

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

on

“Industrial Shift in the Post-LDC Era: Strategies for IPR Issues of Key Industries”

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OUTCOME REPORT



Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI)

As Bangladesh prepares for its scheduled graduation from the Least Developed Country (LDC) category, strengthening its Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) regime has become increasingly important for enhancing the competitiveness of domestic industries and facilitating their sustainable integration into international markets. A robust legal, regulatory, and institutional framework for IPR will be essential to protecting innovation, encouraging investment, promoting technology transfer, and enabling Bangladeshi businesses to compete effectively in the post-graduation era.

Against this backdrop, Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) and Economic Relations Division (ERD), under the Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), jointly organized a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) titled “**Industrial Shift in the Post-LDC Era: Strategies for IPR Issues of Key Industries**” on **Monday, September 21, 2026**, at the DCCI Auditorium. The event aims to identify the challenges and prospects of IPR issues in the post-LDC era and policy reforms based on local industrial needs for smooth transition.

Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, President, **DCCI**, delivered the welcome remarks and moderated the event. Other side, **Mr. A. H. M. Jahangir**, Additional Secretary & Project Director, Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP), Economic Relations Division, GoB, delivered the Introductory Remarks. The programme also featured a keynote presentation by **Mr. Mohammad Ataul Karim**, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford & Former Consultant at WIPO Academy.

Mr. Md. Shahriar Kader Siddiky, Secretary, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, graced the occasion as the **Chief Guest**.

The Panel Discussion session featured contributions from leading industry representatives and experts. The distinguished panel included **Mr. Raisul Kabir**, Founder and CEO of Brain Station 23 Limited; **Mr. Major General Dr. Md. Shahedul Islam (Retd)**, Secretary General, BGMEA; **Mr. KSM Mostafizur Rahman**, President, Bangladesh Agrochemical Manufacturers Association (BAMA); **Mr. Faez Ahmed**, Deputy General Manager, Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd; **Mr. Md Azizur Rahman FCS**, Director General, Intellectual Property Association of Bangladesh (IPAB); **Dr. Abureza M Muzareba**, Professor, Department of Marketing, Faculty of Business Studies, Dhaka University; **Dr. Saif Uddin Ahammad**, Joint Secretary, Trade Support Measures Wing, GoB; **Mr. Abdul Baki**, Project Adviser (SSGP) & Former Secretary, GoB; **Mr. S M Arshad Imam**, Copyright Registrar (Additional Secretary), Copyright Office Bangladesh, GoB; **Mr. Md. Jahangir Hossain**, Director General, Department of Patents, Industrial Designs and Trademarks (DPDT), GoB; Representatives from key industries, government agencies and business organisations and Members of the DCCI Board of Directors were also present at the event.

Welcome Address

Mr. Taskeen Ahmed, President, DCCI

- Bangladesh needs to establish a strong, effective, and business-friendly Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) ecosystem to maintain its competitiveness in international markets.
- Bangladesh should move its Pharmaceuticals, RMG, and other promising sectors beyond a reliance on production volume and focus more on innovation, branding, technology transfer, and value addition.
- Effective IPR protection and enforcement are essential to encourage innovation, investment, technology transfer, and the commercialisation of new products and services.
- Regulatory delays, weak institutional coordination, limited capacity to combat piracy and counterfeiting, and inadequate IPR awareness among businesses should be addressed through coordinated institutional and policy reforms.
- Establishing a modern and integrated Intellectual Property Office of Bangladesh (IPOB) by strengthening coordination among existing institutions and streamlining their respective function.

- Dedicated IP Tribunals or IP Benches in Dhaka and Chattogram should be established to ensure the timely and effective resolution of intellectual property disputes, while specialised IPR training should be provided to Customs and law enforcement officials.
- The registration, examination, and related services of the Department of Patents, Designs and Trademarks (DPDT) should be fully digitalised to reduce backlog and shorten the processing time for applications.
- Specialised examiners with expertise in areas such as pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, and other technology-intensive sectors should be appointed to ensure the effective assessment of complex IPR applications.
- Technology Transfer Office (TTO) should be established in universities and research institutions to facilitate the commercialisation of research outcomes and strengthen linkages between research institutions and industry.
- A centralised platform should be established to connect industry, researchers, universities, and investors and facilitate technology transfer, research collaboration, and commercialisation of innovation.
- Targeted awareness programme, advisory service, and technical assistance should be provided to SMEs to improve their understanding of patents, trademarks, copyrights, industrial designs, trade secrets, and other forms of intellectual property.
- Considering the economic value of intellectual property, Bangladesh should explore mechanisms that allow properly valued IP assets, including patents and trademarks, to support access to finance.
- An effective Notice and Takedown mechanism should be introduced to combat digital piracy and online infringement in accordance with the Copyright Act and relevant cyber regulations.
- The capacity of Customs and relevant law enforcement agencies should be strengthened to identify, intercept, and effectively prevent the cross-border movement and distribution of counterfeit and pirated goods.
- Regular training, awareness programmes, and technical assistance on IPR registration, protection, enforcement, and commercialisation should be provided to businesses, SME entrepreneurs, researchers, and innovators.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on trademark protection, geographical indications, branding, product innovation, and other forms of IP protection to strengthen the position of Bangladeshi products and brands in international markets following LDC Graduation.
- The Government, private sector, universities, research institutions, and relevant professional and business organisations should establish regular consultation and coordination mechanisms for the effective development and implementation of IPR policies.
- Bangladesh should develop an IPR ecosystem in which intellectual property is viewed not merely as a compliance requirement, but as a key driver of innovation, investment, technology transfer, branding, and value addition.
- Following LDC Graduation, Bangladesh's international competitiveness will increasingly depend on its ability to encourage domestic innovation and effectively protect the ownership, commercial value, and market rights associated with those innovations.

