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Prospects of Handloom Industries in Pabna, Bangladesh

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Handloom industry is the ancient, the biggest and the most important cottage industry of Bangladesh. This industry has a lot of future prospects as well as glorious past. This sector is very responsible for a very high percentage of the nation's economy. About more than 1.5 million people are directly and indirectly involved for their livelihood. It is the biggest handicraft industry in Bangladesh. Rural nonfarm development is a strategic priority for many developing countries during their economic transformation from an agricultural to an industrial society. It plays an important role in generating local employment and linking with other sectors. Handloom weaving is one of the most important nonagricultural sources of income in Bangladesh. It is the second largest source of rural employment after agriculture. The knowledge & skills needed for this sector transformed from their forefathers. An international expert says that the technical skill of the weavers of Bangladesh is second to none in the world. Handloom products are best known for their eco-friendly nature. The world solely concentrating on "Green technology", therefore green products and social business concept to save the struggling world, where "Handloom technology" could be best "Green technology" to fulfill basic needs of human i.e., clothing. Handloom weavers & workers are generally poor. Handloom industry can lead to improvement in the earning of those people on a large scale who are at fringes of social existence by alleviating

their poverty. This sector can be a source of employment of hard – passed rural people, particularly.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are to bring to focus on existing improvement of Handloom industry in Pabna, Bangladesh. In the light of this main objective, the specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- ✚ To identify the actual conditions of the handloom industry in Pabna.
- ✚ To identify the basic problems of handloom industry in Pabna.
- ✚ To realize the production procedures of handloom industry in pabna.
- ✚ To identify the weavers & owners actual conditions of handloom industry in pabna.
- ✚ To identify the tribulations in distributions of handloom products.
- ✚ To identify the lacking of government support.
- ✚ To identify the reasons behind lack of interest of private sector to enter in this industry.
- ✚ To identify the most demanding product of this industry.
- ✚ To identify the level of demand of these products in international market.
- ✚ To identify the immediate competitors of this sectors.
- ✚ To identify the potential markets.
- ✚ Finally to provide some suggestions to overcome these constraints.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Handloom have registered growth rates of lunggi production during the post- liberation period(1972/73-86/87) well in excess of population growth and have remained the principal sources of lunggi of Bangladesh over a long period of Bangladesh's history.the entire improvement, growth and structural adjustment have been achieved near- total absence of public policies and programs (chowdhury, N 1989). at the time of independence over a thousand weavers societies were existed and now almost all of which are dormant due to lack of strategic vision from government to protect and promote this sector(Latif, M.A 1997). Weavers in our country don't get quality raw materials at right time and at right price (Ahmed, M.U 1999). The main problems regarding the diffusion of the improved handloom

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techniques appear to have been lack of technological knowledge and skills as well as financial stringency of the weavers (Latif, M.A 1998). Handloom receives the lowest Effective Rate of Protection (ERP) and among three weaving sub sectors power looms receives the highest. ERP is measured by value addition, i.e. returns of land, labor and capital (Ahmed, M. U and Islam, AFMM 1989 BIDS). the product range of handloom is simply amazing and includes muslim jamdani shares, Bedcovers, Bed sheets, Tapestry, Upholstery, place mats, Rugs or Blankets, Satranji, Crochet, Muslim, Tribal textiles, Silk fabrics, Sofa covers, Block prints, Table cloth and Napkins, Towels, Dusters, kitchen towels, Gents, Ladies and Baby wear and Shirts, Panjabies and other household linen in printed, plain or embroidered khadi (Bashu 2001). Weavers are suffering from inadequate contemporary technology and scarcity of working capital, which are mandatory to maintain the smooth flow of production (ADB, 2002). Technical efficiency of handloom industries of Bangladesh is only 41% and its technical efficiency might improve by increasing its male and female labor ratio and decreasing its hired/family labor ratio and labor/ capital ratio (jaforullah, M 1997).

All the researches on handloom sectors have sought different strategies for the support of handlooms and its weavers. but the actual situation has not been changed as expected. In addition, day to day the heritage based crafts industry is destroying. Thus, it is utmost important to create proper initiative, which boosts power to handloom industry; symbol of our heritage and culture; to survive with its own potential without any fare of rivals- power loom and industrial looms.

