

## The RMG Sector - An Investigation into the Tripartite MoU for Betterment of the Sector & Its Workforce

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*Abstract: One of the most promising industrial sectors of Bangladesh is the Readymade Garments (RMG) sector, which is important both in terms of employment and export earnings. The sector plays an important role in the overall economic development of our country. At present approximately 25 lakh workers (among which 80% is female) are working in this sector, which is a great source of employment. Considering the other business activities associated with RMG, the number of people indirectly employed in this sector ranges between 10 to 20 million. This is unquestionably a colossal employment market for an economy afflicted with the classical syndrome of unemployment and poverty. Apart from the quantity of foreign exchange it earns, the garment sector should occupy the centre stage of national priorities also for the sheer size of the employment market under its command. The objectives of this study are to assess compliance of the MoU for the betterment of the RMG sector; and to suggest some measures helpful for creating an atmosphere for boost up of the sector and smooth foreign exchange earnings for the country. Further, the study, observing the overall perspective of mitigating labour unrest in the RMG sector in compliance with the MoU, come up with some suggestive measures which could be of assistance to this vital sector perform better if those are taken into action.*

### 1.0 Introduction

One of the most promising industrial sectors of Bangladesh is the Readymade Garments (RMG) sector, which is important both in terms of employment and export earnings. The sector is featured by the presence of a staggering labour intensive mode of production with a colossal role in the empowerment of women and elimination of poverty. The envious growth of this industry during the last two and half decades bestowed the country and its workforce (most of them are women) an image boost around the world. In 1979m there were 9 export-oriented RMG units in the country generating export revenue of less than one million dollars. By 2005/6, the number of factories rose to more than 4,300 with an export income of more than US\$ 8.0 billion (Hussain, Md. Ghulam 2006).

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The sector plays an important role in the overall economic development of our country. At present approximately 25 lakh workers (among which 80% is female) are working in this sector, which is a great source of employment. It is also mentionable that about 76% of our foreign exchange is also earned by this sector. But after elimination of quota under MFA, Bangladesh does not have the protected market any more. With the collapse of Savar Spectrum Garment factory the issues of Social Compliance has become a burning issue in this sector and lots of pressure have been imposed on the industry proprietors as well as on the government regarding the safety of workers and their overall welfare. The safety of the workers has become a national issue.

This sector alone contributes to more than 81 per cent of the growth in the value of country's export over the past 22 years between 1984 and 2006. It may be worthwhile to note that in early eighties when garments sector emerged as a stakeholder on the industrial map of Bangladesh, its contribution to export earning was only 10 per cent. Compared to that modest beginning, at present it accounts for about 76 per cent share of the country's total foreign exchange earning through export. It is in itself a huge achievement for a single sub-sector under the manufacturing sector. It accounts for 25 per cent of the total value added in manufacturing, while its share in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is 17 per cent. The impact of this sector on the economy is also huge and diversified. Various sectors of the economy including transport, distribution of goods, services and construction activities have been receiving the desired boost from the sector. If one views only the scenario of industrial employment in the country, it would be found that the garment has appeared as the single largest provider of blue collar jobs in the economy at 40 per cent of the total workforce in manufacturing. Considering the other business activities associated with RMG, the number of people directly employed in this sector ranges between 10 to 20 million. This is unquestionably a colossal employment market for an economy afflicted with the classical syndrome of unemployment and poverty. Apart from the quantity of foreign exchange it earns, the garment sector should occupy the centre stage of national priorities also for the sheer size of the employment market under its command (The Financial Express -Tuesday July 10 2007).

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The specific objective of the study is to assess compliances of the MoU

for the betterment of the RMG sector; and the other objective is to -

♦ suggest some measures helpful for creating an atmosphere for boost up of the sector and smooth foreign exchange earnings for the country.

### 1.2 Rationale of the Study

In current circumstances, to square up the problems prevailing in the sector and the threats coming from the competitors there are some musts ahead of us - not only the markets niches abroad; the jobs of millions of workers have also to be saved. The recent unrest in the RMG units in and around the capital city is an issue the government as well as the direct stakeholder in the RMG sector must take seriously. As is well known, the unrest has a lot to do with the demands for pay raise of the workers, existing safety standards in the factories and the overall condition of work. The media continues to cover reports of sporadic eruption of turbulence in the garment units.