Introductory Remarks

Mr. A. H. M. Jahangir, Additional Secretary & Project Director, SSGP,
Economic Relations Division, GoB

- Considering the economic value of intellectual property, Bangladesh should explore mechanisms that allow properly valued IP assets, including patents and trademarks, to support access to finance.
- Bangladesh's transition from the LDC category will require a strategic approach to Intellectual Property (IP) that balances stronger protection with the country's industrial, economic, public health, and innovation need.
- Bangladesh has already updated trade mark rules, patent rights, and relevant regulations to improve and protect businesses.
- Bangladesh should ensure that any future international commitments on IPR do not unnecessarily restrict the policy space.

Keynote Presentation

Mr. Mohammad Ataul Karim

Faculty of Law, University of Oxford & Former Consultant at WIPO Academy

- Bangladesh's transition from the LDC category will require a strategic approach to Intellectual Property (IP) that balances stronger protection with the country's industrial, economic, public health, and innovation needs.
- Bangladesh should focus on using IPR strategically to support innovation, industrial development, technology transfer, and the creation and commercialisation of intellectual property rather than treating IPR only as a compliance requirement.
- The TRIPS Agreement provides minimum standards of IP protection, while member countries retain certain flexibilities and discretion regarding implementation mechanisms; Bangladesh should therefore make informed use of available TRIPS flexibilities in the post-LDC era.
- Bangladesh should carefully assess the implications of TRIPS-plus obligations in future FTAs and EPAs, particularly requirements relating to international IP treaties, stronger enforcement, customs and border measures, and the digital environment.
- Bangladesh should ensure that any future international commitments on IPR do not unnecessarily restrict the policy space and flexibilities available under the TRIPS Agreement, particularly in areas affecting public health and access to medicines.
- In the pharmaceutical sector, Bangladesh should maintain a careful balance between stronger patent protection after graduation and continued access to affordable and quality medicine.
- The concerns regarding the existing pharmaceutical market should be assessed based on evidence, as the keynote finds that the top 50 molecules, which represent approximately 82.85% of the Bangladeshi pharmaceutical market, are currently patent-free, while the top 20 brands are also patent-free.
- Bangladesh should implement the Patent Rules and Patent Examination Guidelines effectively and strengthen the capacity and technical skills of patent examiners at the DPDT, particularly for complex pharmaceutical and technology-related applications.
- Should make effective use of the safeguards and flexibilities available under the Bangladesh Patents Act, 2023, including compulsory licensing, government use, parallel importation, research exceptions, and patent cancellation or withdrawal in the public interest.
- For newly patented inventions after LDC graduation, Bangladeshi industries should explore licensing, access programme, price discrimination mechanism, government assistance, and available TRIPS flexibilities to maintain access to essential technologies and medicines.
- Measures should be taken to reduce the potential impact of higher prices of patented medicines, particularly for diseases such as cancer and diabetes and for vaccines and biologic medicines, through access programmes, insurance, government assistance, publicly funded healthcare, and measures to reduce out-of-pocket healthcare expenditure.
- Bangladesh should promote domestic production of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (APIs) to reduce production costs and limit the transmission of higher imported API costs to patients, as the keynote notes that a 10% increase in API costs is estimated to result in a 10% increase in production costs.
- Should assess the potential implications of stronger IP protection for software, AI-driven innovation, IT infrastructure, agricultural innovation, plant varieties, industrial designs, and copyright-intensive industries as part of its post-LDC industrial strategy.
- The RMG, fashion, plastic, and toy sectors should make greater use of industrial design protection to encourage local designers, protect original designs, and support the development of higher value products.
- Should strengthen the connection between education, research, and industry so that research outputs can be transformed into commercially viable innovations and intellectual property.
- Universities and research institutions should establish or strengthen Technology Transfer Offices (TTO), Technology and Innovation Support Centers (TISC), and other IP support mechanisms to facilitate the creation, protection, transfer, and commercialisation of intellectual property.