IV. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The methodology of the study includes the selection of sample size and data collection method.

a) Sample Size

In this study, all listed handloom factories (Appendix-1) in Pabna, Bangladesh have been selected which are five in number.

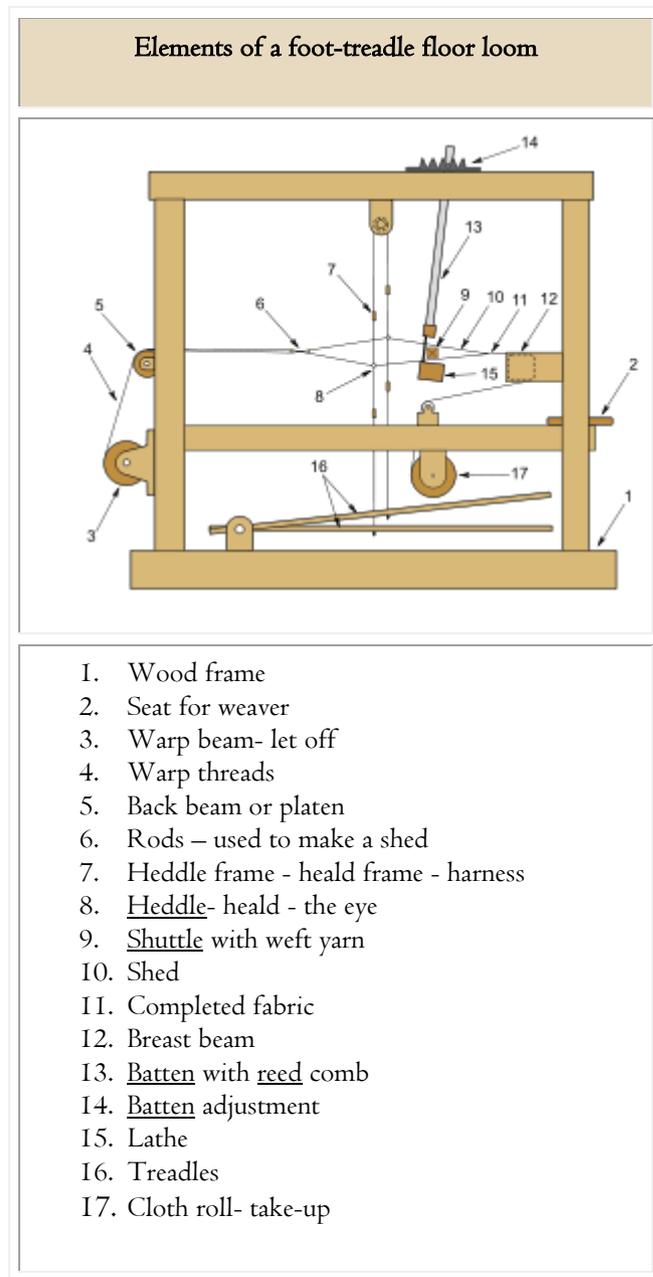
b) Data Collection

The study is mainly based on primary & secondary data. To strengthen theoretical background of the study different local and international published articles, website, seminar papers, different standard text books and personal interviews dealing with overall prospects of Handloom industry in Pabna, Bangladesh. Time period of the study was May 01 to May 08, 2012.

V. HANDLOOM

A handloom is a simple machine used for weaving. In a wooden vertical-shaft looms, the heddles are fixed in place in the shaft. The warp threads pass

alternately through a heddle, and through a space between the heddles (the shed), so that raising the shaft raises half the threads (those passing through the heddles), and lowering the shaft lowers the same threads—the threads passing through the spaces between the heddles remain in place.



1. Wood frame
2. Seat for weaver
3. Warp beam- let off
4. Warp threads
5. Back beam or platen
6. Rods – used to make a shed
7. Heddle frame - heald frame - harness
8. Heddle- heald - the eye
9. Shuttle with weft yarn
10. Shed
11. Completed fabric
12. Breast beam
13. Batten with reed comb
14. Batten adjustment
15. Lathe
16. Treadles
17. Cloth roll- take-up

VI. MAJOR AREAS OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRIES

Handloom weaving is one of the most important nonagricultural sources of income in Bangladesh. According to the Central Statistics Agency's 2003 Cottage/Handicraft Manufacturing Industries Survey, the textiles industry has the second highest number of establishments in the cottage and handicraft

manufacturing industry (22,184), representing 23 percent of the total number of cottage and handicraft enterprises, with almost 55 percent of these located in rural areas. Across the nation the textile industry employs the second highest number of people among the cottage and handicraft manufacturing industries.

