

Apparel buyers stay with Bangladesh despite gas crunch – for now

RMG - BANGLADESH

REYAD HOSSAIN

Global apparel buyers are largely maintaining their orders from Bangladesh despite being concerned whether suppliers can meet deadlines amid the country's prolonged gas crisis.

For now, the orders are holding – but at a growing cost for manufacturers.

Representatives of four leading international buyers told TBS that their companies had no plans to reduce orders, while one said its orders had rather increased slightly in recent weeks.

The buyers said none of their suppliers had delayed shipments, despite factories struggling with the gas shortage and relying on costly alternative fuels to keep production running.

Moyeen Chowdhury, head of the

Dhaka office of sportswear brand Puma, said exporters were struggling with rising costs but continuing to meet their commitments.

"We have no plans to reduce orders," he told TBS.

TBS also spoke to six exporters, and except for one, none reported a decline in export orders. However, a textile mill said it was limiting the orders it accepted despite having buyers because it could not ensure adequate production amid the gas shortage.

Bangladesh has been grappling with a gas shortage for the past two years. The crisis intensified following disruptions to global fuel supply chains after the outbreak of conflict in the Middle East and worsened further in July when a floating LNG terminal broke down.

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RMG ORDERS HOLD

Buyers say they aren't cutting orders

- No shipment delays so far
- But, concerned about future deadlines

Exporters also say orders mostly stable

- Using costly alternative fuels to sustain production

BKMEA members meeting on Saturday to decide next steps

- To announce position through press conference on Sunday

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Against this backdrop, members of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA) are scheduled to meet today to determine their next course of action.

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improve by 14 August. But industrialists said there had been no significant improvement as of 20 August.

Buyers remain committed

The head of the Dhaka office of a leading US-based buyer told TBS on condition of anonymity that the company had no plans to reduce orders from Bangladesh.

The brand imports more than \$1 billion worth of apparel from Bangladesh annually and has more than 100 local suppliers.

A senior official of another European buyer said its suppliers were also continuing to deliver on time. "We have no plans to reduce orders. In fact, our orders have increased slightly in the past two weeks."

The managing director of a leading Bangladeshi exporter with annual exports of more than \$600 million said none of its buyers had indicated plans to cut orders. "However, they are regularly checking on the situation. They are concerned and frustrated."

Shovon Islam, managing director of

who is also MD of MB Knit Fashions, said one of his European buyers had reduced its order by one-third from its original commitment.

"Because of the gas crisis, they don't want to take the risk," he said.

Azhar Khan, chairman of textile mill Methela Group, said gas pressure at his factory was currently just 0.1 PSI against the required level of more than 10 PSI.

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FINANCE



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Against this backdrop, members of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers' Association (BKMEA) are scheduled to meet today to determine their next course of action.

Bangladesh, the world's second-largest apparel exporter, shipped \$38.7 billion worth of garments in FY26, while total textile exports approached \$40 billion.

The textile sector, which forms the backbone of the apparel industry, is heavily dependent on gas. Textile mills use gas to generate captive power and operate boilers to produce yarn and fabric for garment manufacturers.

The government had assured industries that the gas situation would

improve by 14 August. But industrialists said there had been no significant improvement as of 20 August.

Buyers remain committed

The head of the Dhaka office of a leading US-based buyer told TBS on condition of anonymity that the company had no plans to reduce orders from Bangladesh.

The brand imports more than \$1 billion worth of apparel from Bangladesh annually and has more than 100 local suppliers.

"Almost all of them are delivering on time, although we can see that they are struggling," the representative said. "Factories are having to buy diesel to keep production running, pushing up their costs, but they are still meeting delivery commitments," he said.

The buyer's suppliers include all of Bangladesh's top 10 exporters, including Jaber & Zubair and Square, and none had so far missed delivery deadlines, he added.

A senior official of another European buyer said its suppliers were also continuing to deliver on time. "We have no plans to reduce orders. In fact, our orders have increased slightly in the past two weeks."

The managing director of a leading Bangladeshi exporter with annual exports of more than \$600 million said none of its buyers had indicated plans to cut orders. "However, they are regularly checking on the situation. They are concerned and frustrated."