- The Government should promote innovation through a combination of intellectual property protection, prize system, tax rebate, grant, loan, public funding, and public procurement of locally developed innovation.
- Bangladesh should consider utility model as an alternative IP mechanism for certain innovation because they generally involve a lower threshold, easier registration, and lower costs than conventional patents.
- Government policy on IP and innovation should be based on impact assessments, empirical evidence, and clearly defined policy responses that reflect Bangladesh's socio-economic realities.
- IP-related policy objectives should move beyond broad aspirations and focus on concrete, actionable, achievable, and measurable goals.
- Industry should increase awareness of IP, invest more in research and development, create and commercialise intellectual property, and strengthen collaboration between industry and academia.
- Bangladesh should develop an inclusive IP and innovation ecosystem in which government institutions and industry work together to strengthen IP awareness, research and development, technology transfer, commercialisation, and industrial competitiveness.
- Bangladesh should adopt a strategic and evidence-based IP policy that protects legitimate intellectual property rights while preserving necessary policy space for innovation, public health, industrial development, and access to essential products and technologies.

Panel Discussion

Mr. Raisul Kabir

Founder & CEO, Brain Station 23 Limited

- Bangladesh's software and IT industry needs to move beyond traditional outsourcing and place greater emphasis on innovation to remain competitive in the global market.
- The rapid development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is creating new opportunities for Bangladeshi technology companies to develop innovative products and compete with established international companies.
- The experience of Brain Station 23 demonstrates that AI can help local companies overcome gaps in specialised industry knowledge and develop sophisticated software products that can compete with international solutions.
- The IT industry should increasingly focus on developing its own innovative products and solutions rather than relying primarily on providing software development and outsourcing services to foreign clients.
- Innovation will be increasingly important for Bangladesh's future competitiveness, particularly as the country prepares for the post-LDC Graduation period.
- Stronger collaboration between industry and academia is essential to support innovation, particularly by connecting technology companies with universities, graduates, researchers, and professionals with international research experience.
- Bangladesh already has a growing pool of educated graduates and researchers, and the country should make better use of this human capital to develop innovation-driven industries.
- AI can help address some existing gaps in technical skills and enable Bangladeshi companies to improve the quality and competitiveness of their products and services.
- The Government should continue supporting an enabling environment for innovation while encouraging the private sector to take a more active role in research, product development, and commercialisation.
- Universities and technology companies should establish stronger partnerships with Bangladeshi researchers and academics, including those with international PhD and research experience, to develop commercially viable innovations.
- A fast-track commercial IP bench with time-bound disposal should be established so that businesses can obtain timely protection and resolution for intellectual property arising from new products and innovations.
- The IP dispute resolution system should provide faster and more predictable outcomes because lengthy IP resolution processes can discourage businesses from investing in innovation and developing new products.

- Bangladesh should consider greater participation in international IP systems, particularly the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) and the Madrid System for the International Registration of Marks, to facilitate the international protection of patents and trademarks developed by Bangladeshi companies.
- Participation in international trademark and patent systems would help Bangladeshi companies operating globally to protect their intellectual property more efficiently across international markets.
- The Government and industry should use the available transition period following LDC Graduation to strengthen Bangladesh's IP and innovation ecosystem and ensure that local companies are adequately prepared for the changing international business environment.
- Any additional transition period should be treated as an opportunity to accelerate necessary reforms and build institutional and industry capacity rather than as a reason to delay preparations for the post-LDC environment.
- Bangladesh should prioritise innovation, stronger industry-academia collaboration, faster commercial IP dispute resolution, and greater integration with international IP systems as key elements of its strategy for strengthening the competitiveness of the technology sector after LDC Graduation.

Major General Dr. Md. Shahedul Islam (Retd)

Secretary General, BGMEA

- Bangladesh RMG industry needs to move beyond the traditional CMT (Cut, Make and Trim) production model and transition towards higher value manufacturing to remain globally competitive after LDC Graduation.
- The industry should increasingly focus on developing its own designs, fashion products, brands, and technical textiles rather than remaining primarily dependent on designs provided by international brands and buyers.
- Bangladesh garment manufacturers should strengthen their capacity to create original designs and develop their own intellectual property as part of the transition towards higher value and innovation-driven manufacturing.
- BGMEA is working to promote innovation through its Future Centre and Centre of Excellence, which can play an important role in developing new designs, technologies, and capabilities within the RMG sector.
- Sustainability and the circular economy should be integrated into the development of new products, designs, and manufacturing processes so that Bangladesh can respond effectively to changing international market requirements.
- The development of sustainable products should be viewed not only as a challenge but also as an opportunity for Bangladeshi manufacturers to create higher value products with their own intellectual property rights.
- Bangladeshi manufacturers should strengthen the protection of intellectual property associated with their original fashion designs, products, technologies, and brands through appropriate IP rights.
- The RMG industry should develop stronger capabilities in fashion design, branding, product development, and technical textiles to reduce dependence on basic manufacturing and increase value addition.
- Greater government support will be required to facilitate this industrial transformation, particularly through appropriate policy support, incentives, and other forms of assistance for factories investing in innovation and sustainable product development.
- BGMEA's Future Centre and Centre of Excellence should continue working on the development of new and original designs and technologies that can generate intellectual property owned by Bangladeshi manufacturers.
- The Government and industry should work together to create an enabling environment in which investment in innovation, sustainable technologies, original designs, and intellectual property becomes commercially viable for RMG manufacturers.
- Strengthening intellectual property ownership in fashion, design, branding, and sustainable product development can help Bangladeshi apparel manufacturers move from contract manufacturing towards higher value and more innovation-driven participation in global value chains.

