April 2025
Newsletter No 04

Footwear Exchange

A platform of people worldwide who make the footwear, leather and allied industry work.

connect@footwearexchange.com

the footprint

monthly newsletter by **Footwear Exchange**

EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Readers,

Footprint April Edition is Launched!

As we step into the new month, we reflect on the celebrations of Eid, which brought joy and a sense of togetherness to families across the nation. While the festive season has passed, the local business of Eid continues to have a lasting impact, especially for the allied sectors of footwear, leather, and textiles. The demand for new shoes, accessories, and leather goods during this time has been significant, creating opportunities for businesses to thrive.

Looking ahead, we also approach the celebration of Bangla New Year, a time for renewal and cultural pride. This presents another exciting opportunity for our industry to cater to the evolving needs of consumers, particularly in the fashion and retail sectors.

In this edition, we explore the latest trends in the footwear and leather industry, with a focus on growing domestic demand, innovative designs, and how local businesses are positioning themselves for success in the upcoming months. With the changing market dynamics, it's essential to stay ahead by adapting to consumer preferences and embracing new business strategies.

We hope this newsletter provides useful insights and inspires continued growth and collaboration within our industry

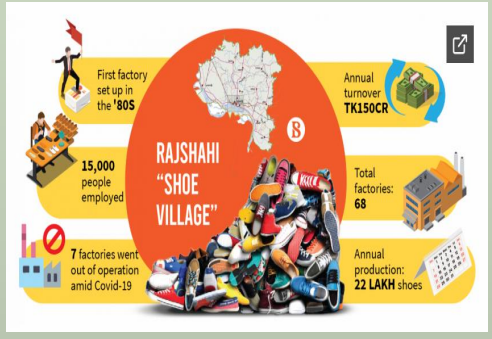
Let's continue exchanging ideas and embracing opportunities for growth.

Thank you for your ongoing support

INSIDE

Page 2-3

Kaluhati Shoe Village: Thriving Alongside Footwear Brands to Meet Festival Demand



Page 4

Remembering Syed Manzur Elahi: A Visionary Leader in Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Industry

Page 5

All Sub Segments Up: March delivers a boost in Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Exports

Page 6

CMEVA Sole Manufacturing Process: Precision and Quality in Footwear

Page 7

Let's Meet Footwear Exchange Campus Ambassador 2025

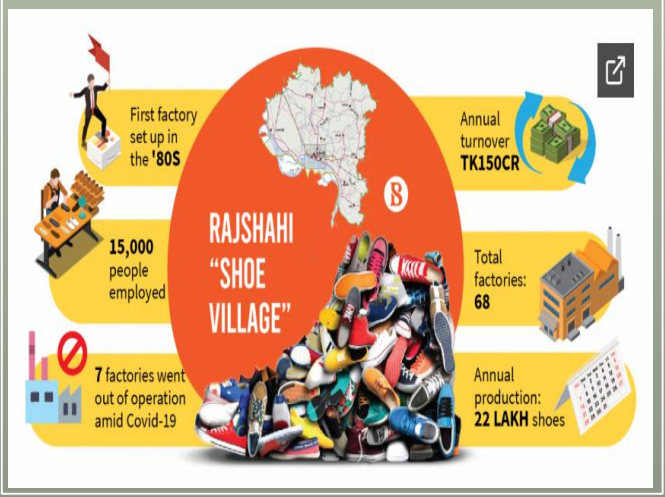
Kaluhati Shoe Village: Thriving Alongside Footwear Brands to Meet Festival Demand

Eid is a time of heightened demand for footwear in Bangladesh, as consumers flock to stores and markets to purchase new shoes for the festive occasion. While established retail brands such as Apex, Bata, Orion, and Bay dominate the high-end market, a significant portion of the footwear business comes from local suppliers, especially in regions like Kaluhati Shoe Village. The question arises: Is the Eid business more significant for established brands or for local manufacturers like Kaluhati?

