৃদ্ধির মডেলের মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশ উচ্চ অর্থনৈতিক প্রবৃদ্ধি অর্জন করলেও অবকাঠামোগত ঘাটতি এখনো বড় বাধা হয়ে আছে। কাঠামোগত দুর্বলতার কারণে যেমন উৎপাদনশীলতা কমছে, তেমনি বাণিজ্য ব্যয়ও বাড়ছে।

ডব্লিউইজে পরিবহন ও লজিস্টিকস অবকাঠামো, জ্বালানি খাত এবং বন্দর ব্যবস্থাপনার সীমাবদ্ধতাকে মূল সমস্যা হিসেবে চিহ্নিত করেছে। সংস্থাটি বলেছে, চট্টগ্রাম সমুদ্রবন্দরে জট ও পুরোনো হ্যান্ডলিং ব্যবস্থার কারণে পণ্য খালাসে বিলম্ব হচ্ছে। এতে বাণিজ্যের ব্যয় বাড়ছে।

বিল্লেষকেরা বলেন, এসব সীমাবদ্ধতা দূর না হলে রপ্তানি খাতের দীর্ঘমেয়াদি প্রতিযোগিতা সক্ষমতা ধরে রাখা কঠিন হবে। প্রতিবেদনে বলা হয়েছে, বাংলাদেশে যেমন বিনিয়োগের সুযোগ আছে, তেমনি ঝুঁকিও আছে।

Vietnam textile firms strengthen resilience amid rising global risks

ANN/VIETNAM NEWS

Vietnamese textile and garment enterprises are steering through unpredictable global markets, rising transport costs and Middle East conflicts while securing orders, diversifying sources and eyeing domestic growth.

Unpredictable market developments and geopolitical conflicts in the Middle East have disrupted supply chains, driven up transportation and insurance costs

and affected business operations. In response, authorities have proactively implemented solutions to help textile and garment enterprises maintain stable production and business activities, sustaining growth momentum and boosting exports.

Many companies have already secured orders through July and are negotiating contracts for the rest of the year. Alongside diversifying markets and customers, businesses continue to invest in modern equipment and

develop new products to enhance competitiveness.

Hoàng Mạnh Cẩm, chief of office of the board of directors at Vietnam National Textile and Garment Group (Vinatex), told Nhân Dân newspaper that as soon as the conflict in the Middle East broke out, companies quickly developed strategies such as securing raw material supplies, diversifying sourcing and customer bases and avoiding dependence on limited clients.

In practice, export orders have not been significantly affected, but risks remain, particularly for shipping routes passing through the region to Europe and partly to the US East Coast.

Shipping companies have increased insurance premiums, adding costs, while importing materials such as cotton from the US takes longer due to rerouting, affecting production schedules.

Orders that previously took about two months including shipping now require up to one and a half months for transportation alone, causing disruptions. Although total production time remains unchanged, longer delivery times require careful adjustment of production schedules, Cẩm said.

He emphasised that textile enterprises must prioritise resilience amid uncertainty by maintaining financial flexibility, managing exchange rate and raw material risks, restructuring supply chains and upgrading value-added capabilities.

"In a context where high tariffs are becoming the

new normal, competitive advantage will belong to companies that control costs well, comply with origin requirements and ensure fast delivery," he said.

Lê Tiến Trường, Vinatex chairman, added that amid volatility in tariffs, geopolitics and logistics costs, businesses must remain proactive and flexible, developing specific action plans based on different scenarios. For the EU market, companies need to prepare for changing transport routes, rising logistics costs and longer delivery times. For the US market, they must anticipate continued pressure from buyers to adjust prices, especially as China maintains a low yuan, increasing competition.

Companies are advised to accelerate shipments during the 150-day period when an additional 10 percent tariff applies to optimise delivery plans and reduce policy risks. Maintaining balance across production, finance and markets will determine business resilience, allowing companies to retain market share, stabilise employment and achieve growth targets.



WTO conference concludes without major agreements



14th WTO Ministerial Conference
Yaoundé - Cameroon
2026

REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA

The 14th Ministerial Conference (MC14) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) concluded early yesterday with no significant agreements, except promises to continue working towards consensus on disputed issues among member countries.

The four-day conference, which began on March 26, saw nearly 2,000 officials, including more than 90 ministers, debate key topics such as the moratorium on customs duties for electronic transmissions and broader WTO reform.