Mr. KSM Mostafizur Rahman

President, Bangladesh Agrochemical Manufacturers Association (BAMA)

- LDC Graduation is expected to create significant challenges for Bangladesh's agricultural sector, particularly in relation to patents, agricultural chemicals, seeds, and plant varieties.
- The TRIPS flexibilities available to LDCs have provided Bangladesh with important policy space to develop domestic industries, build production capacity, facilitate technology transfer, and use patented products under the applicable transitional arrangements.
- The post-LDC environment may increase the importance of patent protection for agricultural chemicals and other agricultural technologies, which could affect domestic producers and increase the cost of agricultural inputs.
- Bangladesh should carefully assess the potential impact of stronger patent protection on farmers, agricultural production costs, food security, and the competitiveness of domestic agricultural input industries.
- The Government should ensure that the transition from the existing LDC-related IP flexibilities to the post-LDC framework does not unnecessarily disrupt the domestic agricultural input industry.
- Bangladesh should strengthen its policy framework for agricultural chemicals so that local manufacturers can develop and produce their own formulations while maintaining appropriate standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness.
- Greater emphasis should be placed on facilitating technology transfer to domestic agrochemical companies so that local manufacturers can develop the technical capacity required to produce competitive agricultural inputs.
- The agrochemical industry should be treated as a priority sector in the post-LDC industrial strategy because of its direct relevance to agricultural productivity, food security, and the development of domestic manufacturing capacity.
- The Government should review the existing registration practices for patented agrochemical products to ensure that the relevant authorities apply Bangladesh patent laws and applicable legal provisions consistently and transparently.
- Bangladesh should make effective use of compulsory licensing and other available legal mechanisms where necessary to facilitate access to essential agricultural technologies and prevent excessive dependence on patented products.
- A fast-track mechanism should be considered for the registration and licensing of essential agrochemical products during the transition period so that domestic manufacturers can build capacity and maintain a stable supply of agricultural inputs.
- The Government should use the available transition period to develop a comprehensive strategy for strengthening domestic agrochemical manufacturing, including technology transfer, local formulation, research and development, and intellectual property management.
- Bangladesh should strengthen research and development in agriculture and agrochemicals so that local companies and research institutions can develop formulations and technologies based on domestic agricultural requirements.
- The country should strengthen its capacity to protect and utilise locally developed agricultural technologies, genetic resources, seed varieties, and other innovations through an appropriate intellectual property framework.
- The protection of farmers' interests and the development of the domestic seed industry should be considered alongside stronger protection of plant varieties and other agricultural intellectual property rights.
- Bangladesh should develop a balanced IP policy that protects legitimate intellectual property rights while ensuring that agricultural inputs remain accessible and affordable for farmers.
- Stronger coordination among the relevant government agencies, agricultural research institutions, regulators, and private sector manufacturers is necessary to develop an effective post-LDC strategy for agrochemicals and agricultural inputs.

- The Government should provide appropriate policy support and incentives to encourage domestic investment in agrochemical research, formulation, manufacturing, technology transfer, and innovation.
- The available transition period should be used strategically to prepare the domestic agrochemical and agricultural input industries for the post-LDC environment rather than waiting until stronger patent obligations become fully applicable.
- Bangladesh should adopt a coordinated strategy that protects domestic agricultural industries and farmers, facilitates technology transfer, encourages local innovation and formulation, and maintains food security while meeting the country's international intellectual property obligations.

