

Footwear Exchange



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

connect@footwarexchange.com

the footprint

monthly newsletter by Footwear Exchange



EDITOR'S NOTE

Footprint December Edition: From Year-End Reflections to Future Directions.

Dear Readers,

As 2025 comes to a close, we reflect on a year of growth, innovation, and connection in Bangladesh's leather and footwear industry. Footwear Exchange continued its mission of sharing insights and knowledge through the monthly Footprint newsletter, quarterly magazines, and sector research, covering export trends, market data, and industry developments.

This year saw the launch of the Bangladesh Leather and Footwear Sector Business Survey, offering valuable insights into business conditions, investment opportunities, and industry challenges. We also introduced the Campus Ambassador Program, recruiting fourteen bright ambassadors from top universities who engaged with industry leaders and visited operational sites like the CETP plant. The National Leather Day celebration at DTIEWTPCL brought together professionals for a roundtable on the future of the leather industry, coinciding with the launch of the Q1 magazine.

Footwear Exchange participated in Leathertech Fair 2025 and concluded the year with the inaugural Prime Bank Leather Industry Changemaker Awards, honoring leaders and innovators driving sustainability, efficiency, and innovation. Throughout 2025, our research, reports, and initiatives contributed to knowledge sharing, sector development, and stronger industry connections.

As the year ends, we celebrate achievements, recognize changemakers, and look forward to new opportunities, collaborations, and innovations in 2026.

The more we exchange, the more we gain.

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Leather Industry Changemaker Awards 2025

Prime Bank presents LEATHER INDUSTRY CHANGEMAKER AWARDS - Edition 1

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The year 2025 has been a dynamic and transformative period for Footwear Exchange. With a strong focus on knowledge-research, sector engagement, and industry development, the organization continued to expand its contributions to Bangladesh's leather and footwear sector. Throughout the year, Footwear Exchange introduced new initiatives, strengthened its publications, conducted meaningful research, and created platforms that connected professionals, students, manufacturers, and stakeholders across the value chain. From insightful newsletters and sector surveys to impactful events, awards, and youth-led programs, 2025 stands as a year of progress, collaboration, and renewed commitment. This Year in Review highlights the milestones and achievements that shaped our journey forward.

Footwear Exchange – 2025 Year in Review

1. A Year That Began with *Footprint*:

Footwear Exchange welcomed the new year by launching its monthly e-newsletter *Footprint*. Throughout the year, the newsletter evolved into a trusted information source for the industry. Each issue presented updated monthly export data, year-on-year comparisons, and detailed breakdowns of leather, leather products, leather footwear, and non-leather footwear exports. Alongside data, *Footprint* celebrated significant international days related to the leather and footwear sector and highlighted key monthly developments shaping the industry. With insightful content and consistent publication, the newsletter helped readers stay informed and connected.



2. Leather and Footwear insights Business Service

Survey Launched:

Another major achievement of the year was the introduction of the Bangladesh Leather & Footwear Sector Business Service Survey. The initiative received impressive participation from manufacturers, exporters, traders, and service providers across the sector. The final published report offered a clear picture of the current business situation, turnover expectations, projected pricing trends for 2025, and possible investment opportunities. It also revealed the biggest challenges perceived by industry players, making it a valuable reference for businesses planning their next steps.



Footwear Exchange

BANGLADESH LEATHER & FOOTWEAR SECTOR INSIGHTS SURVEY REPORT 2025

Issue 2



3. US Tariff Analysis report for Leather and Footwear Sector :

Footwear Exchange also published a focused analytical report titled “US Tariff: A Blow or an Opportunity for Bangladesh’s Leather and Footwear Industry.” The report examined the evolving US tariff structure and its implications for Bangladeshi exporters, highlighting potential risks, cost pressures, and compliance challenges, while also identifying emerging opportunities for market repositioning, product diversification, and strategic sourcing in the global value chain.



