August 2025
Newsletter No 08

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

Footprint August Edition: Crafting the Present, Shaping the Future

Dear Readers,

August often brings with it a sense of reflection—on heritage, on progress, and on the path ahead. This month, *Footprint* does just that, weaving together stories of tradition, transformation, and youthful vision.

We begin with a spotlight on the revised tariff structure that's creating ripples across the leather and footwear sector. Change often comes with questions, and we aim to unpack what this means for producers, exporters, and consumers alike.

In celebration of National Leathercraft Day (August 15), we take a closer look at the tools of the trade—those humble instruments that quietly power a craft passed down through generations. It's a nod to the makers, whose hands continue to shape leather into stories of value and identity.

From the workshop to the boardroom, this edition also brings you key news and developments from across the industry—insights that matter, challenges that need attention, and moments worth marking.

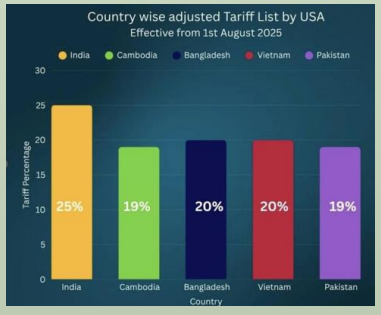
And finally, As the fiscal year draws to a close, this edition of *Footprint* highlights the latest available export data for our industry. This provides our readers with a valuable snapshot of the sector's current position as we approach the year-end.

This issue is not just about updates—it's about honoring the roots while reaching forward.

Let's continue exchanging ideas and embracing opportunities for growth.Thank you for walking this journey with us.

INSIDE

Page 2
Revised U.S. Tariff: A Mixed Bag for Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Sector



Page 3-5
Crafted by Hand: 50 Tools That Shape the World of Leather

Page 6
Bangladesh Kicks Off FY2025-26 with Explosive Growth in Leather & Footwear Exports

Page 7
6th issue of Leather & Footwear HIVE, is out now!



Page 8
Decathlon Strengthens Local Strategy with New Country Director Appointment

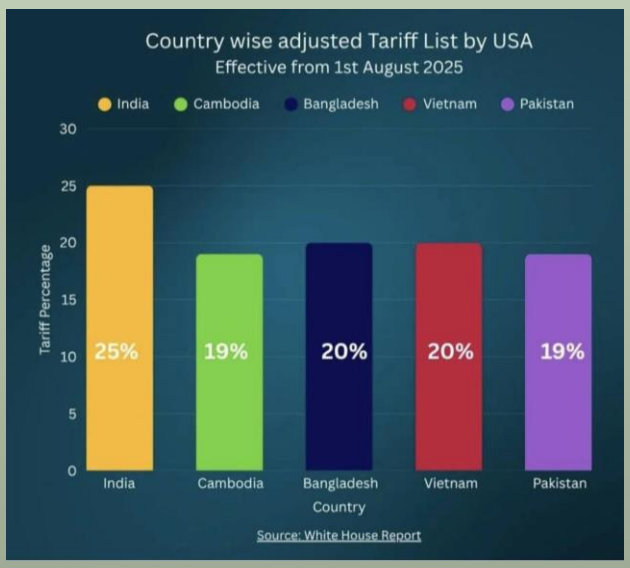
Revised U.S. Tariff: A Mixed Bag for Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Sector

The United States has officially implemented its adjusted tariff list effective from 1st August 2025, placing Bangladesh under a 20% duty for leather and footwear exports. While this still poses challenges, it is notably lower than the initially proposed 35%, offering some relief to exporters and policymakers alike.

Based on the comparison with other countries, Bangladesh's rate of 20% is:

- Lower than India (25%), giving Bangladesh a relative advantage over Indian goods.
- Roughly on par with Vietnam.
- Slightly higher than Cambodia and Pakistan (both 19%).