Mr. Faez Ahmed

Deputy General Manager, Incepta Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

- Bangladesh should retain all available TRIPS flexibilities, including compulsory licensing and parallel importation, to protect public health and ensure access to essential medicines.
- The Bangladesh Patents Act 2023 provides important safeguards and should be maintained and implemented strictly without unnecessarily reducing its existing flexibilities.
- Bangladesh should focus on meeting the minimum TRIPS requirements and carefully assess any additional IP obligations, as excessive TRIPS-plus commitments could reduce access to medicines and limit policy space.
- The pharmaceutical industry should focus less on discovering new molecules and more on developing the technology and capacity to manufacture generic medicines and products after patent expiry.
- Bangladesh should strengthen technological capabilities so that local pharmaceutical companies can manufacture products whose patents expire and reduce dependence on foreign technologies.
- The existing capabilities of leading pharmaceutical companies and the growing API industry should be further developed to support domestic production of medicines and active pharmaceutical ingredients.
- Bangladesh should carefully review FTA/EPA negotiations to avoid unnecessary TRIPS-plus obligations such as data exclusivity and market exclusivity that could negatively affect the generic and biosimilar industries.
- The Government should ensure that any additional IP commitments under international agreements do not undermine public health, domestic pharmaceutical capacity, or access to affordable medicines.
- Greater government support should be provided for technology development in generic medicines, biosimilars, CRO, and bioequivalence testing facilities to strengthen Bangladesh pharmaceutical industry after LDC graduation.

Mr. Md Azizur Rahman FCS

Director General, Intellectual Property Association of Bangladesh (IPAB)

- Bangladesh should use the remaining LDC transition period to strengthen domestic intellectual property capacity and prepare industries for the post-LDC environment.
- Existing IP-related laws and rules should be thoroughly reviewed and updated where necessary in line with international regulations and sector-specific requirements.
- The Government should focus on developing IP awareness, IP management, and practical compliance capacity among private-sector enterprises.
- Small and medium industries, including manufacturing clusters such as Dholaikhal and Zinjira, should be supported to move from imitation toward creative engineering, re-engineering, innovation, and original product development.
- Industries should focus on developing their own brands, technologies, and intellectual property rather than relying on copying existing products.
- Sector-specific IP problems should be identified and addressed through coordinated discussions among government, industry, researchers, and relevant stakeholders.
- Bangladesh should make greater use of available LDC-related support and technology transfer opportunities from developed countries through WIPO and relevant government ministries.

- Sector-specific technology and capacity building support should be sought from developed countries based on Bangladesh's identified industrial and IP needs.
- The Government and private sector should work together to identify practical solutions to IP-related challenges before and after LDC graduation.
- A coordinated sector-wise IP roadmap should be developed to strengthen innovation, technology development, branding, and global IP compliance.
- Private-sector businesses should be encouraged to seek professional IP support and build long-term capacity to protect and commercially utilise their intellectual property.

Dr. Abureza M Muzareba

Professor, Department of Marketing, Faculty of Business Studies, Dhaka University

- Universities should strengthen research and innovation by increasing meaningful participation from industry and the private sector in academic research projects.
- Bangladesh should develop stronger university-industry (*Industry-Academia*) collaboration so that research can address practical industrial problems and lead to commercially viable products and technologies.
- The Government and private sector should provide sustainable funding and institutional support for university research, innovation, and product development.
- Existing research and innovation centres in universities should be better coordinated and linked with industry to improve commercialisation and technology transfer.
- Intellectual property should be viewed not only as a compliance requirement but also as an economic and commercial infrastructure that can create business value.
- Bangladesh should strengthen its capacity for branding, marketing, and commercialisation so that locally developed products can generate greater economic value in domestic and international markets.
- Special attention should be given to SMEs because they may face greater difficulties in managing the costs and challenges associated with IP protection and compliance.
- Universities and industry should support SMEs through practical guidance on IP, branding, marketing, GI protection, and product commercialisation.
- Bangladesh should identify more locally developed agricultural and traditional products with GI potential and support their registration, branding, marketing, and commercialisation.
- GI protection should be accompanied by effective commercialisation strategies so that producers, particularly rural communities and farmers, can obtain tangible economic benefits.
- Government, academia, and industry should establish a coordinated and continuous mechanism for research, IP development, branding, and commercialisation rather than relying on isolated initiatives.
- Industry representatives should actively engage with universities to support research, provide practical knowledge, and help develop solutions to real-world industrial challenges.
- Bangladesh should use existing academic, research, and industrial capabilities more effectively to develop innovative products and strengthen the country's post-LDC competitiveness.

Dr. Saif Uddin Ahammad

Joint Secretary, Trade Support Measures Wing, GoB

- Bangladesh should shift from being primarily a user of intellectual property to becoming a producer, creator, and innovator by strengthening domestic technological and creative capabilities.
- The country should make maximum use of available TRIPS flexibilities and carefully consider TRIPS-plus obligations when negotiating international trade agreements.
- Bangladesh should strengthen its legal and institutional capacity to address post-LDC IP challenges, particularly in enforcement, confidentiality, and trade secret protection.
- The legal framework should address corporate criminal liability and strengthen mechanisms for tracing the source of IP-related violations, particularly in packaging and labelling.
- The proposed plant variety protection framework should balance the protection of breeders' rights with the interests and rights of farmers.