The Birth of Kaluhati Shoe Village

Kaluhati, a village under Charghat upazila in Rajshahi, has become known as the "Shoe Village" due to its thriving footwear industry, with many residents involved in shoe manufacturing. The village has gained a new name as the 'Shoe Village' of Rajshahi. Kaluhati Shoe Association, with around 120 members, puts out 90 percent of its total production in leather, with 10 percent shoes made of jute and rexine.

Kaluhati's journey into the footwear industry began in the early '80s, established the first shoe factory, Mukta Shoe, in **1981**. Since then, the village has grown significantly, with over **68 factories** producing an array of leather, jute, and rexine footwear.



Kaluhati Shoe Village: A Powerhouse of Mass Market Production:

- **Annual Production**: Kaluhati produces over 22 lakh shoes each year, with the Eid period accounting for about 30-40% of that total. This means over 6 lakh pairs of shoes are produced sp**Economic Impact**: The **annual turnover** of Kaluhati's shoe industry is approximately **Tk 150 crore**, with a significant chunk coming during Eid sales. The Eid period alone generates an estimated **Tk 45-60 crore** in revenue.
- **Employment Surge**: Over **15,000 people** are employed directly or indirectly in the footwear industry in Kaluhati, with **30%** of the workforce being women. During Eid, temporary workers and overtime hours increase production capacity significantly.
- **Production Breakdown**: Kaluhati's shoes are predominantly made of leather, comprising **90%** of the total production. The remaining **10%** consists of jute and rexine shoes. Most raw materials are sourced from **Dhaka and Chattogram**.
- **Local Distribution**: The shoes produced in Kaluhati are distributed across various districts, including Dhaka, Khulna, and Rajshahi, meeting the demands of the **mass market**, especially in rural and suburban areas.



Source: New age, The business Standard, Bangladesh Sangbad sangstha.

Kaluhati Shoe Village: Thriving Alongside Footwear Brands to Meet Festival Demand

Comparative Analysis: Volume vs. Profit Margins

- **Volume of Sales**: Kaluhati's high-volume, low-cost approach means that during Eid, they likely outpace established brands in terms of total units sold.
- **Revenue Comparison**: Although popular footwear brands like Bata and Apex generate higher revenue per unit, Kaluhati's volume of sales during Eid contributes to a substantial total turnover. The estimated annual turnover for Kaluhati is Tk 150 crore, with Eid sales accounting for 30-40% of this figure, while established brands see significant revenue boosts, but their overall production volume is lower than that of Kaluhati.
- **Sales Surge During Eid**: Kaluhati Shoe especially during Eid. Kaluhati's production volumes, which reach over 6 lakh pairs during the Eid season alone, ensure that it captures a significant portion of the footwear market, particularly among the working class and rural populations

Rise of different Footwear Hubs following Kaluhati



Challenges Faced by Kaluhati

- **Pandemic Impact**: In recent years, the industry has faced significant challenges due to the pandemic, leading to a loss of Tk 80 crore and a drop in production from 22 lakh shoes to 14 lakh shoes annually. Around 25% of workers were displaced, and 7 factories shut down. With 25% of goods unsold and a significant reduction in production, Kaluhati struggled to maintain its market presence. However, the industry is recovering with the help of local support.
- **Financing and Automation**: Kaluhati's shoe industry has high potential, The lack of automation and modern machinery which introduction could significantly boost production, with the industry estimating a potential turnover increase to Tk 500 crore with proper investment.
- **Government and Institutional Support**: The SME Foundation has pledged Tk 35 lakh worth of machinery for the industry, which will help improve production capacity and product quality. The government's support in financing and access to machinery is expected to aid Kaluhati's recovery and expansion in the coming years.

While established brands like Apex, Bata, and Bay dominate the upper market with their premium offerings, Kaluhati Shoe Village has a larger share of the overall volume of footwear sold during Eid.

However, brands still retain their stronghold in the premium segment, where consumers are willing to pay more for higher-end designs. Thus, while Eid provides a substantial business boost for both local suppliers and established brands, Kaluhati's role in catering to the mass market remains indispensable for the country's footwear industry.