### 1.3 Methodology

- a. Review the status of compliances with national and international standards for pre-MoU period.
- b. Focus on the outbursts of labour unrest.
- c. Both primary and secondary data have been used here to evaluate the compliances with the MoU.
- d. The primary data were collected from sample survey.
- e. A set of indicator was used to evaluate compliances.
- f. Results have been analyzed with traditional statistical means.

### 1.4 Scope and Limitations

The study covers -

- i) overview of the RMG sector;
- ii) its mitigation approaches which includes the tripartite MoU, implementation of its clauses along with compliance monitoring; and
- iii) recommending measures based on the findings come out from the study.

The study also tries to focus on the well-beings of the workforce involved

from a broader perspective and does not, rationally, cover the total length of this huge work environ.

### 1.5 Plan of Presentation

The paper consists of five chapters. The introductory one encompasses the overview of the RMG sector in brief. Chapter II accommodates the burning issue of the sector that is, labour unrest and its reasons and the tripartite MoU signed to mitigate the problem. The third chapter examines the MoU itself, how it is being exercised, monitoring mechanisms etc. The fourth and fifth chapters provide the findings and concluding statement along with suggestive measures respectively.

### 2.0 Recent Labour Unrest

2.1 The months of May and June 2006 have witnessed series of rebellious incidences in the garments sector of Bangladesh. On May 3, garment workers and supporters staged a peaceful protest against a sudden wage cut by the management of EPZ. The management of Ring Shine called in the police. There were clashes between the workers and the police that left two persons (one worker and one supporter) dead and about 200 injured. Outraged demonstrators ransacked the factory in vengeance. 6 persons were arrested, and another 80 face charges of property damage.

Outside EPZ, the labour insurgency started on May 20 at FS Sweater Factory in Shripur under Gazipur district. Workers gathered and refused to work unless 3 fellow workers were released from custody. The factory management reportedly locked the workers in the factory. The workers fought their way out and barricaded the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway for 6 hours and fought pitched battles with cops. One worker was killed and 70 left injured.

On May 22 workers of Universal Garments Limited gathered to demand 3 months arrear wages but were pushed "back by the factory security staff. In retaliation, the workers went to neighbouring factories and sought their supports. Several thousand workers joined the possession. 2 factories were torched and 100 more ransacked, over 300 company and management vehicles wrecked. The highways were blocked. Media reports stated that some thousands unruly people mostly outsiders stormed the Bando Design Enterprise at Savar EPZ on May 22 and damaged machine, motor vehicles and furniture holding innocent

workers hostage. May 23 started with attack on Little Star Spinning Mills Limited. The revolt then spread to more factories and industrial areas of Dhaka were closed. Workers took the revolt from the industrial suburbs, where factories were being looted, destroying cars and attacking commercial buildings. The two days long reign of terror was let loose by the unruly elements in different industrial belts in and around Dhaka including Savar, Ashulia, Tongi, Mirpur, Uttara, Tejgaon, Gazipur and Rupgonj that left over 300 factories damaged and 19 others burnt. Mass demonstrations demanded an end to / repression, release of arrested workers, higher minimum wages, weekly holidays, overtime pay, public holidays, payment of arrear wages, etc. Throughout June, clashes in the garment producing areas have continued, the main issues being victimization of militants, and non-implementation of previously agreed concessions. Strikes continually break out at individual factories, workers nearby stop work to join the spontaneous demonstrations. The owners blame foreign conspiracy, but apparently appeared eccentric and phoney. In any case, nobody could deny the fact that the current spate of agitation relates to compliance also.