Originally scheduled to end on Sunday, the meeting stretched past midnight as ministers tried to bridge gaps on major issues.

DEADLOCK ON E-COMMERCE MORATORIUM

The WTO's moratorium on customs duties for electronic transmissions expired yesterday after nearly three decades. Negotiations in Yaoundé continued late into the night but concluded without a final agreement.

Diplomats worked to reconcile differences between Brazil, which initially sought a two-year extension and later proposed a four-year extension with a mid-term review, and the United States, which pushed for a permanent moratorium to protect major companies such as Amazon and Apple from digital taxation.

A draft proposal for a four-year extension with a one-year sunset buffer, extending the moratorium to 2031, was also discussed but not agreed upon, reports Reuters.

Developing countries, including India, opposed a lengthy extension, arguing that

the moratorium denies them potential tax revenue that could be reinvested domestically. Some 66 nations, however, agreed to an interim arrangement pending ratification.

WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said, "The e-commerce moratorium had expired, meaning countries could apply duties on electronic goods such as digital downloads and streaming. But we hope to be able to restore the moratorium and Brazil and the US were trying to reach agreement on it. They need more time and we didn't have the time here."

close to agreement before the talks ended. Completion of any reform deal, however, will depend on resolving recurring issues, such as improving consensus-based decision-making and extending trade benefits to developing countries. Ministers also fell short of expectations on agriculture and other areas.

Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala welcomed progress in discussions on WTO reform, fisheries subsidies, and other issues.

KEY OUTCOMES

The WTO announced that ministers agreed to continue negotiations on

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The conference, which began on March 26, overran due to a deadlock 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The e-commerce duties moratorium expired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brazil and the US disagreed on the extension
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WTO reform talks made partial progress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two small decisions aided minor economies, trade rules 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talks will continue in Geneva this May

Cameroon Trade Minister Luc Magloire Mbarga Atangana, chair of MC14, added that WTO talks would continue in Geneva, expected in May.

Britain's Business and Trade Secretary Peter Kyle called the failure to reach a collective decision in Yaoundé a "major setback for global trade."

REFORM TALKS MAKE PARTIAL PROGRESS

Ministers and delegates made some progress drafting a plan for broader WTO reform, though no final agreements were reached, reports AFP. They were tasked with creating an action plan to revitalise the organisation, weakened by geopolitical tensions, stalled negotiations, and rising protectionism.

A draft reform roadmap outlining timelines and key issues, seen by Reuters, was

fisheries subsidies, aiming to present recommendations at the 15th Ministerial Conference for comprehensive rules.

Two decisions were also adopted that had been previously endorsed in Geneva: improving the integration of small economies into the multilateral trading system, and enhancing the implementation of special and differential treatment provisions under the Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) agreements.

The WTO director-general confirmed that members would return to Geneva with drafts of the Yaoundé Ministerial Declaration on WTO Reform and Work Plan, the Ministerial Decision on Electronic Commerce, the Ministerial Decision on TRIPS Non-Violation and Situation Complaints, and the LDC package.



MOST JAPANESE FIRMS EYE EXPANSION IN BANGLADESH: SURVEY

Business leaders push for policy consistency, faster services

FE REPORT

Over 50 per cent of Japanese companies expect profit growth and expansion in Bangladesh this year after the elections, according to a survey released on Monday.

Business leaders from Bangladesh and Japan, however, stressed the need to remove barriers in line with the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) framework to unlock the full potential of bilateral trade and investment.

They highlighted several challenges, including policy inconsistency, lack of coordination among government agencies, lengthy procedures, ineffective one-stop services, visa complications, and inadequate protection of intellectual property rights, adding that the EPA would open the door to expanded trade and investment.

Speaking at the "Japan Business Day" event in Dhaka, Kazuiki Kataoka, country representative of Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), described Bangladesh as a "high-stakes frontier for growth" for Japanese companies.

Citing data, he said a growing number of firms are considering shifting operations from ASEAN countries to South Asia.

Bangladesh's current political and social stability following the election has increased expansion prospects for Japanese firms, particularly amid growing opportunities in non-manufacturing sectors, he added.

The event was jointly organised by the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh, JETRO, the Japan-Bangladesh Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(JBCCI), and the Japan Commerce and Industry Association in Dhaka (JCIAD), marking the EPA signed between Bangladesh and Japan on February 6. The 2025 JETRO Survey on Business Conditions of Japanese Companies in Asia and Oceania was also formally unveiled.

