

Essay on Garment Industries of Bangladesh Or Prospect of RMG Sector in Bangladesh

Introduction

The garment industry of Bangladesh is progressing by leaps and bounds. GDP of our country has gone high due to garment products. To speak the truth, this industry is notable on the part of Bangladesh. Garment products have been one of the most important goods for exporting in foreign countries. A lot of foreign currencies instead of these products have brought about a radical change in the growing economy of Bangladesh. That is all good. Now ready-made garments (RMG) shines Bangladesh and its economy. Bangladesh exports RMG goods of about 30 thousand crore taka. This is 75 percent of its total export income.

There are many small or big textile industries depending on the RMG sector. Besides cartons, buttons, strings, and the like industries, various kinds of trade and commerce like a bank, insurance companies, transports, C & F, ports, shipping are set up. About 25 lakh laborers are directly engaged in this industry, 80 percent of which are women. Another 10 lakh workers in the industries are associated with the textile and garment industries. So, about 1 crore people are directly and indirectly dependent on this industry. Of course, most of them are dragging a heavy load of family mouths.

Prospect of RMG Sector

Owners of RMG industries are afraid now. In one report of the US International Trade Commission (ITC), it is said that China has taken the most suitable position after 2004 in the quota-free world. And the next will be India. For some strategic reasons, buyers of the US will consider Bangladesh and Pakistan to be the biggest exporting

countries.

Developed, developing, and least developed countries (LDCs) have been competing since 2004 to the greatest extent. It is pertinent to mention that developed and developing countries are on the top as our competitors. If we want to stand against all odds, we have to emphasize competitive price, quality standard of goods, time of serving goods, labor laws of the country and international labor law, bilateral and regional treaties, and so forth.

RMG sector of Bangladesh relies on import of clothes because of lack of textile industry. Besides, the port charge is comparatively high than the rate of other countries, and the interest of the bank, commission, and other rates are also costlier. For hartal, strike and the like political causes import and export of goods are delayed. Transport of goods is also high. If the government and associated business organizations in a body tried to solve the above-mentioned problems, Bangladesh hardened and stabilized its position in 2005.

The air of bilateral and regional treaties is going on in the present world. Bangladesh should also try to do so. Present, in the meantime, has established good relations to face post-MFN with ASEAN countries. BIMSTEC and D-8 countries are also coming closer. This is a good sign for the Bangladeshi RMG sector that Australia, Japan, and some other countries have shown interest to invest in this sector. With these countries, Norway, Canada, New Zealand have given US duty-free access. Our export of RMG is not so much elevated except in EU countries. So the countries that provided us duty-free access should be evaluated as a new market without any lingering.

But a recent incident of the Rana Plaza slide at Savar is a heinous blow to duty-free access to the USA. On 23 April 2013, Rana Plaza with four garment factories housed in it collapsed. Now the 9-story

complex with 3222 workers (according to BGMEA) is under the ground; several traceless workers (approximately 800) have been leveled to the ground and about 2500 (excluding 400 dead bodies) have been rescued while lots of them are still addresses. Seeing such infrastructural defect in our RMG sector buyers of the world markets have almost turned down their face from us. Dan Mazina, the US High Commissioner, deployed in Bangladesh, has already announced that Bangladesh may be faced with a GSP problem for this haphazardous condition. Of course, he has also assured us that he will plead for us to the US buyers' association, and it is a matter of hope for victimized Bangladesh.

It is also a matter of great hope that the National Coordination Council (NCC) on textile and ready-made industries has recommended setting up Central Bonded Warehouses (CBWs) in export processing zones and a Tk. 3000 crore fund to withstand the challenges of post – MFA. The high-powered committee has also suggested that a textile zone should be established with a ready infra structure similar to the EPZs. Some more prescriptions are allowing import of fabrics, grey yarn, dyestuff, and garment machinery, and accessories through back-to-back letters of credit (L / Cs) and re-export of unsold items from the CBWs. If this suggestion comes into force, the demand of the day will be met up. Again, the prospect of the RMG sector is directly involved with the solvency of the garment workers who are pertinent to be mentioned here.

Life of the Garment Workers

For a bright prospect of the RMG sector, the condition of the workers must be called into question. The workers do not know day and night. Most of them have been going on working almost standing all time. Besides overtime duty is compulsory. For the integral work in the confine of the stuffy factory, a worker becomes sickly. He/she often

suffers from dyspepsia, anemia, and the like. He/she has to remain standing for most of her/his duty. As a result, he/she feels his/her legs heavy for deposited blood in them. He/she becomes fade. He /she has no uniform. They are simply dressed. Their dressing is a combination of patched clothes. They are an early riser. They usually get up at 5 a.m. and run to the workplace with a tiffin box in their hands. They usually live in very unhygienic slum areas.

Their drinking water is impure. Most of the workers are female. A lot of child laborers are employed in these factories. Many divorcees are working here. Female workers are sexually being harassed now and then. These are the negative sides for a garments worker. Above all, they are ill-paid instead of rib-breaking labor. Someone is still paid only 1500 taka per month whereas the minimum salary has been fixed Tk. 3000/month. Despite the flourishing period of the garment industry, they are drooping for continuous work day by day. But their pecuniary condition is unchanged. Again, Savar's tragedy has appeared to them as another plague. Lots of fresh lives and fresh dreams have been buried under the ground. Lots of kinsmen (parents, spouse, sister, brother, daughter, son, beloved, and others) of the wounded, survivors, dead, and traceless have gathered around the ravaged Rana Plaza.

In the stinking of dead bodies in the air, they are questing back their darling persons in a pensive or vacant mood. Prime Minister and opposition leader including other political figures and general people are wordless; they are dumbfounded now. But alas! the main culprits behind this tragic note are still out of reach; they are also missing voluntarily. The untimely dropouts will never come again under this sun, their kinsmen will never wait for them to come. At last, the deprived rebounded by the wall behind have begun to rise, though very late. Now they know how to revolt against the capitalist owners, and such sign bids fair of the bright future of the RMG

sector of the country. Of course, the govt. the side has come forward to compensate the destitute of the RMG sector.

Conclusion

Undoubtedly hope and fear are working in the weak minds of the weak poor commoners of Bangladesh where 30 percent of the total population is unemployed and 40 percent live below the poverty line, and where the workers are neglected by the owners. Again, fire incidents in garment industries are very rampant now. In the meantime, many workers have been dead in a fire accidents in many garment factories. Somebody thinks that for displeasure it is happening. Yet the mentality to fight with hard obstacles, 25 years long experience, cheap labor- all point to the happy future of the RMG sector of Bangladesh.