3. Quarterly Magazines: Q4, Q1, Q2, and Q3 :

Footwear Exchange strengthened its publishing presence with the release of four quarterly magazines. The year began with the publication of Q4 (Oct–Dec 2024). This was followed by the Q1 edition, which highlighted the rise of molded EVA footwear manufacturing in Bangladesh—a development that signals a significant transformation in the industry.

The Q2 issue focused on the National Leather Day theme and shared insights from the roundtable discussions. The Q3 magazine continued the momentum by presenting current trends, expert opinions, and timely updates relevant to stakeholders across the value chain.



4. Launch of the Campus Ambassador Program

A major highlight of the year was the launch of the Campus Ambassador Program by Footwear Exchange. Through this initiative, fourteen talented campus ambassadors were selected from different universities and academic disciplines across Bangladesh. The program was designed to create a strong connection between students and the leather and footwear industry, encouraging knowledge sharing, industry exposure, and leadership development among future professionals.



5. Leather Day Celebration at DTIEWTPCL:

Footwear Exchange celebrated International Leather Day by collaborating with DTIEWTPCL to organize a special roundtable discussion titled *"Bangladesh Leather – Beyond the Surface: Exploring the Truth, Challenge, and Future."* The session was presided over by Golam Shahnewaz, Managing Director of DTIEWTPCL, with Md. Shaheen Ahmed, Chairman of the Bangladesh Tanners Association (BTA), attending as Chief Guest. The event brought together industry leaders, professionals, and young participants to discuss current challenges and future opportunities of the sector. The inception of the Q1 magazine was also announced during the programme, adding further significance to the celebration.



6. Campus Ambassador Orientation & CETP Visit:

Footwear Exchange arranged Campus ambassadors' orientation programme and their group visit to CETP to introduce the selected ambassadors to the practical and operational aspects of the leather industry. As part of the programme, FE allowing participants to gain first-hand exposure to environmental management, wastewater treatment processes, and compliance practices within the tannery cluster.



7. Yearlong Research and Sector Support:

Throughout the year, Footwear Exchange continued to play a central role in supporting the industry through research and data-driven insights. The organization conducted several studies focusing on footwear operations, supply chain dynamics, export performance, merchandising practices, tariff structures, and overall business and operational trends. A number of these research findings were published through *Leather & Footwear BIZ*, helping industry members make informed decisions. In addition to research, Footwear Exchange actively promoted backward linkage companies, ensuring they received wider visibility and recognition within the sector.



8. Participation in Leathertech 2025

Footwear Exchange marked its presence at Leathertech fair 2025 at ICCB in December 4-5-6 with an active and engaging stall. Throughout the event, the team welcomed visitors, industry professionals, students, and entrepreneurs. The participation allowed the organization to showcase its initiatives, publications, and research activities, while also strengthening connections with existing and potential collaborators.



9. Leather Industry Change Maker Awards 2025 – Edition 1:

One of the most memorable milestones of the year took place on 5 December at ICCB, where Footwear Exchange, in collaboration with ASK Trade, organized the inaugural Prime Bank Leather Industry Change Maker Awards 2025. The programme was graced by the presence of Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Honorable Advisor, while Saiful Islam, Chairman of BSCIC, attended as Special Guest. The ceremony celebrated individuals and organizations making exceptional contributions to the leather and footwear sector.

Awards were presented in categories such as sustainability, operational efficiency, backward linkage development, and emerging changemakers, reflecting Footwear Exchange's commitment to recognizing innovation, responsibility, and positive transformation within the industry.



As 2025 comes to an end, Footwear Exchange celebrates a year of progress, engagement, and meaningful contribution to Bangladesh's leather and footwear industry. From newsletters and magazines to events, awards, research, and youth engagement, the organization has worked consistently to strengthen industry knowledge and collaboration. The year sets a strong foundation for more impactful initiatives in the coming year.