Bangladesh is competitively positioned—its tariff rate is relatively moderate. It gains over India, matches Vietnam, but faces slightly higher duties than Cambodia and Pakistan.



Competitive Positioning:

- Leather & footwear face higher effective duties (28–32%) than the general average tariff (20%), hurting price competitiveness.
- Compared to India (25%) and others, Bangladesh still fares better on average—but its specialized sectors may suffer due to sector-specific hikes.

Impact on Bangladesh's Leather & Footwear Sector:

Product Category	Last Year's Tariff (%)	New Tariff (%)
Leather products	12.2	32.2
Artificial leather shoes	51.0	71.0
Non-leather shoes ($3-$6.5)	55.0	75.0
Low-cost non-leather shoes (<$3)	48.0	68.0
Waterproof plastic/rubber shoes	37.5	57.5
Footwear exports (general)	8.5	28.5
Leather handbags	9.0	29.0

Opportunity vs Threat:

- Threat: Steep total duties in leather and footwear may suppress exports, trigger buyer contract delays or cancellations, and create price pressure.
- Opportunity: Because Bangladesh's general tariff rate is lower than India's and on parity with Vietnam, it may attract some shifting trade from those markets—if it can sustain competitiveness and negotiate reductions.

Final Verdict

General trade: Bangladesh's 20% tariff offers a modest advantage over India and parity with Vietnam, making it relatively competitive.

- Leather & footwear: Face higher tariffs than average, risking export decline unless the sector negotiates relief or explores diversification.
- Overall: Bangladesh stands in a moderately favorable position compared to some peers but will likely be harmed in the leather & footwear segment unless mitigating actions succeed.

Source :White House report & Prothom Alo

Crafted by Hand: 50 Tools That Shape the World of Leather

Honoring the Hands Behind Leather

Every stitch tells a story. Every cut reveals a craft. National Leathercraft Day, observed on August 15, pays tribute to the enduring tradition of handmade leatherwork and the people who shape it—one tool at a time. First recognized by Tandy Leather in 2018, this day encourages appreciation of the skills, patience, and precision required in leathercraft—whether in a rural village workshop or a modern design studio.

While leather goods today range from luxury handbags to durable footwear, their origins are humble. Small hand tools, passed from one generation to another, have always been the foundation of this timeless trade. It's with these tools—held by the skilled hands of artisans—that raw hides are transformed into products that last a lifetime. This National Leathercraft Day, we spotlight 50 essential tools that continue to shape the world of leather.

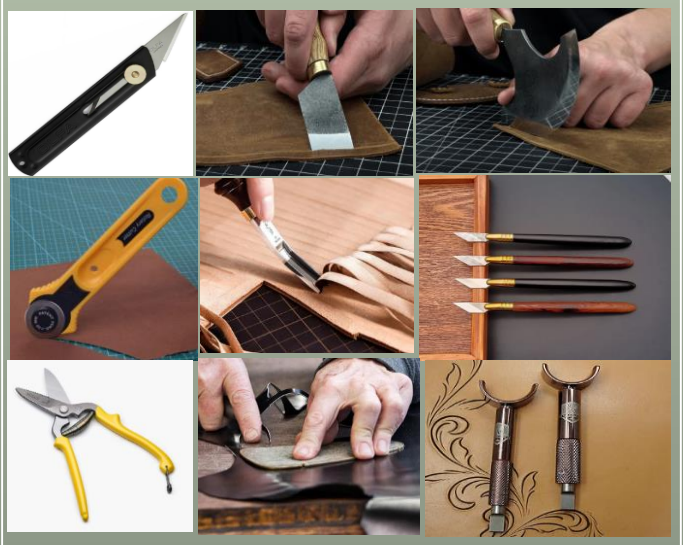


50 Essential Tools of Leathercraft

Behind every finely crafted leather item lies a set of simple yet powerful tools—each with its own purpose, precision, and history. Whether you're a seasoned artisan or a curious beginner, understanding these tools is the first step in mastering the craft. In this section, we explore 50 essential leatherworking tools that shape, cut, stitch, and finish raw hides into timeless creations.

