

Denim Expert, hosted almost 50 international companies and 4,000 visitors in May 2016. For its November 2016 edition it expects to double both those numbers while organizing workshops and seminars within the show aimed at nurturing local talents and helping to educate them. The Denim & Jeans Bangladesh show is smaller. It is organized by denim expert Sandeep Agarwal, who has also recently launched a sister trade show in Vietnam (more on that later). After events such as the 2013 disaster of Rana Plaza in Savar, the local industry has significantly improved its safety and environmentally friendly processes. One of the technically advanced and forward thinking manufacturers in Bangladesh is M&J, owned by Manir Ahmed. It employs 8,000 people and has a total production capacity of 12 million jeans annually, expecting to reach 16 million by 2017. M&J has reached some of the best standards concerning environmental footprint and its employees' care conditions adhere to some top international safeguard programs. Although a terroristic attack recently took place in Bangladesh, M&J thinks the nation has always been a safe place for foreigners to work in: "The recently founded democracy and their capital, Dhaka, haven't been dangerous places. The recent terroristic attack shows how situations are changing fast and how they generally require that precautions must be taken."

**PAKISTAN
COTTON GROWER, DENIM AND
JEANS MANUFACTURER**

Pakistan also has one of the largest textile industries of the world. As the fourth largest cotton producer, it has a rich history in textiles and produces 600 million meters of fabrics (of which 250 million meters are used locally and 350 million exported). The country produces around 220 million jeans per year. Textiles and clothing exports from Pakistan account for US\$3.5 billion, half of which are sold between Europe and the US.

The main groups involved in the local textile and garment manufacturing include the US Group, made up of US Denim and US Apparel, which produce according to certified production standards that minimize environmental impact. The group employs 17,000 people altogether. It produces 26 million garments per year and about 29 million meters of denim.

Another top player is AFGI (Artistic Fabric & Garment Industries), which offers full package services. It has also recently introduced a new post-consumer waste-shredding plant: "With this new technology we can turn old jeans into new jeans and give a complete new meaning to the

term 'fully vertical,'" says AFGI's Hasan Javed. Crescent Bahuman is another fully integrated plant employing 6,500 people. It has a yearly production capacity of 10 million garments and 15 million meters of fabrics. It also has top eco-friendly certifications and treats industrial waters to be re-employed for agriculture.

Sooty was founded in the 1970s and operates in denim manufacturing, garment production, laundering and finishing. Artistic Milliners, established in 1949, employs more than 7,600 people in denim production, product development and garment manufacturing. The textile firm expects to reach a 36 million meter denim production capacity very soon. Then there is the Machiyara Group, a huge Pakistani holding operating in the textile business since 1990. The group owns plantations, produces yarns and denim fabrics for its own Hantex company and for its garment manufacturing company DCC that serves brands and retailers globally. The Pakistani textile division employs a total of 15,000 people. Its monthly production capacity is 2.4 million meters of fabric and 2.5 million garments. A few years ago, Machiyara also opened up a hub in Dubai (more below). In Pakistan much has changed recently. The advent of democracy guarantees better conditions and the latest government's security investments in industry and infrastructure show an overall upgrade of working conditions.

**DUBAI
THE FUTURE IS HERE**

Up-and-coming Dubai is important for its geographical position—at easy reach for both the Western and Eastern worlds. The city has become an international shopping mecca and a hub for various business ventures. It started hosting the Arab Fashion Week in 2015 and in 2020 will be home to the next World Expo. Dubai could become a must-go destination for jeanswear insiders for all these reasons and because it hosts Desert Studio, a forward-thinking, eco-friendly and technically advanced production facility that belongs to Machiyara Group. While the group's Pakistani activities aim at mainstream brands, Desert Studio works for top-end US and European denim brands. Founded in 2013, Desert Studio can develop new exclusive treatments quickly and upon single brand's request. Its 900 workers can produce 250,000 pieces per month. In March 2016, Artistic Milliners also established its own research and innovation center called Artistic Lab in Dubai. It provides designers, brands and partners a platform to interpret upcoming trends and explore new and sustainable washing techniques.

