

7th Bangladesh Round Table on Social Compliance

- Synopsis -

The 7th Bangladesh Round Table on Social Compliance, held on 24 November at Dhaka with the agenda:

“Towards achieving full compliance –
The Role of Stakeholders, Challenges in time of tremendous potentiality.”

Stakeholders discussed social perspectives, the risk in time of a rapidly growing market and what to be addressed by whom individually or in cooperation.

The round table, brought together about 30 people representing buyers, manufacturers, suppliers, trade union and labour activists and NGOs. Mr. Fakrul Ahsan, chief of General Economic Division of the government's Planning Commission, spoke as special guest.

The organizer Christian von Mitzlaff explained the objective of this 7th Round Table and asked for the participants' view for the next year agenda. He called for identifying the potentials in the RMG sector, the risks involved and how to address them jointly.



Dr. Wajed-ul Islam Khan, general secretary of Bangladesh Trade Union Centre, Khairul Basher, Director (compliance) of Ha-meem Group, Payal Jain, CSR Regional Manager of H&M, Ismail Hossain Khan, Adviser, Admin, HR and Compliance of Northern Group, Syed Anwarul Sabir, GM, Admin and Compliance of Palmal Group, Towhidur Rahman, President of BAWF, Syed Sultan Uddin, Asst. Executive Director of BILS, Zia Ahad of PVH Corporation and Fakhrul Ahsan spoke at the opening session.

Fakhrul Ahsan touched on salary adjustment with rising prices of the essentials, raising productivity and price competitiveness. He said it is important to continually adjust workers' salaries with rising prices. "Social compliance is both a social and a moral issue," he said.

After the tea break the participants brainstormed in the working session. The discussion brought out a list of issues to be potentially addressed by the Round Table: Working hours and overtime, child labour, labour unrest, safety and health, environment (including clean water), participatory committee, productivity and gain sharing with education and training

of managers as well as workers awareness raising, social safety network, adjustment of wages with inflation, maternity leave, labour governance, common code of conduct, devise ways how to ensure workers' representation on various level, abuse and harassment of workers at work places. The participants welcomed the proposal to include Chittagong and one industrial regional hub as venue for 2012.

During the intense discussion the above 14 topics were scale down by vote to only remain four topics as orientation for the Round Tables agenda in 2012. These are: Social Safety Net (Dhaka); Wages and productivity and education (Dhaka), Occupational Safety & Health (Chittagong) and Ensuring workers participation at various levels (one industrial hub).

The concluding discussion was held on how to mobilize future Round Tables to ensure participation of more decision makers. The organiser volunteered for a consultation process with the respective participants group to develop a participatory mobilization.

The 8th Bangladesh Round Table on Social Compliance is foreseen in March 2012 at Chittagong.



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