According to the survey, 56.9 per cent of Japanese firms in Bangladesh plan to expand operations, compared to 81.5 per cent in India and 63.4 per cent in Pakistan. Expansion intentions in China stood at 63.2 per cent, while India recorded 75.5 per cent.

The non-manufacturing sector showed stronger growth prospects, with 62.2 per cent of firms planning expansion, compared to 47.6 per cent in manufacturing.

Speaking at the event, Prime Minister's Adviser on Finance and Planning Dr Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir underscored the need to boost investment in manufacturing and ensure technology transfer from Japan, particularly in infrastructure and other key sectors.

He said the EPA could help shift Bangladesh's traditional development model from reliance on official development assistance (ODA) to increased foreign investment.

Japanese Ambassador to Bangladesh Shunichi Saida described the EPA as a strategic partnership based on trust and shared values, expressing hope that post-election reforms would strengthen law and order and drive economic growth through enhanced investment.

Participants at a panel discussion noted that rising middle-class demand is encouraging Japanese firms, especially in non-

manufacturing sectors, to expand in Bangladesh.

However, they also expressed concern over frequent policy changes and regulatory burdens, urging authorities to adopt a more business-friendly approach.

Syed Nasim Manzur, Managing Director of Apex Footwear Limited, appreciated the business environment that Apex Footwear has enjoyed through its 50-year partnership with Japan, and said Bangladesh could benefit from increased Japanese investment to move beyond a low-cost, low-productivity model.

He said Japanese investment would help open up Bangladesh to other countries, emphasising that protecting intellectual property rights is critical to attracting such investment.

Dr M Masrur Reaz, Chairman and CEO of Policy Exchange Bangladesh, described the EPA as a legal and institutional framework to ensure Japanese investment and boost bilateral trade, stressing that policy continuity, tax arbitration and related issues must be prioritised by the government.

He added that the non-manufacturing sector is particularly bullish, with 62.2 per cent of firms planning expansion, significantly higher than the 47.6 per cent in the manufacturing sector.

Executive Chairman of the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun also spoke on the occasion.

The panel discussion was moderated by JBCCI President Tareq Rafi Bhuiyan Jun.

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RMG exports may face 5% EU carbon tax after 2030: Study

RMG - BANGLADESH

REYAD HOSSAIN

Industry leaders not concerned as many factories already began adopting sustainable production processes

Bangladesh's apparel exports to the European market could face a carbon tax of about 5% if emissions are not reduced, a new study warns.

The European Union (EU), Bangladesh's largest export market, has introduced the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) to curb emissions across its supply chains. Apparel products could be brought under this mechanism by 2030. If current emission levels in Bangladesh's garment sector persist, an additional 4.8% carbon tax may be imposed on apparel exports after 2030, according to the study.

The findings come from joint research by Professor Mustafizur Rahman, distinguished fellow at the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), and Mohammad Imraj Kabir. The report was published on the CPD website on 29 March.

This additional tax may come at a time when Bangladesh is set to lose its duty-free trade benefits in the EU market due to graduation from least developed country (LDC) status. The study notes that the loss of duty-free access could result in an average tariff of about 12%, and with the added carbon tax of 4.8%, the total tariff burden could rise to nearly 17%.

"The carbon tax on Bangladesh's exports of apparel to the EU, using the EU-CBAM methodology, is estimated to be 4.8%," the report titled "EU Carbon Tax: Possible Implications for Bangladesh's Apparel Export" states.

"If the average EU-MFN import duty on apparel is taken to be 12.1%,"

the total import tariff comes to about 16.9% (12.1%+4.8%)," it adds.

This scenario could emerge after Bangladesh graduates from the LDC group in November 2026. Even if the EU extends duty-free access until 2029, the apparel sector could still face a 4.8% CBAM tax during 2026-2029 if apparel is included in the mechanism.

Professor Mustafizur Rahman told TBS, "We estimated this based on the level of carbon emissions in Bangladesh's apparel sector."

However, industry leaders are not overly concerned. They say many factories have already begun adopting environmentally friendly production processes, including renewable energy, to reduce emissions, and others are expected to follow.