Although there exists more than 40 union representing garments workers, the level of unionization among workers is very poor ILO commissioned survey narrated that most trade unions in the garment sector operated from outside the factories and they lack wholesale active participation of the general workers. The survey says that there is also need to improve the institutional capacity of basic unions and industrial federations in this sector to deliver effective membership services and more transparent and responsible actions by the union leadership. Violence in workplaces is not desirable. The recent turmoil also indicates that the garments workers need to be organized and engaged in systematic bargaining. The deliberate discouragement by the owners to form unions inside the factories deprives them from nominating collective bargaining agents.

According to a report of government enquiry committee, the main reasons of the two days violence and vandalism at different garment factories on May 22 and 23 are: (a) absence of working atmosphere, (b) violation in payment of workers' wages as per minimum wage structures fixed by the government, (c) irregular payment of wages with other financial benefits like overtime; (d) resorting to dillydally tactics by a section of employer to pay compensation to the families of the workers

killed in accidents; and (e) indecent behaviour of a section of officials (mid-level management) to deal with the workers, etc. The enquiry committee recommended ensuring of job security, regular payment of wages, revision and implementation of minimum wages and necessary measures to resist accidents and ensure safety and security of the workers to address the problems and labour unrest in the garments sector.

2.2 Following the unrest, the factory owners at a tripartite meeting accepted almost all demands of the garments workers including the right to form trade unions, weekly holidays, maternity leave and issuance of appointment letters and identity cards. The meeting formed a minimum wage board comprising representatives from the government, factory owners and workers. And a formal memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on June 12, 2006 between the Government, RMG associations and labour unions; in which the following 10 issues were mutually agreed upon:

- 1) strongly condemning the unwanted incidents that took place in different locations resulting in loss of properties, etc., all of them expressed their sorrow and an unanimous decision was taken to stop such incidents immediately;
- 2) to withdraw the police cases that were filed against the workers in Gazipur, Tongi, Savar and Ashulia police stations who were involved in the turmoil;
- 3) workers involved in the movement will not lose their jobs;
- 4) in order to return to the normal situation, the factories that were closed due to the unrests should resume operations immediately;
- 5) all workers will be provided with letters of employment and identity cards;
- 6) no restrictions shall be imposed on the trade union activities and on the right to bargain;
- 7) as per as the existing labour laws, all workers should be entitled to a one day leave per week. Also, as per as the existing labour laws, all due leave to the workers should be ensured;
- 8) if the workers have to work more than 8 hours per day, they will be given overtime payments;
- 9) as per as the existing labour laws, maternity leave should be given with full pay; and

10) to review and revise the existing wage structure, a minimum wage fixation board will be formed.

2.3 Having signed the tripartite agreement (MOU) among government, exporters associations and the trade union federations on 12 June 2006, both BGMEA and BKMEA have assigned responsibility of collecting information on the 10 points of the MOU to their own monitoring teams. BGMEA conducted inspections in 2,893 factories during the period from 18 July 2006 to 10 August 2006 and 3 September 2006 to 15 October 2006. Information received from BGMEA reveal that more than three-fourths of the inspected factories have issued appointment letters to the workers, more than 90 percent enterprises are providing different leaves and weekly holidays, 75 percent are providing maternity leaves with admissible benefits and more than 81 percent factories are paying overtime allowances regularly.

#### 2.4 Causes of Recent Labour Unrest

Apparently general causes of labour unrest are the follows

- a) insufficient training and motivational programme by few enterprises;
- b) increase of living cost of the workers;
- c) hiring and firing tendency by few enterprises;
- d) lack of individual attitude among the workers and investors;
- e) weak internal security system of the enterprises;
- f) inefficient mid level management ;
- g) inadequate wage and overtime and remuneration;
- h) piece rate in sweater factory;
- i) service insecurity;
- j) absence of leave; and
- k) absence of maternity benefit.