Leather & Footwear Export Update – November 2025

Leather Footwear & Products Continue to Drive Growth

Bangladesh's leather and footwear sector maintained steady momentum in FY25–26, posting +7.7% export growth during July–November 2025 (US\$737.21M vs US\$684.19M last year)

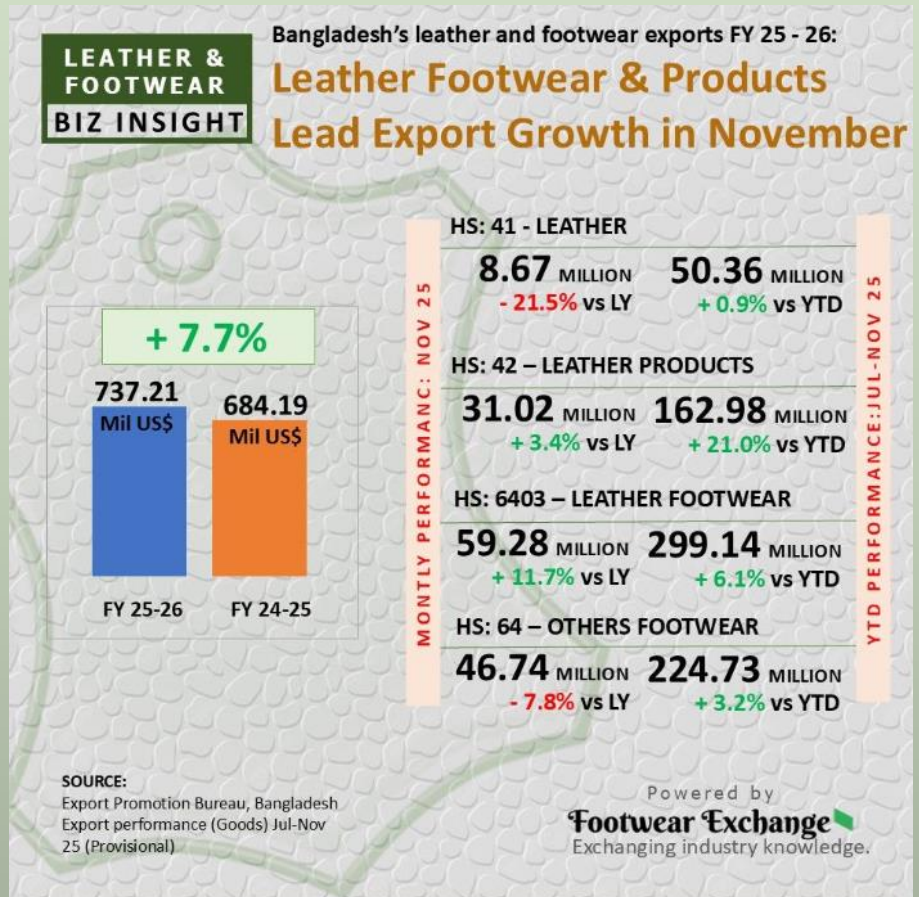
But the month's performance shows a mixed picture across categories:

- Leather (HS 41): November dipped –21.5%, reflecting softer global demand, though YTD remains slightly positive at +0.9%.

- Leather Products (HS 42): A strong performer — +3.4% in November and a remarkable +21% YTD, driven by growing value addition.

- Leather Footwear (HS 6403): Continues to lead the sector with +11.7% growth in November and +6.1% YTD, reinforcing its role as Bangladesh's key export engine.

- Other Footwear (HS 64): November saw –7.8%, but YTD remains positive at +3.2%, suggesting a slow but steady recovery.



Footwear Exchange will continue to track and share monthly insights to help the industry stay informed and forward-focused.

Source:
Export Promotion Bureau, Bangladesh
Export performance for Leather & Footwear 2025-26 July-Nov (provisional)

The Leather Industry Changemaker Awards 2025, organized by Footwear Exchange in collaboration with ASK Trade & Exhibitions, celebrated Bangladesh's first dedicated platform to honor excellence, innovation, sustainability, and leadership in the leather and footwear sector. The awards ceremony was held on 5 December 2025 at ICCB, Dhaka, with prominent guests including Syeda Rizwana Hasan, Honorable Advisor, and Saiful Islam, Chairman of BSCIC. The event brought together industry leaders, policymakers, and young professionals to recognize transformative contributions across the sector.