There are four main areas in which the clustering method has helped in Bangladesh handloom weavers to perform better:

1. Reductions in transaction costs through better market linkages
2. Technological spillovers
3. Lower cost of entry
4. Ease of trade credit through repeated interactions.

VII. FUNCTIONS

Functions of Bangladesh Handloom Board as per Bangladesh Handloom Board Ordinance 1977. Ordinance No LXIII of 1977.

To undertake survey, census and planning for rational growth of handloom industry.

- ✚ To maintain statistics relating to handloom industry.
- ✚ To conduct enquiries and investigations relating to handloom industry.
- ✚ To promote Handloom industry primarily with the help of primary, secondary and Apex weaver's societies.
- ✚ To render promotional and advisory services to units of handloom industry.
- ✚ To arrange credit facilities for handloom industry.
- ✚ To make arrangement for supply of yarn to the weavers at reasonable price primarily through weavers societies.
- ✚ To make arrangement for supply of consumables like dyes, chemicals, spares, and accessories to the weavers primarily through weavers societies.
- ✚ To make arrangement for marketing at home and abroad primarily through weaver's Societies of articles manufactured by handloom industry.
- ✚ To undertake and organize publicity and propaganda for popularization of handloom products both at home and abroad.
- ✚ To make arrangement for maintenance of depots primarily through weavers societies for the supply of raw materials to, and purchase of finished products from handloom industries, and also for maintenance of common facilities for design, yarn preparation, bleaching, dyeing, calendaring, printing and finishing.
- ✚ To render promotional and extension facilities for standardization for domestic and export sales of handloom products and grant certificate of quality and of the country of origin.
- ✚ To provide training facilities and promote research
- ✚ To prepare and implement common facility schemes.

- ✚ To collect fees.
- ✚ To float subsidiary companies.
- ✚ To do such other acts and things as may be necessary or conducive to be done for the smooth operation and rational growth of handloom industry.

VIII. IMPORTANCE OF HANDLOOM INDUSTRIES

Historically handloom has got its predominance and heritages in Bangladesh. The tradition of weaving cloth by hand constitutes one of the richest aspects of Bangladeshi culture and heritage. The level of artistry and intricacy achieved in handloom fabrics are unparalleled and unique. The handloom can meet every need from exquisite fabrics of daily use. The industry has displayed innate resilience to withstand and adopt itself to the changing demand of modern times.

A manpower of about one million weavers, dyers, hand spinners and allied artisans have been using their creative skills into more than .30 million active looms to produce around 620 million meters of fabrics annually. It shares 64% of the total fabric production in the country designed for home consumption, meeting 40% of the local demand for fabrics. Besides, it provides employment facilities to a million rural people are indirectly engaged in the industry. It contributes more than 10 billion taka to the national exchequer as value addition for the development of handloom sector and ensure well being of handloom weavers, Bangladesh handloom board has been implementing a number of package programmes covering supply of input, innovation of suitable designs, financing of working capital, development of human resources, modernization of handloom technology, efficient marketing management and formation of sound weavers societies.