#### 2.5 The Follow-up of Unrest incidences and the MoU

The unprecedented May 2006 labour unrest has forced the Ministry of Labour and Employment (ML&E) to switch over her focus from monitoring the progress on compliance activities to the implementation of the 10-points tripartite MOU reached on 12 June 2006 between the Government, workers and the owners. To monitor the implementation of these 10 points, Ministry of Labour and Employment has taken following steps:

- (a) created 15 inspection teams - 10 for Dhaka region and 5 for Chittagong region;
- (b) each team is composed of representatives from Labour Department and Factory Inspection & Establishment Department;
- (c) these teams check and collect information on 8 (eight) aspects at the factory level as follows:
  - (i) whether appointment letter has been issued;
  - (ii) whether identity card has been given to workers;
  - (iii) whether workers allowed to enjoy weekly holidays;
  - (iv) whether minimum lowest wage is paid to workers;
  - (v) whether wages are paid regularly;
  - (vi) whether workers are required to work overtime;
  - (vii) whether overtime allowances are paid; and
  - (viii) whether workers are allowed to enjoy maternity leave.
- (d) inspected garments factories have been grouped as (a) compliant (fulfilment of all conditions), (b) semi-compliant (non-fulfilment of only one condition) and (c) non-compliant (non-fulfilment of two or more conditions) factories based on their level of compliance of the major provisions of the Labour Law;

### **3.0 Compliances as Regards the RMG Sector**

#### **3.1 What is Compliance?**

Compliance is the maintenance of certain recognized standards. It is a code of conduct that takes into account minimum labour standards, occupational safety measures and environmental concerns. Minimum labour standards cover wages, working hours, over time, safety, job security, right to form trade union, and also social security. It also ensures non-violation of human rights. Social benefits are socially responsible management which includes bonus, cash incentive, working condition, maternity leave, medical facilities, arrangement for food including safe drinking water, prayer place, transportation, festival bonus, etc. Compliance and productivity have close relations, because without good working conditions, minimum wage, etc., the workers can not be expected to improve their skill to produce more or quality products.



### 3.2 Why is Compliance so Important?

The allegation on working conditions and environment against the RMG industry in Bangladesh does not have any boundary. These include, inter alia, wages are low, hours are long, forced labour is practised, overtime bills are not met, payments are irregular, child labour exists, sexual harassment exists, freedom is curtailed, entries are locked, and multitude of other practices which are termed to go against international labour standards and codes of conduct. At the level of legislation and business dealings, lack of enforcement of laws, restrictive laws, and unfair buying practices by the buyers compound the issue of non-compliance. "

### 3.3 Problems of Compliance

Compliance does carry some inherent risks and additional costs for the industry. Experiences with the elimination of child labour from Bangladesh RMG industry reveal that compliance initiatives are not necessarily and properly remunerated by the buyers. There are about one thousand buyers operating in Bangladesh. The compliance requirements among these buyers vary widely and most buyers have their own set of codes. These codes are also changing. Many factories have multiple buyer orders running at the same time, making it difficult for producers to always comply with buyer requirements (Iftekar, 2005). The problems associated with compliance in Bangladesh may be grouped as (a) regulatory inadequacies; (b) non-enforcement; (c) lack of adequate physical facilities and governance, and (d) other problems.

### 3.4 Regulatory Inadequacy

Different workers' organizations and the civil society (as well as buyers) have been asking for removal of inadequacies in respect of working hours, night law, overtime, method of calculation of overtime, etc. The new Labour Law allows maximum 60 hours including additional 12 hours overtime per week. Many RMG firms find this working hour is not sufficient to meet peak season delivery deadlines (Murshid et al, 2003). However, the new law attempts to ease the ambiguity with respect to the method of calculation of overtime. According to Section 108 of the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006, the overtime shall be twice the basic wage plus dearness allowances and ad hoc wage, if any. Section 109 of the Law stipulates that a female worker can not be asked to work from 10.00 PM to 6.00 AM without her consent. Stipulation to provide appointment

letters and identity cards to the workers under Section 5 is a welcome insertion in the Law.

### 3.5 Poor Enforcement of Laws

It has been mentioned that Bangladesh had 25 labour related laws in force till 11 October 2006. An apparent lack of consistencies and clarities among these laws made their enforcement cumbersome and weak. While admitting the fact that updating and reconciliation of the existing laws are very useful in improving the overall regulatory environment for compliance, the presence of well trained, honest and dedicated inspection machinery is also needed to enforce them. Proper enforcement of law can help the industry meet at least 80 percent of the requirements of the international compliance practices, observed in the last UNDP-MFA Forum international conference held in Dhaka during June 2-3, 2006.