Cutting & Trimming Tools

1. **Utility Knife** – A standard tool for making precise straight cuts.
2. **Head Knife (Round Knife)** – Perfect for skiving and cutting curves.
3. **Skiving Knife** – Used to thin edges for folding or layering.
4. **Rotary Cutter** – Ideal for clean, long cuts on thin leather.
5. **French Skiver** – For detailed edge skiving in fine leatherwork.
6. **Bevel Point Knife** – Angled blade for detailed shaping and trimming.
7. **Leather Shears** – For cutting soft or lightweight leather.
8. **Clicker Knife** – Used with templates to cut fixed patterns.
9. **Swivel Knife** – Essential in carving and tooling leather surfaces.
10. **Cutting Mat** – Grid-marked, self-healing surface that protects blades.

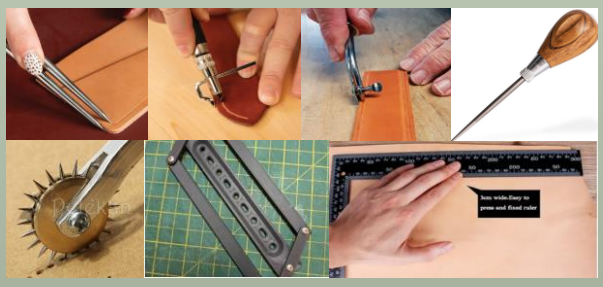


Source :Tandy Leather, LeathercraftLibrary.com

Crafted by Hand: 50 Tools That Shape the World of Leather

Measuring & Marking Tools

11. **Wing Divider** – Marks equal stitch spacing and borders.
12. **Stitching Groover** – Cuts grooves to guide stitching.
13. **Edge Creaser** – Creates clean, parallel lines near the edge.
14. **Compass** – Used for circular or consistent curved designs.
15. **Scratch Awl** – Marks cutting lines or pierces soft leather.
16. **Steel Ruler** – For measuring and guiding straight cuts.
17. **Overstitch Wheel –** Marks even stitch spacing along the groove.
18. **Center Finder** – Locates midpoint on belts or straps.



Punching Tools

19. **Pricking Iron** – Marks stitch holes before piercing.
20. **Stitching Chisel** – Punches holes for saddle stitching.
21. **Diamond Awl** – Pierces leather with diamond-shaped holes.
22. **Round Hole Punch** – Used for belts, buckles, or rivets.
23. **Oblong Punch** – Creates oval holes, mainly for strap adjustments.
24. **Slot Punch** – Makes slits for hardware or threading.
25. **Lacing Punch** – Designed for threading laces cleanly through



Stitching Tools

26. **Saddle Stitch Needles** – Dual blunt-tipped for hand sewing.
27. **Waxed Thread** – Durable thread used in hand-stitching.
28. **Stitching Pony** – Clamp that holds leather while stitching.
29. **Thimble** – Protects fingers while pushing needles.
30. **Thread Burner** – Burns thread ends cleanly for sealing.
31. **Thread Snips** – Cuts thread ends with precision.
32. **Overstitch Marker** – Smooths and tightens thread into grooves



Source :Tandy Leather, LeathercraftLibrary.com

Crafted by Hand: 50 Tools That Shape the World of Leather

Edge & Finishing Tools

33. **Edge Beveler** – Rounds off square corners of leather edges.
34. **Burnisher (Wood / Bone)** – Polishes edges by hand friction.
35. **Edge Slicker** – Can be manual or machine-powered.
36. **Sandpaper / Emery Stick** – Smooths edges and surfaces.
37. **Creasing Iron (Heated)** – Used for luxury finish lines.
38. **Edge Paint Pen** – Applies colored coating to edges.
39. **Polishing Rag** – Final buffing for a glossy look.
40. **Edge Dye** – Dyes and protects raw leather edges



Hardware & Assembly Tools

41. **Rivet Setter** – Installs rivets for straps and accessories.
42. **Snap Setter** – Applies press snaps to closures
43. **Eyelet Setter** – Punches and sets eyelets/grommets.
44. **Hand Press Machine** – Applies hardware with uniform pressure.
45. **Belt Tip Cutter** – Cuts belt ends in rounded or pointed shapes.