Source: : New age, The business Standard, Bangladesh Sangbad sangstha.

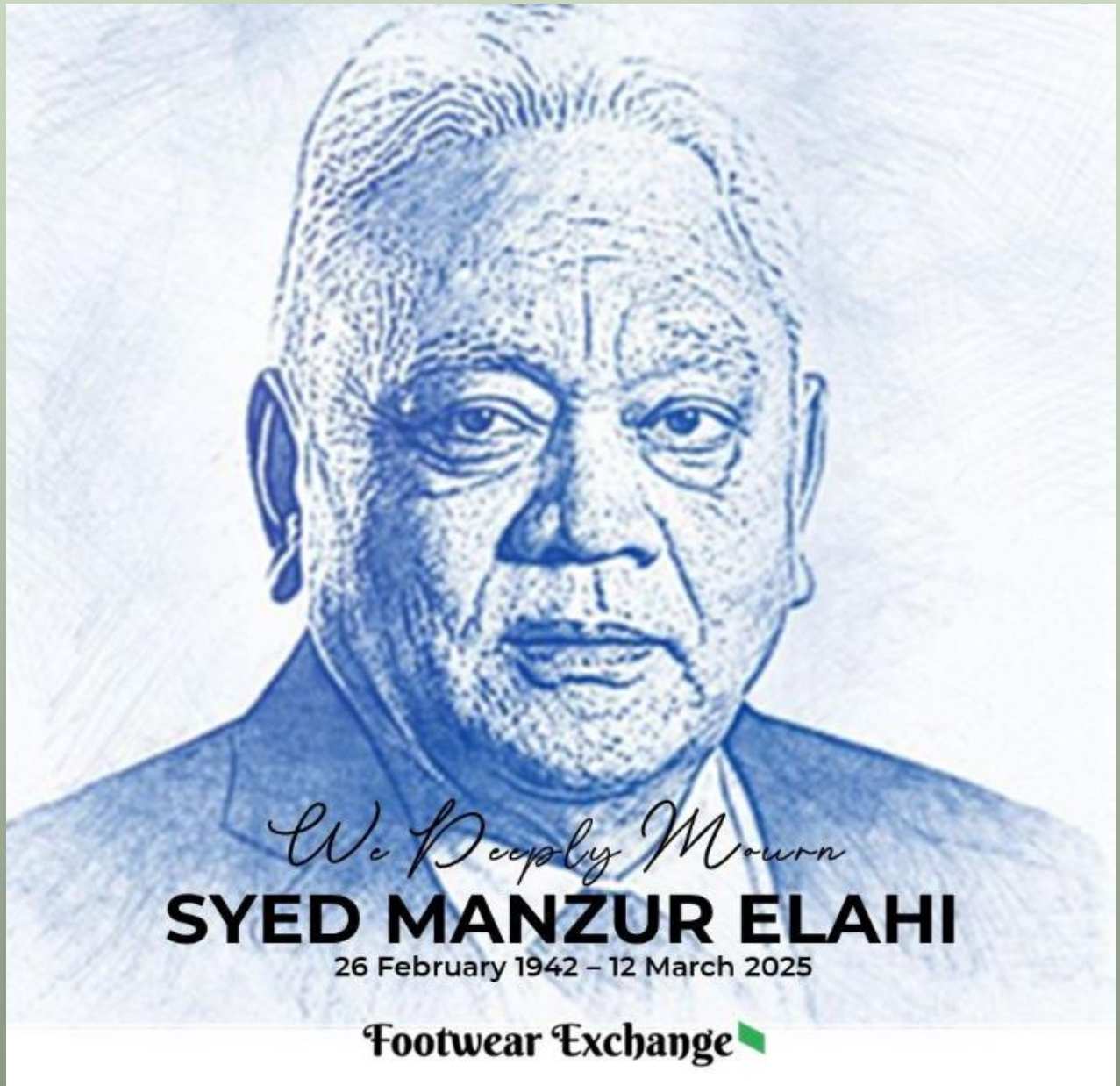
Remembering Syed Manzur Elahi: A Visionary Leader in Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Industry

We mourn the passing of Syed Manzur Elahi, a pioneering entrepreneur and a pillar of Bangladesh's leather and footwear industry. As the Chairman of Apex Footwear Limited, he played a crucial role in shaping the industry, setting new benchmarks in quality, innovation, and global competitiveness.