Their implementation. It also contains information on the compliance requirements of the Basic Social Compliance Initiatives (a retailers' association in Europe), compliance requirements of major European buyers, requirements of North American buyers, provisions of ILO convention, etc. A similar attempt has also been taken by BGMEA. London based International MFA Forum has prepared a draft Jo-In code for Bangladesh RMG industry.

Meanwhile, the government has enacted the "Bangladesh Labour Law 2006", reconciling as many as 25 laws and regulations on labour related affairs. Bangladesh has ratified seven out of eight core ILO conventions. Despite all these efforts, there are some pertinent questions that need to be addressed.

### 3.6 Other Problems

Other serious problems having indirect bearing to factory standard and compliance are frequent disruption in power supply forcing the workers to do overtime, absence of workers' organizations (unions) inside most factories, a weak and ineffective mid-level management, an apparent lack of knowledge and awareness among the workers of their rights and entitlements and non-existence of any premium or incentive for becoming compliant. As compliance has a cost, this absence of any premium may be attributed to the sluggish growth of compliant industries. Despite these, it is graduating as compliant every day. Becoming compliant with social and labour standards.

### 3.7 Compliance Practices in Bangladesh

Bangladesh's record on compliance and standard in general is poor, although the °RMG industry has registered remarkable improvement in recent times. Most of the studies conducted have shown that violation of the laws has been extensive in the RMG industry. Adherence to internationally recognized core labour standards has appeared to be modest although Bangladesh has ratified seven out of eight ILO conventions relating to workers.

Several studies reveal that the owners exploited the abundance and unskilled position of the workers. Reports on unnoticed dismissals or illegal terminations resulting to conflicts are not uncommon. Also there are reports of deprivation of severance benefits to the workers. Absence of any legal contract has produced conflicts between the workers and the owners.

As there had no legal bindings for the factory owners to issue appointment letters, they usually did not issue that. Section 5 of the recently enacted Bangladesh Labour Law 2006 has made issuance of appointment letters and identity cards to the workers mandatory. This will definitely bring about much desired sense of security in the workplaces.

The Minimum Wage Ordinance 1994 fixes the minimum wage at Taka 930 only and this remained unchanged for about 12 years. There were reports in the media that even this minimum wage was not religiously enforced. Section 139 of the labour law 2006 provides that the minimum wage may be revised in five years. It also says that the government may revise the minimum wage upon receipt of a request from the owners or workers or jointly from them. Minimum wage was also point of MOU.

The Factory Act 1965 allows factories to operate six days a week and 12 hours a day including overtime. The weekly holiday is on Friday. The Act provides women to work overtime up until 8.0 o'clock at night. The Act also provides that no worker should be forced to work for six hours at a stretch without an hour's break or two half-hour breaks. Several studies reported information violating the above mentioned provisions of the law (Jamaly & Wickramanayake, 1996). To meet delivery deadlines, workers are often forced to work beyond 8 o'clock in the night, or asked to work throughout the week without a day off. It is true that often workers show interest to work overtime for extra income. Nevertheless, it is not

necessarily rewarding for the owner as he faces delivery deadlines associated with excessive dependence on imported raw materials, frequent disruption in electricity supply, political unrest, inefficiency of the port and customs, weak infrastructure, poor governance, red tape and corruption, etc. force him to resort to continue works in contravention of the provisions of the Law. Poor or almost non-existence of enforcement also encourages the owners to disregard the law.

Many criticize the provision of leave for the workers are nominal while compared with leave available for a government servant. According to Sections 78 to 81 of the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006, in addition to weekly holidays, workers are entitled to enjoy different types of leaves that include 20 days annual leave with wages, 10 days festival holidays, 10 days casual leave on full pay, 14 days sick leave on half pay, (8+8=16) weeks maternity leave, etc. The government has extended the period of maternity leave from 12 to 16 weeks in Section 46 of the Bangladesh Labour Law 2006.