Purpose and Selection Process:

The awards aim to highlight achievements that drive sustainability, efficiency, and industry growth, inspire broader adoption of best practices, and strengthen Bangladesh's global visibility in leather and footwear. Nominations were open to businesses and individuals across manufacturing, retail, and backward linkage sectors. Entries were evaluated through a rigorous three-tier process: initial shortlisting by experts, category-specific jury evaluation, and final deliberation by the grand jury. Judges included senior industry professionals and association leaders, ensuring transparency and credibility.

Nominees and Innovations:

Sustainability Practices

Bata Shoe Company introduced Bangladesh's first fully digital invoicing system in retail footwear, reducing millions of paper receipts, chemical exposure, and boosting operational efficiency.

SAF Industries Ltd. integrated sustainability across operations, including a full-capacity effluent treatment plant, chrome recovery system, waste-to-biofertilizer innovation, and worker welfare programs.

RIFF Leather Industry focused on environmental compliance, efficient waste management, and worker health & safety aligned with ILO and OSHAS standards.

Process Efficiency

Edison Footwear Industry leveraged advanced automation and laser cutting technologies to improve precision, reduce waste, and enhance operational efficiency.

MAF Shoes Ltd. demonstrated **full vertical integration**, modern production techniques, and in-house material lab innovations, ensuring quality, scalability, and export competitiveness.

Frame House Footwear Ltd. optimized manpower, introduced automation in sewing and marking, and reduced material and chemical consumption while improving productivity.

Support Services

Step Shoe Last & Accessories Co. Ltd. strengthened the local footwear ecosystem by supplying critical shoe lasts, reducing costs and lead times, and enhancing production accuracy.

Banga Building Material Ltd introduced eco-friendly **water-based PU leather**, reducing VOC emissions by 90% and minimizing import dependency.

Pidilite Bangladesh pioneered toluene-free adhesives for footwear, offering fast supply, compliance with global standards, and supporting local manufacturers' efficiency.



The awards were evaluated by a distinguished panel of industry leaders and experts, ensuring a fair, credible, and insightful selection process. The *Grand Jury Board* included:

Mr. Mohammed Nazmul Hassan: Jury Board Chairman.

Senior Vice President, Leathergoods & Footwear Manufacturers & Exporters Association of Bangladesh (LFMEAB) & Managing Director, Leatherex Footwear Industries Ltd.

Jury Members:

Md. Mominul Ahsan

Managing Director, E-Zone HRM Limited

Dr. Md. Houmyoun Kabir Khan

Director, Investment Research & Economics Observatory, BIDA.

Ms. Badria Anis

Director (Marketing), Bangladesh Export Ltd & Tropical Shoe Industries Ltd.

Major (Rtd) Md Rafiqul Islam.

Secretary General, LFMEAB

Mohammad Ali Bappy

President, LETS'B



Award Winners

The winners, chosen by the jury based on impact, innovation, and scalability, included:

Sustainability Practices: SAF Industries Ltd.

Process Efficiency: MAF Shoes Ltd.

Support Services: Step Shoe Last & Accessories Co. Ltd.

Emerging Changemaker: AKM Moshpiqur Rahman, Accenture Footwear & Leather Products Ltd

It was announced the **“Legacy of Excellence”** in honor of **Syed Manzur Elahi**, recognizing his enduring impact and leadership in Bangladesh’s leather and footwear industry.



The awards also featured expert panels and discussions on technology adoption, localization, and export competitiveness, making the event a **platform for knowledge sharing and sectoral advancement**, alongside celebrating outstanding achievement.



Mr. Syed Mushfequr Rahman
Member (VAT Audit),
National Board of Revenue (NBR)



Mr. Md. Ariful Hoque
Investment Expert
Former DG, BIDA



Mr. Md. Golam Shahnewaz
Managing Director,
DTIEWTPCL (CETP)



Mr. Shamim Kabir
Managing Director, Step Shoe
Last & Accessories Co Ltd



Md. Nasrullah
Head of International Business,
Apex Footwear Ltd

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Or

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