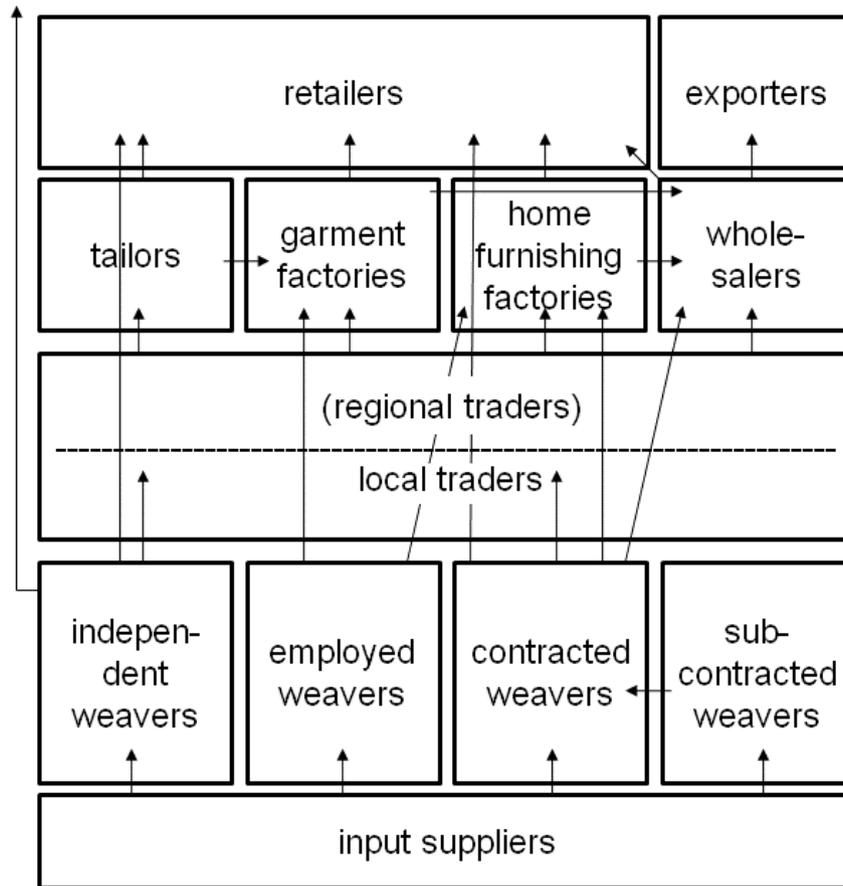
In a world, the handloom industry has no alternative in the development of rural economy.

a) Collection of Raw Materials

They collect their raw materials from the local market to fulfill the production process. In which factories have wealth economic conditions they can collect their raw materials directly from the Naraongong city and other available sources. But the most of the factories in Pabna, collect their raw materials from the Ataycula and Shahzadpur Hat. They collect their all raw materials on credit facilities from the Mahajon, because they do not get any loans facilities from different local banks.

b) *Handloom Production Process*

The production processes of handloom industry in Pabna, Bangladesh are shown on the following figure:



Source: Abdella and Ayele (2007).

Figure 1 : Handloom Production Process

Note: Input suppliers include fiber suppliers, spinners, yarn dyers, accessories suppliers, and machinery suppliers

c) *Handloom Products*

Specifications and brief descriptions of items

i. *Furnishing and made up items*

Bedcovers, bed sheets and furnishings including tapestries constitute main furnishing and made up items.

ii. *Bed Sheet*

Bed sheet is a piece of cloth woven with colored yarn in the border length wise and width wise and may be used on a bed and includes sheeting.



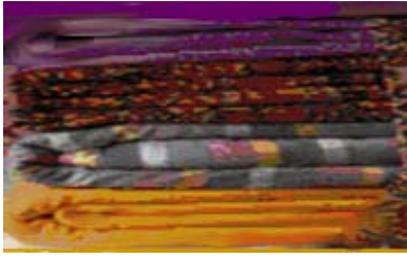
iii. *Bed cover*

Bed cover is a piece of cloth woven in gray or bleached or colored yarn with or without checks or in floral or in geometrical designs with oven border and/or heading having a decorative or colored effect as inter covering of a bed when not in use.



iv. *Tapestry*

The tapestry is a highly figured and electorate designs. The tapestry constructions are suited for hangings, sofas, rugs, upholsteries, table covers etc.



v. *Lungies*

Lungi is a piece of cloth wearied by males and is a traditional item in the export list. Lungies are generally in colored check patterns and plain weaves but they may also have elaborate colorful prints and designs.