Shovon Islam, managing director of Sparrow Group, which exports around \$350 million a year, said they were using diesel to keep factories running but had not missed any shipments.

"None of our buyers has told us they will reduce orders," he said, adding that diesel use was increasing the company's costs by around Tk3 crore a month.

One exporter reports order cut

BKMEA President Mohammad Hatem,

who is also MD of MB Knit Fashions, said one of his European buyers had reduced its order by one-third from its original commitment.

"Because of the gas crisis, they don't want to take the risk," he said.

Azhar Khan, chairman of textile mill Methela Group, said gas pressure at his factory was currently just 0-1 PSI against the required level of more than 10 PSI.

"We're using alternatives to keep production running, but even then we can't operate at more than 60% of capacity. Buyers want to place orders, but we are unable to accept them," he told TBS.

Factories turn to costly alternatives

Exporters said many are increasingly turning to solar power, rice husk, diesel, batteries and even wood to keep production running.

"We are using rice husk to run our boilers," said Inamul Hoque Khan Ba-

blu, managing director of Ananta Garments.

Azhar Khan said his company was also using rice husk and diesel to maintain production.

Some weaving mills in Narsingdi have resorted to burning wood, while others are using rice husk to run their boilers, Bablu said.

Many factories are also relying on diesel, which costs three to four times more than gas, significantly raising production costs.

BKMEA to decide next steps

BKMEA members will meet today to discuss the ongoing gas crisis and decide what steps industrialists should take, Hatem said.

"We have arranged the meeting to determine what industrialists should do in the face of the ongoing gas shortage," he said. "We will make a decision after the meeting. We may hold a press conference on Sunday to announce our position," Hatem added.

কুনমিংয়ে মেকং-লানচাং ফল উৎসব বাংলাদেশের কৃষিপণ্য ও ফলে আগ্রহ চীনা ব্যবসায়ীদের

নিজস্ব প্রতিবেদক ■

চীনের ইউনান প্রদেশের রাজধানী কুনমিংয়ের হ্যালো ওয়ার্ল্ড লিভিং মলে শুরু হয়েছে ২০২৬ মেকং লানচাং ফল, কফি, ফুল ও বিয়ার কার্নিভাল। ইউনান প্রদেশের বাণিজ্য বিভাগের আয়োজনে অনুষ্ঠিত এ আন্তর্জাতিক উৎসবে মেকং অঞ্চলের দেশগুলোর ফল ও কৃষিপণ্য নিয়ে বসেছে ৯৪টি স্টল। উৎসবের শুরু থেকেই বাংলাদেশের স্টল ঘিরে স্থানীয় দর্শনার্থী ও ব্যবসায়ীদের মধ্যে ব্যাপক আগ্রহ দেখা যাচ্ছে। আঞ্চলিক কৃষি ও বাণিজ্য সহযোগিতা জোরদারের লক্ষ্য নিয়ে আয়োজিত এ উৎসবে অংশ নিয়েছে চীন, কম্বোডিয়া, ভিয়েতনাম, মিয়ানমার, মালয়েশিয়া, লাওস, বাংলাদেশ ও থাইল্যান্ড। অংশগ্রহণকারী দেশগুলো নিজ নিজ দেশের বৈচিত্র্যময় ফল, কৃষিপণ্য ও খাদ্যপণ্য প্রদর্শনের পাশাপাশি বিক্রির ব্যবস্থাও করেছে। এ আয়োজনে বাংলাদেশ সহ-আয়োজক হিসেবে অংশ নিয়েছে। বাংলাদেশের স্টলে প্রদর্শিত ফল ও কৃষিপণ্য দেখতে দর্শনার্থীদের ভিড় লক্ষ করা গেছে। এ আয়োজনের মাধ্যমে বাংলাদেশের কৃষিপণ্যের বৈচিত্র্য আন্তর্জাতিক বাজারে তুলে ধরার পাশাপাশি চীনের সঙ্গে নতুন বাণিজ্যিক যোগাযোগ তৈরির সুযোগ সৃষ্টি হচ্ছে। উদ্বোধনী অনুষ্ঠানে কুনমিংয়ে বাংলাদেশের কনসাল জেনারেল শাহনাজ রানু বলেন, 'বাংলাদেশ ও চীনের মধ্যে কৃষিপণ্য বাণিজ্য ও অর্থনৈতিক সহযোগিতা নতুন উচ্চতায় পৌঁছেছে। কৃষিপণ্য রফতানি, বিনিয়োগ ও বাণিজ্য সম্প্রসারণে দুই দেশের সহযোগিতা গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা রাখছে।' তিনি বলেন, 'গত বছরের ফল উৎসবের পর বাংলাদেশ ও ইউনানের মধ্যে "থ্রি ফ্রিস অ্যান্ড থ্রি ফ্যাসিলিটেশনস' নীতির আওতায় সহযোগিতা আরো শক্তিশালী হয়েছে। ফলে বাংলাদেশী প্রতিষ্ঠানগুলোর জন্য চীনের