Support & Adhesive Tools

46. **Glue Spreader / Brush** – Applies adhesive evenly.
47. **Hammer** – Applied after strong glue used for assembly.
48. **Clamps / Clips** – Holds glued parts while drying.
49. **Weight Block / Press Board** – Keeps leather flat and bonded.
50. **Teflon Sheet** – Protects surfaces during gluing or heating



Leathercraft is a dialogue between tradition and technique—where the soul of the artisan lives in the tools they hold. These 50 instruments are not just objects; they are **extensions of the craftsperson's hands**, shaping everything from sturdy work boots to elegant handbags. On this *National Leathercraft Day*, let us celebrate the tools, the makers, and the legacy they continue to build.

Source :Tandy Leather, LeathercraftLibrary.com

Bangladesh Kicks Off FY2025-26 with Explosive Growth in Leather & Footwear Exports

Bangladesh's leather & footwear exports kick off FY 2025-26 with a bang! ✸

According to EPB's provisional data, exports in July 2025 reached $178.8 million, marking a 34% growth compared to July 2024 ($133.8 million). This performance sets a strong tone for the fiscal year ahead.

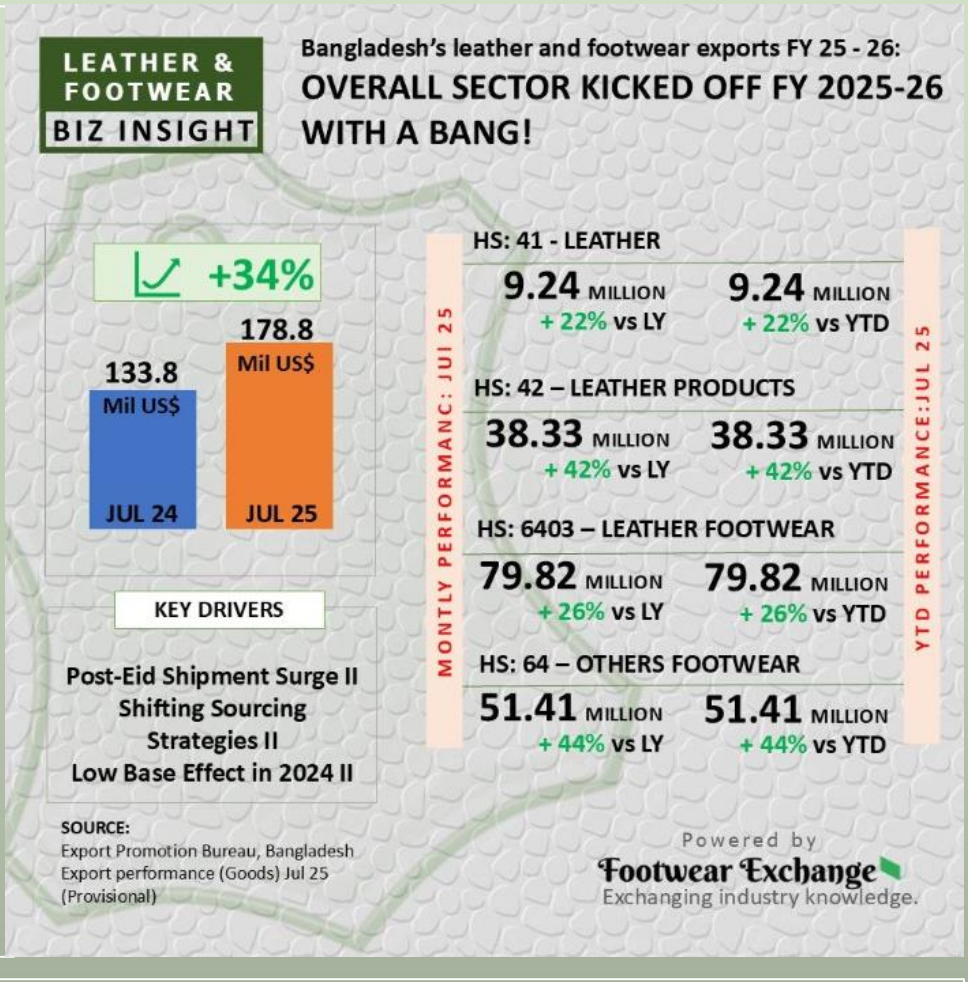
📊 Breakdown by category:
Leather (HS 41): $9.24M ▲ +22% YoY

