

## 25% Bangla garment manufacturing to be automated by 2023

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Pic: Shutterstock

Around a quarter of garment manufacturing activities in Bangladesh will be automated by 2023, up from 8 per cent now, according to Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) president Rubana Huq, who recently said this projection is because the sector has entered the Fourth Industrial Revolution and is witnessing the adoption of artificial intelligence.

So workers, especially females, need to be skilled and reskilled so that they can continue to contribute to this important business, she said. She urged different agencies to disseminate education for skilling the enormous number of female workers as they have been tremendously contributing to the industry.

Huq was addressing a virtual programme on 'Women Power: the Force Multiplier' organised by the American Chamber of Commerce in Bangladesh (AmCham).

The scenario of women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh has been progressing in the right direction, said Uzma Chowdhury, chief finance officer and director of PRAN-RFL Group.

However, some women entrepreneurs have been facing difficulties in accessing finance due to the fallouts of the Covid-19 pandemic, she said, adding that 40 per cent of her company's

115,000 employees were women.

Some 80 per cent of enterprises owned by females have been affected as part of the fallouts of the pandemic as most of those are cottage, micro, small and medium ones, which have been hit hard, said AmCham president Syed Ershad Ahmed.

Till date, a majority of female entrepreneurs could not avail loans from the government-sponsored stimulus packages, he added.