- ▶ 4.8% carbon tax on RMG likely after 2030 in EU
- ▶ Industry leaders are not overly concerned
- ▶ Bangladesh has many green factories



Existing green factories don't fully meet all EU requirements

Mahmud Hasan Khan Babu, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), told TBS, "We have already started preparing to use 30% renewable energy in line with EU requirements. Many of our factories have begun implementing green practices, including renewable energy."

He added that smaller and medium-sized factories are also being supported to meet these requirements in collaboration with the government.

Bangladesh has one of the highest numbers of green-certified factories by the US Green Building Council (USGBC), with nearly 300 such facilities.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 4

The Business Standard

31 MAR 2026



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The EU introduced CBAM in July 2021 to encourage exporters to reduce emissions and penalise those who do not. Initially, it applies to products such as cement, fertiliser and steel from January 2026. However, the EU plans to eventually include all imported goods by 2030.

Given that apparel accounts for more than four-fifths of Bangladesh's exports – and the EU takes more than half of those exports – this development is highly significant for the country.

subsidised loans for setting up ETPs, and institutional measures such as enforcing emission-reduction policies and building technical capacity.

Other recommendations include developing a monitoring mechanism for CBAM, engaging with the World Trade Organization (WTO), introducing a domestic carbon pricing system, strengthening renewable energy policies, and ensuring that CBAM is not used as a protectionist trade tool.

57% Japanese firms eye expansion in Bangladesh: Jetro survey

INVESTMENT - BANGLADESH

TBS REPORT

Around 56.9% of Japanese firms in Bangladesh plan to expand operations over the next one to two years, placing the country on par with Vietnam and above the global average of 45%, according to a survey by Japan External Trade Organization.

The expansion intent is lower than India's 81.5% but higher than Pakistan's 63.4% and the Asean average of 46.3%, underscoring Bangladesh's growing appeal as an investment destination.

The survey, conducted between 19 August and 17 September 2025, was unveiled at a Japan Business Day event jointly organised by the Embassy of Japan in Dhaka and Jetro.

Domestic demand drives growth
Robust domestic demand remains the primary driver, with 66.7% of firms citing local market growth—closely

aligned with the global average.

Low labour cost, market scale growth potential, ease in recruiting local staff, fewer linguistic/ communication problems, are the top five advantages of the investment environment, as per the survey.

On the other hand, investors flagged key risks, including political or social instability (94.4%), time-consuming tax procedures (81.5%), policy uncertainty (66.7%), administrative delays (66.7%), and weak legal frameworks (66.7%).

Officials acknowledge challenges, promise reforms

Chowdhury Ashik Mahmud Bin Harun noted the survey predates the February election, adding that more real-time data would improve policy responsiveness. He admitted persistent challenges such as tax complexity and licensing hurdles, but expressed optimism about ongoing reforms.

"Clearly, we haven't done enough, and there is still a lot to be done," he admitted, while expressing optimism about ongoing reforms backed by strong government commitment.

Despite these challenges, the survey signals improving business sentiment. Bangladesh recorded an 11.9 percentage-point rise in the share of companies expecting operating profits to increase in 2026 compared to 2025. It also showed that 29.4% of firms view local companies as their main competitors—the highest among surveyed markets.

At the event, Japan's Ambassador to Bangladesh, Shinichi Saida, highlighted growing prospects for foreign direct investment (FDI), citing political stability following the February election as a key confidence booster.

He cited political stability and policy direction as key to boosting foreign direct investment.

Emphasising the significance of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), the envoy noted that such frameworks should be assessed from a long-term perspective spanning decades, rather than short-term

Non-manufacturing sectors lead expansion

Non-manufacturing sectors are driving expansion, with 62.2% of firms planning growth compared to 47.6% in manufacturing. Export opportunities, competitive advantages, and demand for value-added products were cited as secondary factors.

For 2026, Bangladesh recorded the highest rise—11.9 percentage points—in firms expecting profit growth. Meanwhile, 29.4% of companies identified local firms as key competitors.

Around 350 Japanese companies are currently operating in Bangladesh, and the number is gradually increasing.

Rashed Al Mahmud Titumir, Prime Minister's Adviser on Finance and Planning, has urged Japanese investors to significantly expand their footprint in Bangladesh, calling for a strategic shift from Official Development Assistance (ODA) to stronger private sector investment.

"While Japan has long been a key development partner, the government envisions a new economic model to support sustainable economic growth," he said.