His vision and leadership not only propelled Apex to great heights but also laid the foundation for Bangladesh's emergence as a key player in the global leather and footwear market. Beyond business, he was a mentor, an institution builder, and an inspiration to many. His absence leaves a deep void, but his legacy will continue to guide the industry for generations to come.

Our heartfelt condolences to his family, colleagues, and all those whose lives he touched.

Rest in peace, Sir.



All Sub Segments Up: March delivers a boost in Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Exports

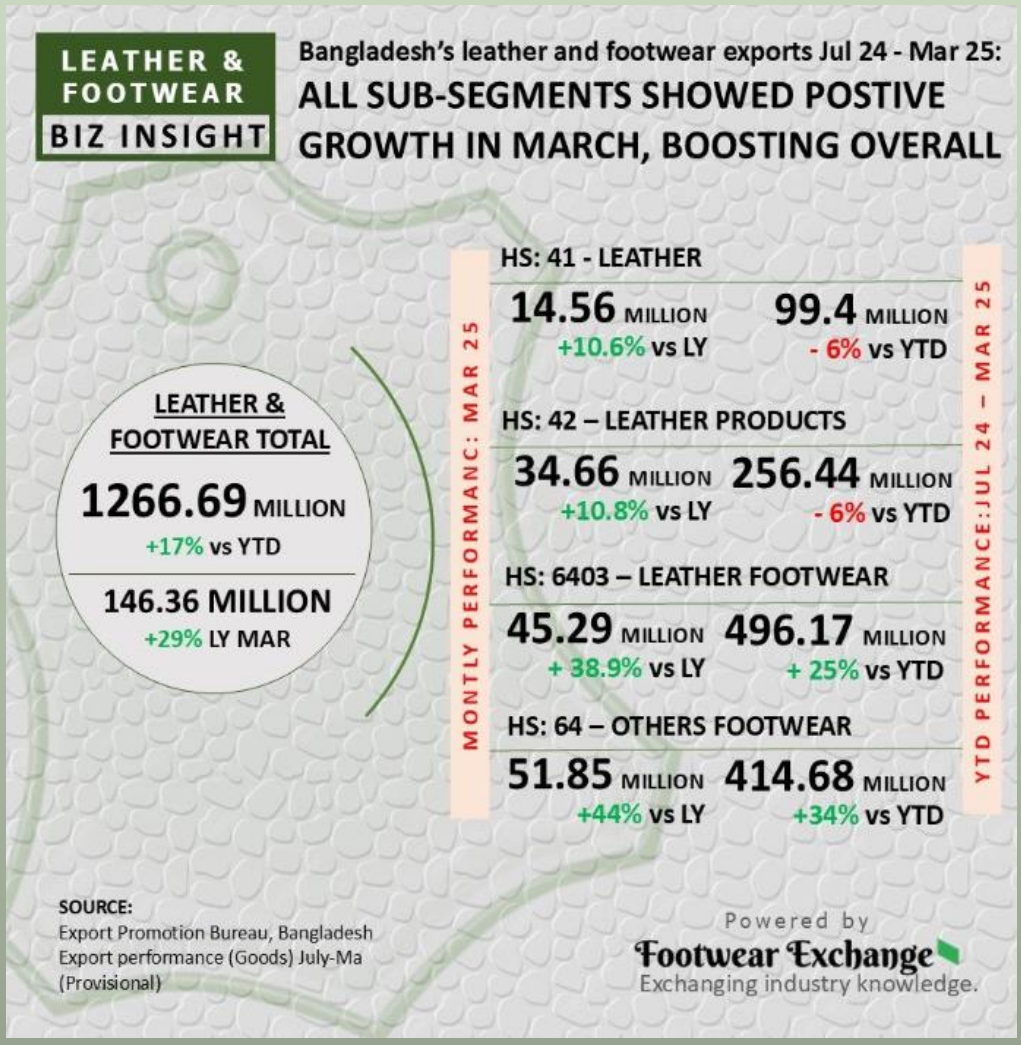
Positive Signs for Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Exports in March!