Leather Products (HS 42): $38.33M ▲ +42% YoY

Leather Footwear (HS 6403): $79.82M ▲ +26% YoY

Other Footwear (HS 64): $51.41M ▲ +44% YoY

✓ Key Drivers Behind the Growth:
Post-Eid shipment surge boosted July volumes
Shifting sourcing strategies from global buyers
Low base effect of 2024 made growth more pronounced



The industry's adaptability and readiness are once again proving vital. Let's carry this momentum forward through FY25-26!

.

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

the footprint

Q2

AVAILABLE NOW

LEATHER & FOOTWEAR HIVE Q2

A Quarterly magazine of Footwear Exchange

Our 6th issue of Leather & Footwear HIVE, themed: "Bangladesh Leather – Beyond the Surface" 🐾, is out now!

This edition invites readers to take a deeper look at the evolving forces shaping the leather and footwear industry in Bangladesh — from sustainability and compliance to economics, innovation, and investment.

Inside this issue:

✅ Cover story on LWG status and sustainability momentum

📊 Deep-dive on rawhide economics during Eid-ul-Adha

🗣️ Highlights from our industry roundtable — truth, challenges & the way forward

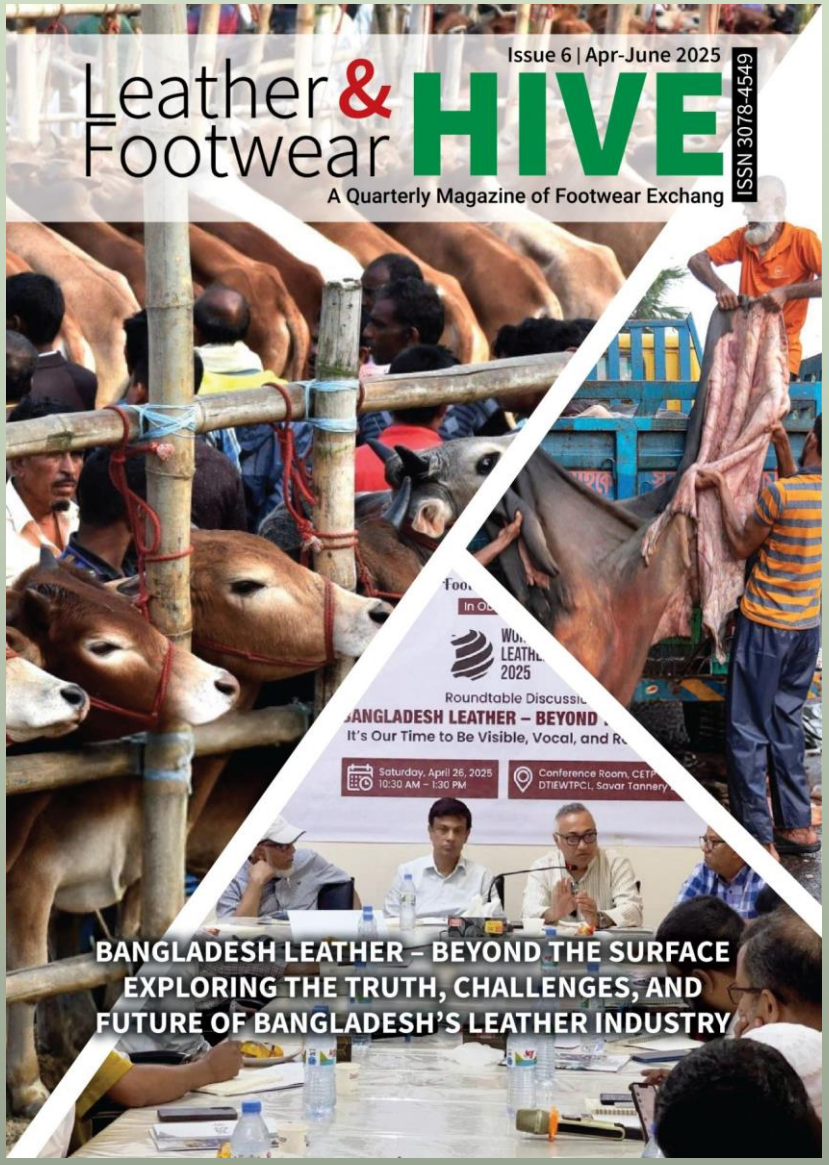
📈 Takeaways from the BIDA Investment Summit 2025