### 3.8 Evolving Buyers' Preferences

Although there exist no prohibitions in forming workers' unions in the factory, in reality, the factory managements do not encourage such activity of the workers. As a result, there exists apprehension among the workers of losing jobs should the management become displeased for joining unions. There are around 40 registered workers' associations in the country, and they hardly possess any common understanding. There exists a common fear among the owners about the unions that these are highly politicized and often militant.

In addition to the issues mentioned above, in many a cases, workers are not aware of their rights and responsibilities. The May 2006 turmoil in the RMG sector is attributable to the discontent prevalent among the general workers with regard to wages, overtime, leave, etc. On the top of these, the mid-level management has been identified as a serious hindrance to establishing a healthy working atmosphere inside the factory.

## 4.0 Analysis & Findings

4.1 As a result of the tripartite MoU, to combat the Labour unrest in RMG industries, labour unrest and their movement were neutralized. Thereafter, the consequences of the movement entirely depend on the successful implementation or compliance of the MoU. For this reason,

the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE) took following measures:

1. Instantly 15 inspection teams (10 for Dhaka division and 5 for Chittagong division) were formed under the Notification of MOLE bearing memo no. k'IKg/kv-6/cwi'k©b-1/2006/54 Zvwil-29 'R"ô 1413/12 Ryb 2006 for monitoring the compliance of MoU;
2. To determine the minimum wage for Labour, the Wage Board constituted earlier was requested to minimum wage for the RMG sector labourer.. Accordingly, the Wage Board determined the minimum wage at the rate of Tk. 1662.50 per month instead of Tk. 930.00.

On the other hand, the association of employers BGMEA and BKMEA also took the following measures for implementing or compliance of the said MoU:

1. Not to remove any labour on the ground of movement.
2. To ensure their own monitoring system to achieve the compliance.
3. To resume operations of all factories, those were closed due to unrest.
4. To withdraw the police case against the labour.
5. To issue the appointment letter to the labour.
6. To provide the identity card to the labour.
7. To ensure weekly holiday.
8. To pay minimum wage at rate Tk. 1662.50 on a regular basis.
9. To ensure maternity leave for female labour.

Subsequently, The Bangladesh Labour Law 2006 (Act 42 of 2006) was enacted with immediate effect as compliance with the MoU. There are so many sections there that can contribute to meet the goal.

Therefore, an assessment has been made to evaluate the degree of compliance of the MoU in this study. With a view to evaluate the degree of compliance, the following 8 assessment indicators have been determined.

- (i) whether appointment letter is to be issued;
- (ii) whether identity card is to be given to the worker;
- (iii) whether weekly holiday is to be ensured to the worker;
- (iv) whether minimum wage is to be paid to the worker;
- (v) whether the wage is to be paid regularly;

- (vi) whether worker is to be involved in overtime work;
- (vii) whether overtime allowance is to be paid to the worker on regular basis; and
- (viii) whether maternity leave is to be ensured to the worker.

The above mentioned inspection team made their primary visit in 1523 factories of Dhaka and 463 factories of Chittagong with in June to October 2006 and also made their follow up visit in 50 of Dhaka and 389 of Chittagong with in March to July 2007. The team obtained the information from their inspection regarding the compliance of MoU based on the above indicators on basis of a binary response either 'yes' or 'no' of a respondent labour or a management personnel. The information obtained from visited factories against indicators is shown in Table - 1 and Table - 2 (annexed at the end).

#### 4.2 Findings

The compliance of MoU for a factory was evaluated in 3 ways: - 1) If each response for a factory against 8 indicators is 'yes', the factory is fully compliant. 2) If any two responses for a factory against any two indicators are 'No', the factory is partially or semi-compliant. 3) In case of more than two responses are 'No', the factory is non-compliant with MoU.

It is observed from the primary visit that 18.0 % factories in Dhaka Division and 19.8% in Chittagong Division are non-compliant, on the other hand, 30.0% in Dhaka and 35.0% in Chittagong are complaint. In a follow up visit, it is found that 6.0% in Dhaka and 23.4% in Chittagong are non-compliant, on the other hand, 66.0% in Dhaka and 54.0% in Chittagong are compliant.