- Bangladesh should develop comprehensive Patent Rules and Patent Examination Guidelines to ensure consistent, transparent, and TRIPS-compliant patent examination.
- Patent examination should apply strict standards for novelty, inventive step, and industrial applicability to discourage evergreening and prevent the inappropriate patenting of minor changes or new uses of existing medicines.
- DPDT should strengthen its online application, examination, and patent database systems to improve the identification and prevention of inappropriate or repetitive patent applications.
- Bangladesh should enhance DPDT's technical and institutional capacity so that patent applications can be examined effectively and consistently.
- The Government should strengthen the legal framework and enforcement mechanisms to protect Bangladeshi exporters from potential international IP disputes and related market-access challenges.
- TRIPS-plus provisions, including data exclusivity, market exclusivity, and other enhanced IP obligations, should be carefully assessed before being included in future trade agreements.
- Bangladesh should ensure that IP provisions in agreements with trading partners do not unnecessarily restrict domestic industrial development, innovation, or access to essential products.
- The Government, industry, and relevant institutions should jointly strengthen preparedness for post-LDC IP challenges through coordinated legal, institutional, and technical measures.
- Bangladesh should use the preparation period strategically to establish stronger IP rules, examination guidelines, enforcement capacity, and institutional mechanisms before facing increased post-LDC obligations.

Mr. Abdul Baki

Project Adviser (SSGP) & Former Secretary, GoB

- Bangladesh should use any additional LDC transition period effectively to complete the necessary preparations for post-LDC challenges, rather than allowing further delays.
- A clear and time-bound roadmap should be implemented to address the legal, trade, business, and intellectual property challenges associated with LDC graduation.
- Stronger coordination among government ministries, agencies, private-sector representatives, and other stakeholders is essential to ensure that LDC-related reforms are effectively implemented.
- The National Committee on Coordination and Monitoring on LDC Graduation should play a central role in monitoring progress and ensuring accountability for agreed reforms.
- The sectoral task force led by ERD should identify specific reforms required to address trade, business, and IP-related challenges after LDC graduation and translate them into actionable proposals.
- Sector-specific challenges, including those related to agrochemicals and pharmaceuticals, should be examined through focused consultations and incorporated into the national LDC graduation roadmap.
- The Government should conduct an in-depth study on the potential IP-related challenges of post-LDC graduation and develop evidence-based recommendations for necessary reforms.
- Previous studies and recommendations should be reviewed and followed by concrete implementation measures rather than remaining only as reports.
- Regular progress monitoring and reporting on deregulation, reforms, and LDC graduation preparedness should continue at the highest government level.
- Government and private sector stakeholders should work together to identify specific requirements and ensure that necessary reforms are implemented within the available preparation period.
- Bangladesh should use the additional preparation period to strengthen institutional capacity, implement priority reforms, and ensure that post-LDC challenges are addressed through coordinated and timely action.

Mr. S M Arshad Imam

Copyright Registrar (Additional Secretary), Copyright Office Bangladesh, GoB

- Bangladesh should strengthen the copyright framework to support the growing creative and digital industries, including software, ICT, music, film, television, publishing, advertising, gaming, and digital content.
- The Copyright Rules should be finalised and effectively implemented to strengthen the practical enforcement of the Copyright Act.
- The Copyright Act should be reviewed and updated where necessary to address emerging digital industries and evolving forms of copyright use.
- Bangladesh should strengthen measures against copyright infringement and digital piracy, particularly unauthorized reproduction, streaming, downloading, and digital distribution.
- Technological capacity, digital evidence management, and coordination among relevant agencies should be strengthened to address online copyright violations effectively.
- Collective management mechanisms should be made more effective and aligned with international developments and the requirements of the digital economy.
- Bangladesh should carefully assess its technical, institutional, and professional capacity before undertaking additional international copyright commitments under WIPO frameworks.
- Post-LDC IP reforms should be industry-specific and based on the practical needs and challenges of different sectors rather than applying a uniform approach.
- Copyright policies should maintain an appropriate balance between protecting creators' and investors' rights and ensuring legitimate access for education, research, information, and cultural purposes.
- Bangladesh should develop a strong, balanced, and industry-oriented IP ecosystem that promotes creativity, innovation, investment, knowledge sharing, and sustainable industrial development.
- IP should be treated not only as a legal compliance issue after LDC graduation but also as a strategic tool for innovation, investment, export competitiveness, and value addition.
- Bangladesh should gradually move beyond cost-based competitiveness and strengthen creative, innovative, technological, and value-added industries through effective IP protection.
- Relevant stakeholders should provide written recommendations on copyright-related reforms so that practical industry concerns can be considered in the finalisation of the Copyright Rules.