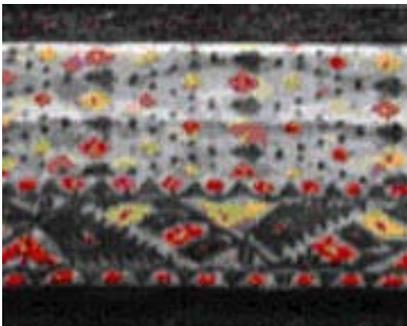
vi. *Checks / Fabrics*

These are the cotton fast color shirtings in check and stripes, woven mainly from 60s/40s on fly shuttle pit looms in Dhaka and Sirajgonj belt. These fabrics having numerous color patterns in warp and weft have great demand in European markets.



vii. *Jamdani Saree*

Jamdani is a traditional superfine handloom fabric which has evolved through generations of outstanding craftsmanship. Jamdani is woven on pit looms. The designs in the jamdani are geometrical. Two persons generally work together at a piece of Jamdani. It has a very good export market.



viii. *Brocket / MirpurBenarashi Saree*

Mirpur Benarashi is a traditional superfine handloom fabric. Basically this is brocade with cotton or zari threads. The Benarashi is woven in pit looms. It has also a very good export market.



ix. *Tangail Muslins / Silks*

Tangail Muslins is a traditional superfine handloom fabric. Basically this is highly ornamented and fashion saree silk cotton with cotton or zari threads. The moslin is woven on pit looms. It has also a very good export market.



d) Important Handloom Products with Places of Production

Sl.	Name of the Products	Place of Production
1	Jamdani	Rupgonj and Sonargaon of Narayangonj district.
2	Benarasi	Mirpur of Dhaka, Iswardi of Pabna district and Gangachara of Rangpur district.
3	Tangail Sharee (Cotton sharee, Half Silk, Soft Silk, Cotton Jamdani, Gas-mercerised twisted cotton sharee, Dangoo sharee, Baluchherri)	Tangail Sadar, Delduar and Kalihati, Nagorpur, Basail of Tangail District.
4	Handloom Cotton sharee	Shahjadpur, Belkuchi and Sadar of Sirajgonj district, Narsingdi and Pabna districts.
5	Lungi	Ruhitpur of Keranigonj and Dohar of Dhaka district, Shahjadpur, Ullapara, Belkuchi, Sadar of Sirajgonj district, Kumarkhali of Kushtia district, Sathia, Pabna
6	Silk sharee	Sadar and Shibgonj of Chapai Nawabgonj and Rajshahi district.
7	Gamcha	Ullapara, Kamarkhand of Serajgonj, Gouranadi of Barisal, Fultola, Doulatpur of Khulna, Jhalokathi, Jessore and Bogra districts.
8	Check Fabrics	Belkuchi of Sirajgonj district.
9	Mosquito Nets	Araihazar and Rupgonj of narayangonj district, Shibpur and Sadar of Narsingdi district.
10	Bed Sheet & Bed Cover	Kumarkhali of Kustia district, Danga of Narsingdi district.
11	Sofa Cover	Danga of Narsingdi district.
12	Rakhine Special Wear (Wooling Shirting, Woolen Bed Sheet, ladies chadar, Bag, Lungi and Thami for tribal ladies)	Taltoli of Borguna district, Kalapara, Rangabali of Patuakhali district and Cox's Bazar district.
13	Tribal Fashion Wear (Thami for tribal ladies, Khati(Orna), Ladies Chadar & Lungi.	Rangamati, Khagrachari & Bandarban Hill districts.
14	Miniouri Fashion Garments (Monipuri Sharee, Puneek for ladies like lungi, Lungi, Un-stitched cloth (three pieces), Innachi(Orna) & Vanity Bag	Sylhet and Moulivibazar districts.

e) Handloom Markets

Sl.	Trading Products	Name of the Market	Market Days
1	Jamdani	Demra Bazar, Demra, Dhaka	Friday
2	Jamdani	Jamdani Shilpa Nagari Noapara, rupgonj, Narayan Gonj	Friday
3	All Handloom Products	Gausia Market, Bhulta, Narayangonj.	Tuesday
4	Handloom Products	Baburhat Shekerchar, Narsingdi.	Friday to Sunday
5	Tangail Sharee	Karotia Bazar, Korotia, Tangail	Wednesday
6	Tangail Sharee	Bajitpur Hat, Adi-Tangail, Tangail	Monday & Friday
7	All Handloom Products	Shahjadpur Bazar, Shahjadpur, Serajgonj.	Sunday, Wednesday
8	All Handloom Products	Shohagpur Hat, Belkuchi, Serajgonj.	Tuesday to Wednesday
9	All Handloom Products	Enayetpur Hat, Enayetpur, Sirajgonj.	Sunday, Wednesday & Friday
10	All Handloom Products	Ataikula Hat, ataikula, Pabna	Saturday