All sub-segments of leather and footwear exports from Bangladesh showed positive growth in March, giving a much-needed boost to the overall performance of the year.

Footwear continues to lead the way, maintaining its strong momentum with over 42% growth compared to March last year and a solid 29% year-to-date (YTD) growth.

While finished leather and leather goods are still trailing behind on a YTD basis, they bounced back in March with double-digit growth (10%+), signaling signs of recovery.

A positive month like this helps reinforce confidence across the value chain from factories to exporters and highlights the resilience of our sector in a challenging global trade environment. Let's keep the momentum going!



Source:
Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh
Export performance for Leather & Footwear 2024-25 July-March (provisional)

CMEVA Sole Manufacturing Process: Precision and Quality in Footwear

CMEVA (Compression Molded EVA) soles are widely used in the footwear industry due to their lightweight, comfortable, and durable properties. The production process involves several critical steps to ensure consistency, quality, and performance. Below is a detailed step-by-step breakdown of the CMEVA sole manufacturing process:

Step 1: Compound Mixing

EVA compounds are mixed based on the ratio of Short Expansion (S) and Large Expansion (L) compounds. For instance, if the desired sole length is 175mm, S=165mm and L=185mm, then the final mixture is calculated as:

Mixture = (185 + 165) / 2 = 175mm

The large expansion compound ratio is slightly increased according to pre-tested recipes to ensure accurate sole length

Step 2: Mixing Process

The compounds are thoroughly mixed for approximately 45 minutes to achieve a uniform consistency.

Step 3: Drying

The mixture is then passed through a drying process to eliminate moisture, as residual moisture can cause bubble formation in the final product

Step 4: Temporary Storage

Dried compounds are transferred to a storage unit known as the hopper, where they remain before being processed further.

Step 5: Injection Machine Processing

The compounds are melted and filtered through four chambers in the injection machine to ensure uniform melting and purity.



MIXING



DRYING



HOPPER

Step 6: Molding and Curing

The molten compound is injected into molds and undergoes a curing process for **300-360 seconds at a temperature of 165-175°C**. Once cured, the molds are opened, and the soles are demolded. The molds are then cleaned using compressed air and silica gel to maintain precision.

Step 7: Quality Control (QC) Inspection

Excess injection points are trimmed, and the soles undergo a preliminary quality inspection.

Step 8: Cooling Process

The soles are stored for a minimum of **12 hours** to cool down and stabilize their structure.

Step 9: Buffing

The surface of the soles is buffed to enhance texture and improve adherence for further processing.

Step 10: Compression Molding

The soles are passed through a **Compression Molding (CM) machine** at approximately **170°C** to achieve their final shape and design.

Step 11: Final QC and Packaging

The soles are gradually cooled in multiple chambers of the CM mold, followed by a final QC inspection. Once approved, they are packaged for distribution

Common Defects in CMEVA Soles

1. Dirty: Unwanted dirt or stains on the surface.
2. Bubble: Air bubble trapped inside or on the surface.
3. Burn: Scorched or discolored areas due to overheating.
4. Toe Damage: Deformation or cracks in the toe area.
5. Toe Shape: Incorrect or uneven toe molding.
6. Hole: Unintended openings or punctures.
7. Logo Damage: Blurred, missing, or deformed logo.
8. Sole Damage: Cracks, tears, or material loss in the sole.