Mr. Md. Jahangir Hossain

Director General, Department of Patents, Industrial Designs and Trademarks (DPDT), GoB

- Bangladesh should conduct sector-specific assessments of post-LDC industrial shifts to identify how each industry will be affected by changes in market access, intellectual property protection, competition, and export requirements.
- The plastics industry demonstrates the importance of moving from imitation-based production toward innovation, original designs, product development, and stronger intellectual property capabilities before entering international markets.
- Export-oriented industries should assess competitors, consumers, financiers, market conditions, and other business factors alongside IPR issues, as business competitiveness depends on a broader ecosystem.
- The government and business community should jointly develop a clear, sector-specific industrial strategy for the post-LDC era, with clearly assigned responsibilities for analysis, coordination, implementation, and monitoring.
- The pharmaceutical sector requires adequate policy and institutional facilitation to maintain its competitiveness, while IPR rules should prevent practices such as evergreening that may unnecessarily extend patent protection and affect access to affordable medicines.
- Industrial policy should support a balanced development of export-oriented and domestic market industries rather than focusing exclusively on export earnings, while ensuring that domestic consumers also have access to quality products at competitive prices.
- Bangladesh should move beyond repeated discussions and wish lists and translate recommendations into concrete policies, measurable actions, institutional responsibilities, and implementation outcomes.

- The country should identify the reasons for its slower industrial and technological transformation compared with countries such as Vietnam and Korea and develop targeted measures to address these structural gaps.
- After nearly three decades of TRIPS implementation and with LDC graduation approaching, Bangladesh should accelerate practical preparations instead of relying mainly on discussions and studies.
- Government, industry, academia, and other stakeholders should work together through a coordinated and implementation-focused mechanism to ensure effective preparation for the post-LDC era.

Chief Guest

Mr. Md. Shahriar Kader Siddiky, Secretary

Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, GoB

- Bangladesh should develop a strong culture of research and development (R&D) through coordinated efforts among the government, private sector, industry, and academia.
- The government, private sector, and academic institutions should work together to identify existing gaps, address challenges, and develop practical solutions through collaborative initiatives.
- A stronger relationship between academia and government is essential, as institutional distance and misconceptions between the two sides can hinder effective collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- Given the limited time available before LDC graduation, Bangladesh needs a clear, time-bound action plan focused on achieving the necessary compliance and readiness within the available timeframe.
- A 24-month implementation plan, followed by a six-month adjustment or transition period, can provide a practical framework for completing key preparations and addressing operational requirements.
- Bangladesh should remain open to constructive recommendations and make necessary adjustments while recognizing that changes to laws and policies cannot always be implemented overnight.
- Any legal or policy reform should consider the interrelationships and interdependencies among existing laws, policies, institutions, and international commitments.
- In negotiating FTAs and other trade arrangements, Bangladesh needs to carefully assess the implications of extending specific benefits to one trading partner and ensure that its overall trade structure remains balanced and sustainable.
- Bangladesh should develop a trade and economic framework that is both acceptable to the international community and supportive of the country's domestic economic interests.
- While protectionism exists in many countries, Bangladesh should identify and adopt relevant international best practices that can strengthen the competitiveness of domestic industries.
- Changes in mindset and institutional culture are essential for improving coordination, collaboration, and the effective implementation of policies.
- Need to establish a comprehensive support structure in which the government, industry, private sector, and academia work together to identify priority areas and translate policy recommendations into effective implementation.
- Although Bangladesh has introduced several important laws and policies, stronger implementation mechanisms are needed to ensure that these frameworks produce their intended outcomes.
- Where necessary, the government and development partners should support both public and private studies, while industry and academia should actively participate in developing research that is practical, evidence-based, and useful to all stakeholders.
- Sector-specific priorities should be clearly identified, including the priorities of agriculture, garments, pharmaceuticals, SMEs, and other emerging and smaller sectors.
- A comprehensive support system should address sector-specific requirements related to knowledge, capacity development, legal frameworks, finance, technology, standards, and market access.
- Bangladesh must prepare systematically to address the challenges associated with LDC graduation, as a successful transition will require coordinated efforts across multiple sectors.
- Preparations should cover policy adjustments, effective implementation, financial support, institutional capacity, and other measures required to ensure a smooth transition.

- Bangladesh should focus on increasing domestic value addition and improving the competitiveness of its industries rather than relying primarily on existing market advantages.
- All proposed interventions should be assessed in terms of their economic costs and benefits to ensure that resources are used efficiently and that the country's overall economic balance remains sustainable.
- A positive attitude, clear priorities, coordinated action, and a specific time-bound plan are essential for achieving meaningful and sustainable changes.
- The government, industry, academia, and other stakeholders should work collectively to prepare Bangladesh for the challenges ahead and ensure that necessary reforms and support measures are implemented effectively.