Therefore, it may be concluded that any factory, which is compliant with MoU, may be a non-compliant one in any time in absence of proper monitoring.

### **5.0 Recommendation & Conclusion**

#### 5.1 Recommendations

The study, observing the overall perspective of mitigating labour unrest in the RMG sector in compliance with the MoU, comes up with the following recommendations:

- Monitoring system should be more intensive;
- Worker and management relation should be developed.
- Continuous training program workers and mid level managers should be ensure;
- Worker should be motivated that there also be part of the industry;
- Awareness build up training should be imparted;
- Participation committee should be from and meet once in a week;
- Some welfare schemes (Scholarship for the children facilities, low cost housing, Medical facilities etc.
- Measure should be taken to supervise to sudden super vision of the motoring team.

## 5.2 Conclusion

Empirical findings on compliance in this sector particularly are rather outdated and irregular. These, as such, should not be treated as representative while considering the recent awakening developments that have been taken place within the industry following cessation of MFA system on the one hand, and major tragedies such as Spectrum and KTS accidents, on the other. Backed by enormous and enduring pressures from the demand side, these successive tragedies have generated an momentum for change in the RMG sector. The workers uproar of May 2006 have again brought to the fore the need for urgent and meaningful change. Apart from compliance, other burning issues such as buying practices, turnover time, infrastructural development, corruption and red tapes, development of linkage industries etc. need to be addressed simultaneously.

**Table - 1****Compliance-level of RMG sector on month-wise monitoring found in first visit (Dhaka Division)**

Name of Month	Inspection	Compliant	%	Semi-compliant	%	Non-compliant	%	Shifted	Closed	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
June/2006 (18/6/06 to 30/6/06)	155	30	19.35	17	10.97	108	69.68	-	-	
July/2006	286	93	32.52	23	8.04	170	59.44	-	-	
August/2006	214	139	64.95	20	9.35	52	24.30	-	3	
September /2006	92	40	43.48	09	9.78	43	46.74	-	-	
October/2006	10	-	-	-	-	10	100	-	-	
November/2006	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Monitoring was suspended at this period
December/2006	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
January/2007	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
February/2007	59	27	45.76	17	28.81	14	23.73	01	-	
March/2007	121	50	41.32	55	45.45	16	13.22	-	-	
April/2007	118	59	50	45	38.13	12	10.17	01	01	
May/2007	146	72	49.31	50	34.25	24	16.44	-	-	
June/2007	118	56	47.46	35	29.66	27	22.88	-	-	
<b>Total =</b>	<b>1319</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>42.91</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>20.55</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>36.09</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>04</b>	



**Table - 2**

**Compliance-level of RMG sector on month-wise monitoring found in first visit (Chittagong Division)**

Name of Month	Inspection	Compliant	%	Semi-compliant	%	Non-compliant	%	Shifted	Closed	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
June/2006 (18/6/06 to 30/6/06)	148	80	54.05	52	35.13	16	10.08	-	-	
July/2006	209	50	23.92	89	42.58	70	34.49	-	-	
August/2006	97	31	31.95	62	63.91	04	04.12	-	-	
September /2006	09	03	33.33	04	44.44	02	22.22	-	-	
<b>Total =</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>164</b>	<b>35.42</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>44.70</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>19.87</b>	-	-	

**Reference:**

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- বাংলাদেশ শ্রম আইন, ২০০৬ (২০০৬ সনের ৪২ নং আইন), ১১ অক্টোবর, ২০০৬;
- বাংলাদেশ শ্রমিক কল্যাণ ফাউন্ডেশন আইন, ২০০৬ (২০০৬ সনের ২৫ নং আইন), জুলাই, ২০০৬;
- বিজ্ঞপ্তি নং নিমবো/নিঃমঃনিঃ/গার্মেন্টস শিল্প/২০০৬/৩৩৮, তারিখ: ১২ সেপ্টেম্বর, ২০০৬ (নিম্নতম মজুরী বোর্ড এর সুপারিশ।