f) Statistics

Items	Number
Total Handloom units	183512
Total number of handlooms	505556
Total number of operational looms	313245
Total number of non operational looms	192311
Type wise number of looms Pit loom	169700
Frame loom	29212
Waist loom	141684
Semi automatic/ Chittaranjan loom	150407
Benarashi/ Jamdani	12383
Others	2170
Number of Weavers	Number
Total number of weavers	888115
Total number of male weavers	472367
Total number of female weavers	415748
Handloom Factory (As of May 2008)	Number
Number of Handloom factory registered with the BHB (Factory is a production unit having more than 20 looms)	246
Weavers societies registered with the Bangladesh Handloom Board (as of May 2008)	Number
Number of Primary Weaver's Societies	1300
Number of Secondary Weaver's Societies	58
Apex Weaver's Society	01

g) Production from Handloom industry

The production of handloom industry in different years is shown below:

Year	Qnt.	Percent
1989-90	826.8	64.7
1990-91	808.1	64.9
1991-92	775.5	63.4
1992-93	752.2	63.3
1993-94	729.6	61.0
1994-95	707.0	57.4
1995-96	684.4	50.6
1996-97	663.9	47.6
1997-98	642.7	43.6
1998-99	623.4	39.0
1999-00	604.1	35.5
2000-01	584.8	30.4
2001-02	567.3	26.6
2002-03	543.3	23.6
2003-04	590	21.5
2004-05	584	20.5
2005-06	567.3	18.5
2006-07	543.3	16.6
2007-08	530.1	15.9

Table : Domestic production from handlooms industries

h) The comparative production analysis between Large & Small handloom industry in Pabna, Bangladesh

i. Large scale handloom factory(Based on yearly basis)

- ✚ Name : Razzak cottage industries
- ✚ Location : Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna.
- ✚ Number of machines: 140
- ✚ Number of workers: 90
- ✚ Amount of fixed capital: 2,50,00000 taka
- ✚ Amount of working capital: 59,90,625 taka
- ✚ Volume of production: 1,82,500 pieces lungies
- ✚ Average Per unit production cost: 315 taka(per lungi)
- ✚ Average Per unit selling price: 350 taka(per lungi)
- ✚ Average per unit profit: 35 taka(per lungi)
- ✚ Total annual profit: 63,87,500
- ✚ Wages payment system: Weekly basis

ii. Small scale handloom factory (Based on yearly basis)

- ✚ Name : Alamin Weaving industry
- ✚ Location : Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna.
- ✚ Number of machines: 44 pieces
- ✚ Number of workers: 37
- ✚ Amount of fixed capital: 85,00,000 taka
- ✚ Amount of working capital: 15,80,205 taka
- ✚ Volume of production: 43,200 pieces lungies
- ✚ Average Per unit production cost: 328 taka (per lungi)

- ✚ Average Per unit selling price: 350 taka(per lungi)
- ✚ Average per unit profit: 22 taka(per lungi)
- ✚ Total annual profit: 9,50,400 taka
- ✚ Wages payment system: Weekly basis

i) *Major Barriers in handloom industries in Pabna*

- ✚ High price of raw materials like yarn.
- ✚ Lack of power supply.
- ✚ High rate of interest of loan.
- ✚ Difficulties in getting bank loan.
- ✚ Low capital.
- ✚ Traditional system of production.
- ✚ Lack of automation in production.
- ✚ High level of labor cost.
- ✚ Unwillingness of worker.
- ✚ Absence of trade union.
- ✚ Restriction in purchasing raw material.
- ✚ Lack of government support.
- ✚ Inefficient in management.
- ✚ Absence of trade policy.
- ✚ Limitation of design.
- ✚ Existing distribution channel of the handloom products is not adequate & effective.
- ✚ Existing promotional campaign is not adequate.