Summary Recommendations

- Bangladesh should develop a strong, business-friendly, and innovation-oriented IPR ecosystem to support competitiveness following LDC Graduation.
- A clear, time-bound, and sector-specific national IPR roadmap should be developed, with defined priorities, institutional responsibilities, measurable targets, and regular progress monitoring.
- Bangladesh should use available TRIPS flexibilities strategically while carefully assessing TRIPS-plus obligations in future FTAs and EPAs to preserve policy space for public health, industrial development, and innovation.
- The Government should strengthen the institutional capacity of DPDT, including digitalisation of registration and examination processes, specialised examiners, improved patent databases, and comprehensive patent examination guidelines.
- Dedicated and fast-track IP dispute resolution mechanisms, including specialised IP Tribunals or Benches, should be established to ensure timely and predictable resolution of IPR disputes.
- Customs and law enforcement agencies should be provided with specialised IPR training and stronger technical capacity to combat counterfeiting, piracy, and cross-border infringement.
- Bangladesh should strengthen copyright protection and introduce effective digital enforcement mechanisms, including a functional Notice and Takedown system, to address online piracy and infringement.
- The Government should strengthen coordination among IP-related institutions and consider an integrated institutional framework to streamline IP registration, enforcement, policy development, and stakeholder services.
- Universities and research institutions should establish or strengthen Technology Transfer Offices (TTO), Technology and Innovation Support Centres (TISC), and other mechanisms to convert research outcomes into commercially viable products and technologies.
- A centralised platform should connect universities, researchers, industry, investors, and government agencies to facilitate research collaboration, technology transfer, IP protection, and commercialisation.
- Bangladesh should create a stronger R&D culture through sustainable public and private funding, grants, tax incentives, innovation prizes, loans, and public procurement of locally developed technologies and products.
- Industry-academia collaboration should be institutionalised through regular consultations, joint research, industry-led research projects, and partnerships involving researchers and professionals with international experience.
- SMEs should receive targeted IP awareness, advisory, technical, and financial support to register, manage, protect, and commercialise patents, trademarks, copyrights, designs, trade secrets, and GIs.
- Should explore appropriate mechanisms for recognising properly valued intellectual property as an asset that can support access to finance.
- Industries should shift from imitation, low-cost production, and volume-based competitiveness towards original designs, innovation, branding, technology development, and higher domestic value addition.

- The RMG, pharmaceuticals, plastic, IT, agriculture, agrochemical, toy, fashion, and other priority sectors should develop sector-specific IP and innovation strategies based on their respective technological, market, and regulatory challenges.
- The RMG industry should move beyond the traditional CMT model by strengthening original fashion design, branding, technical textiles, sustainable products, and ownership of locally developed intellectual property.
- The IT sector should move beyond traditional outsourcing towards the development and commercialisation of proprietary software, AI-based solutions, digital products, and other technology-intensive innovations.
- Bangladesh should strengthen domestic pharmaceutical and API capabilities while maintaining appropriate TRIPS safeguards to protect public health and access to affordable medicines.
- The pharmaceutical sector should carefully assess future TRIPS-plus commitments, particularly data exclusivity and market exclusivity, to avoid unnecessarily constraining domestic generic and biosimilar production.
- Bangladesh should strengthen domestic agrochemical, seed, agricultural technology, and plant variety innovation while maintaining an appropriate balance between IP protection, farmers' interests, food security, and affordable agricultural input.
- Local industries should be supported to move from copying and imitation towards creative engineering, reengineering, original product development, and internationally competitive brands and technologies.
- Bangladesh should strengthen the protection and commercialisation of geographical indications, traditional products, agricultural products, and locally developed brands so that producers and communities can obtain greater economic value.
- Government and industry should establish mechanisms for IP-backed technology transfer from developed countries and make strategic use of available international technical assistance and capacity building opportunities.
- Bangladesh should strengthen its participation in relevant international IP systems, where appropriate, to facilitate international protection of patents and trademarks developed by Bangladeshi enterprises.
- IP policy should be based on evidence, sector-specific impact assessment, and Bangladesh's socio-economic realities rather than adopting a uniform approach across all industries.
- The Government should review existing IP laws, rules, and policies and update them where necessary to ensure consistency, transparency, effective enforcement, and alignment with Bangladesh's post-LDC requirements.
- Previous studies and policy recommendations should be translated into concrete implementation measures rather than remaining only as a report or discussion point.
- The National Committee on Coordination and Monitoring on LDC Graduation and relevant sectoral task forces should strengthen coordination, accountability, progress monitoring, and implementation of priority IP and trade reforms.
- A coordinated support structure should bring together government, private sector, industry associations, universities, research institutions, and professional organisations to identify sectoral priorities and implement solution.
- Bangladesh should use the remaining preparation and transition period strategically, with a focused implementation programme covering legal reform, institutional capacity, industry readiness, R&D, technology transfer, financing, and market competitiveness.
- Bangladesh should treat IPR not merely as a legal compliance requirement, but as a strategic economic tool for innovation, investment, technology transfer, branding, value addition, export competitiveness, and sustainable industrial development.