LET'S MEET

TOP 14

CAMPUS AMBASSADOR 2025

An initiation of Footwear Exchange

We are thrilled to introduce the **Top 14 Campus Ambassadors for 2025!** These talented and passionate individuals will represent our brand, drive engagement, and inspire their peers on campus.



Monjure Montasir Chowdhury Rongon
University of Dhaka

Mahmud Al Mahim
University of Dhaka

Md Irfan Hakim Bhuiyan
Islamic University of Technology

Mubashshira Tasnim Akanda
University of Dhaka

Sifat Haider
Islamic University of Technology

Rakibul Islam Aunkur
University of Dhaka

Md. Yeasin
Southeast University

Nusrat Jahan Sumaia
East West University

MD Sabbir Hossen
Jagannath University

Md. Rajin Shaleh Alam Rafi
University of Dhaka

Afsana Akter Ela
Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University

MD Nahid Azad
Khulna University of Engineering & Technology

Ridoy Roy
University of Dhaka

Rubaiyat Jahan
University of Dhaka



Executive Development Center (EDC), East West University (EWU)
Skills for Industry Competitiveness and Innovation Program (SICIP)

Call for Applications

Graduate Diploma in Leather, Leather Goods, and Footwear Management

Program Context

The leather and footwear sector in Bangladesh holds significant growth potential, driven by the country's abundant raw material supply, competitive labor costs, and increasing global demand for quality leather products. To facilitate the sector, the Government of Bangladesh has taken initiatives to produce a group of mid-level managers which will minimize the dependencies on the foreign experts. In compliance with this initiative, the Executive Development Center (EDC) of East West University (EWU) is offering a Graduate Diploma in Leather, Leather Goods, and Footwear management under the Skills for Industry Competitiveness and Innovation Program (SICIP), Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh.

Program Objectives

- Enhance the technology-driven skilled workforce within the sector focusing on climate-resilient practices and green technologies.
- Cultivate world-class, mid and high-level industry-fit managers.
- Reduce reliance on foreign managers by encouraging industry-university collaborations.

Program Features

- The tuition fee is fully waived and additional allowances will be provided after successful completion.
- The nine-month long program.
- Industry Attachment is mandatory.
- Experienced resource persons from both industry and academia.
- Classes will be held on weekends and/or evenings of weekdays.

Eligibility Criteria

- A Bachelor's degree or its equivalent in any discipline from a UGC approved university or an institution.
- Applicant must have a minimum of 5 points in total based on past examination results. The calculation of the points is as follows:

SSC		HSC		Bachelor	
Div./ GPA	Point	Div./ GPA	Point	Div./ CGPA	Point
1st/ >=4.0	3	1st/ >=4.0	3	1st/ >=3.0	3
2nd/>=3.0 & <4.0	2	2nd/>=3.0 & <4.0	2	2nd/>=2.5 & <3.0	2
3rd/>=2.0 & <3.0	1	3rd/>=2.0 & <3.0	1	3rd/>=2.0 & <2.5	1

- Applicant's age must be less than 50 years as of the last date of application.
- Those who were enrolled in any programs under SEIP for two weeks or above during the last year, need not to apply.
- Females and Ethnic groups are encouraged to apply.

Application Procedure

- Application Link:
- It is also possible to collect and drop the form from the EDC-SICIP office, which opens every day from 11:00 am to 4:30 pm.

Last Date of Application: 23 April 2025

Selection Procedure

- Written Test: 26 April 2025 (Saturday) at 11:00 am in East West University.
- Viva Voce: Applicants passing the written test will appear for Viva Voce. Dates will be announced later.

Contact Details
EDC-SICIP Office, Room # 269, East West University, Aftabnagar, Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh.

Admission at GDLFM program, EDC-SICIP, East West University!

- No course fee is required
- Per diems will be provided
- Duration of the program is 9 months
- Classes will be held on weekends and/or evenings of weekdays
- Internship allowance will be provided to each trainee for 3 months

Last date of submission of the admission form will be Wednesday, 23 April 2025.