📑 Budget 2025–26 and its implications for the sector

🤖 Feature article: AI tool development – from sketch to production

👟 Investment insights: seasonality in footwear

🔍 Plus: conflict management, curated news, expert views & more



This issue continues our mission to inform, inspire, and connect the people building the future of leather and footwear in Bangladesh and beyond& more Thank you to all contributors, readers, and partners.
Let's keep moving forward — with clarity, courage, and collaboration.

Decathlon Strengthens Local Strategy with New Country Director Appointment

Decathlon Appoints First Bangladeshi Country Director – A Milestone for Local Leadership

Decathlon has appointed Sayef Ahmed as the new Country Director for Decathlon Bangladesh, marking a historic milestone as the first Bangladeshi to take on this leadership role. This appointment not only reflects Sayef's decade-long journey within the company but also signals Decathlon's strong commitment to empowering local leadership and deepening its roots in Bangladesh.

Sayef began his career at Decathlon in 2014 as a Production Leader. Over the years, he has held key roles both locally and internationally, including serving as **Purchase Director (Woven Apparel)** in France. His diverse experiences across global operations have shaped his vision for a collaborative, sustainable, and innovation-driven production ecosystem.



In his new role, Sayef will lead the company's end-to-end production strategy in Bangladesh—one of Decathlon's top three sourcing countries. With over **100 million units produced annually** across **70+ factories**, Bangladesh contributes approximately **10% of Decathlon's global sourcing volume**.

Under his leadership, more than 200 team members will work closely with local suppliers to uphold quality, sustainability, and performance.

"This is not just a personal achievement—it is a proud moment for all of us," Sayef shared. "It reflects Decathlon's trust in local capabilities and our shared commitment to making sports more accessible around the world."

He also expressed gratitude to mentors, teammates, and global leaders who supported his journey, including Vivek Kunwar, his predecessor, and key figures from Decathlon's global and regional teams.

Sayef's appointment underscores Decathlon's vision of investing in local talent to build resilient and globally competitive production ecosystems—solidifying Bangladesh's growing role in the international sporting goods industry

the footprint

Grow your business by advertising

If you feel that you need to promote your business not only to ~~many people~~ but **many right people of Bangladesh leather and footwear and allied industry**, then it's time for you to advertise your business in our publications.

We ensure that all our publication (digital or printed) and activities **reach maximum number of professionals** who are either related or working with Bangladesh leather, footwear and allied industry.

For more details, write to us at
connect@footwearexchange.com
Or
Call us at
+880 1616-331111