IX. RECOMMENDATION

After analyzing we recommend the following steps, which we believe, we will provide a direction for further improvement of this sector:

- We strongly recommended that, govt. should take necessary steps to control the price of yarn at desired level. So that weavers can produce the product at cheap rate.
- Supplied of electricity should be maximized and price of per unit electricity must be charged in the favor of owner of the handloom industry.
- Government & Private bank must be insured the credit facilities to the producers at lower rate of interest.
- Trade union policy should be established in the handloom industry in rural areas.
- Government should look-up about who are willingly Stock the raw materials to increase its prices.
- Sound wages system should be applied in the factories to control the any unfavorable attitude of the workers.
- We have found out that weavers don't get raw materials at right time & at right prices. So our recommendation is that government should take a monitoring cell under Handloom Board of Bangladesh to monitor the any unfair advantages of wholesalers & retailer.
- We have found out that weavers suffer from inadequate contemporary technology. So, government should take necessary steps to make available these technologies in local market.

- We have found that high level of skill is needed to produce handloom products, but there is no developed program for weavers. So, both private & public sectors can work for improve these conditions.
- Government should be more responsible & should provide more policy support to save this ancient industry.
- We have found that handloom industry faces intense competition from mill and power loom sector. So govt. can create a quota system for handloom industry.
- Existing distribution channel of the handloom products is not adequate & effective. This can be eliminated if we can catch the attention of private organizations & NGOs to participate in the growth of this industry.
- The Handloom industry cannot be viewed through the prism of the mechanized textile sector as it needs focused attention with an integrated and a holistic approach.
- As the needs of the weavers and weaving community are quite different from those of the power loom and large textile mills the handloom industry needs to be seen independently of the mechanized textile sector.
- A comprehensive HANDLOOM RENEWAL POLICY is needed to address the entire gamut of issues facing the Handloom Industry for its renewal in the 21st Century. This policy will need to keep in mind it's pro-environment, pro-people, pro-rural employment impact and regional variations while achieving the objectives of making this industry viable, competitive and equitably structured. Additionally the policy will need to focus on improving lives and productivity of workers.
- To ensure continuity of weaving traditions, the skills involved in the entire production chain need to be preserved and supported with ancillary occupational workers who perform crucial pre-loom and post-loom operations being recognized as handloom workers and significant contributors.
- The Handloom Reservation List includes only those items woven with cotton and/or silk yarn, it was strongly recommended that the Reserved List be broadened to also include items woven with blended yarns, such as viscose and other blended fibers as this is now the requirement of the customers. Unless this oversight is corrected weavers will continue to lose market share with subsequent loss of income for the entire weaving chain.
- Some sort of distinguishing mark is required so as to enable consumers to differentiate between the handloom product and the power loom product. The possibility of inserting a 'power loom mark'

X. CONCLUSION

All our recommends are only for the Handloom industry in Pabna, Bangladesh. This industry is facing a lot of problems that have been highlighted through our discussion and give some recommendation to bring the handloom industry at the blooming stage of development. We should extend our helping hand to the Government and NGOs to pave the way of development for our poor weavers.

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- (either a symbol or text) in the selvedge of power loom or machine-made fabrics that states/implies the product is so made needs to be explored thereby ensuring that machine-made products are not mistaken by consumers for hand-made or vice versa.
- There is urgent need for investment and research to create simple easily applicable tests to help differentiate between products made on the handlooms vs. those made on the power loom.
 - Yarn availability in small quantities, in required count, at correct price and quality, in the required fibred is a major lacuna.
 - The Mill Gate Price Scheme has not been operating efficiently. It is recommended that the office of the DC (Handlooms) conduct an independent evaluation of the Mill Gate Price Scheme to study how to make it more effective.
 - It is urgent that dyers allied to the handloom sector convert to eco-safe reactive dyes. Training modules to assist in this conversion are therefore imperative and ought to include technical training, testing of dye recipes, and real-time production training.
 - The fund allocation should also be allowed to be utilized for repair existing looms.
 - Special attention must be paid to female heads of weaving households, including where women have stepped forward to be involved in the weaving.

Appendix 1: Name of the listed Handloom Industry in Pabna, Bangladesh

Sl. No	Name of the Handloom Industry	Location
1	Razzak cottage industries	Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna
2	Alamin Weaving industry	Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna
3	Hakim cottage industries	Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna
4	Malek cottage industries	Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna
5	Hafizur Weaving industry	Natun para, Jalalpur, Pabna

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