বাজারে প্রবেশের নতুন সুযোগ তৈরি হচ্ছে। বাংলাদেশের প্রধানমন্ত্রী তারেক রহমানের চীন সফরকালীন বাংলাদেশের জাতীয় ফল কাঁঠাল চীনের বাজারে রফতানির জন্য উদ্ভিদ স্বাস্থ্যবিধি (ফাইটোস্যানিটারি) প্রটোকল স্বাক্ষর একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ অগ্রগতি। বাংলাদেশের আম এরই মধ্যে চীনের বাজারে প্রবেশ করেছে এবং ভবিষ্যতে পেয়ারা ও অন্যান্য গ্রীষ্মমণ্ডলীয় ফল রফতানির সম্ভাবনাও রয়েছে।' তিনি ইউনানকে বাংলাদেশের তাজা কৃষিপণ্যের জন্য চীনের একটি গুরুত্বপূর্ণ বাজার হিসেবে উল্লেখ করে বলেন, 'পারস্পরিক সহযোগিতার মাধ্যমে দুই দেশের কৃষি বাণিজ্য আরো সম্প্রসারিত হবে।' 'বড় বাজার ভাগাভাগি, চীনে রফতানি'— স্লোগান সামনে রেখে আয়োজিত উদ্বোধনী অনুষ্ঠানে মেকং-লানচাং অঞ্চলের বিভিন্ন দেশের প্রতিনিধি, কূটনৈতিক, কৃষি ও বাণিজ্য খাতের কর্মকর্তারা অংশ নেন। অনুষ্ঠানে আরো বক্তব্য দেন লানচাং-মেকং উপ-আঞ্চলিক অর্থনৈতিক ও বাণিজ্য উন্নয়ন কেন্দ্রের উপপরিচালক লিউ জি, কুনমিংয়ে নিযুক্ত কম্বোডিয়ার কনসাল জেনারেল হেং পিসাল, থাইল্যান্ডের বাণিজ্যিক প্রতিনিধি চ্যানউইট রুয়াংচাইথাওয়েসুক, ভিয়েতনামের কনসাল জেনারেল নঘিয়েম ভিয়েত চুং এবং ইউনান প্রদেশের কৃষি ও গ্রামীণ বিষয়ক বিভাগের প্রধান কৃষিবিদ কে বিন। উদ্বোধনী অনুষ্ঠান শেষে অতিথিরা প্রদর্শনী ঘুরে দেখেন। আয়োজকরা আশা করছেন, এ উৎসব অংশগ্রহণকারী দেশগুলোর কৃষিপণ্যের বাজার সম্প্রসারণ, বাণিজ্যিক সম্পর্ক বৃদ্ধি এবং কৃষিভিত্তিক সহযোগিতার নতুন সুযোগ তৈরিতে গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা রাখবে। কুনমিংয়ে শুরু হওয়া -এ উৎসব চলবে আগামীকাল পর্যন্ত। মেলায় দর্শনার্থীরা বিভিন্ন দেশের ফল, কৃষিপণ্য, কফি, ফুল ও অন্যান্য পণ্য দেখার পাশাপাশি কেনার সুযোগ পাচ্ছেন।

