



The European Institute for the PCB Community

EIPC SPEeDNEWS

The Weekly On-Line Newsletter
Issue 29 – October 2023

NEWS FROM BANGLADESH

Walton Digi-Tech Industries Limited, the sole printed circuit board (PCB) manufacturer in Bangladesh, has started exporting the component to abroad; starts exporting PCB to Greece

Walton Digi-Tech Industries Limited, the sole printed circuit board (PCB) manufacturer in Bangladesh, has started exporting the component to abroad. The brand has exported 10,000 pieces of 'Made in Bangladesh' tagged PCB manufactured entirely in its own state-of-the-art production plant in Bangladesh to a renowned company in Greece within a few days of commercial production and marketing of PCB and PCBA.

SM Rezaul Alam, chairman of Walton Digi-Tech Industries Limited, inaugurated the PCB export at a program held at the production plant premises in Chandra, Gazipur on Wednesday.

Liakat Ali, additional managing director of Walton Digi-Tech Industries Limited, Md. Yusuf Ali, deputy managing director of Walton Hi-Tech Industries and Nasir Uddin, chief business officer (CBO) of Walton PCB Products, along with other officials from Walton Group were present at the PCB exporting ceremony.

SM Rezaul Alam, chairman of Walton Digi-Tech Industries Limited, said: "Walton is manufacturing and supplying world class PCB and PCBA making huge investment in this sector to meet the growing demand of IT products in the country. Walton Digi-Tech has set a unique milestone as a Bangladeshi company by exporting international quality PCB to Greece. From now on, the Walton PCB will be exported to Greece every month. Walton PCB will be exported to other countries of the world gradually." Walton Digi-Tech Industries, in its own plant in Bangladesh, is manufacturing, selling and exporting different types of PCBs made using

European machineries and advanced technologies which include single layer, double layer, multi layer and HDI PCB.

There is also scope to order customized PCB as per requirement.

Nasir Uddin, chief business officer of Walton PCB Products, said: “We have started exporting PCB for the first time after meeting the demands of the country. The process of exporting single layer, double layer and advanced multilayer PCBs to different countries of the world including Europe-America is going on. This will create a new scope for Bangladesh in its export earnings.”

05 Oct 2023

dhakatribune.com



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NEWS FROM BELGIUM

ACB received formal approval from the European Space Agency (ESA) to add High Density Interconnect (HDI) PCB technology to their ESA Space qualified domain (PID)

On the 6th of September 2023 ACB nv (member of Group ACB - a European PCB manufacturer) received, as the first PCB manufacturer in the industry, the formal approval from the European Space Agency (ESA) to add High Density Interconnect (HDI) PCB technology to their ESA Space qualified domain (PID).

With this approval ACB can now deliver 2+N+2 HDI circuits (up to 20 layers) for onboard space applications with the highest reliability level.

Group ACB team will exhibit at the Space Tech Expo Europe (Bremen-Germany 14-16 November 2023).



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NEWS FROM CANADA

Matrix Electronics will soon complete the construction of their PCB Equipment Demonstration Room at the Matrix headquarters in Toronto, Ontario.

Matrix Electronics will soon complete the construction of their PCB Equipment Demonstration Room at the Matrix headquarters in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. This demonstration room will offer a fully automated dry film lamination and Mylar peeling line. Equipment in this line will include Advanced Engineering auto load and unload, the Matrix EC-24 electrostatic panel cleaner, Hakuto 6630NP dry film laminator, and Advanced Engineering PMA101-CPB Mylar peeler, CSB buffer unit and conveyors. Project completion is scheduled for late October 2023.

“We are excited about introducing the capability for customers to bring their own panels to test with the latest PCB automation equipment. It’s one thing to review data sheets and PowerPoint presentations about equipment capabilities and quite another to experience the process firsthand with your own panels and to see how process automation and robotics can improve productivity and quality,” remarked Bob Berg, VP Business Development and Manager of Matrix Equipment Group.

ABOUT MATRIX ELECTRONICS

Committed to the motto: “Quality Products, Dependable People”, Matrix was established in 1977 with the objective of providing quality raw materials to the North American Printed Circuit Board Industry. Matrix has four rapid-response warehouses located throughout the US and Canada that fulfil high-quality, fast delivery, and custom orders daily. For more information, please visit www.matrixelectronics.com/products/equipment

Process Equipment



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NEWS FROM INDIA

AT&S India Awarded For Its Environment Protection & Sustainable Development Practices and Excellence In PCB Manufacturing

Nanjangud: AT&S India, a wholly owned subsidiary of Euro 1.8 Billion AT&S AG, Austria, and country's most advanced electronic solutions provider for Artificial Intelligence, Internet of Things, Machine Learning, Automated Driving and Miniaturisation based applications, has won coveted 48th ELCINA national awards under 4 different categories. AT&S India has received twin first prizes for its environment protection & sustainable development practices and excellence in manufacturing of high-end printed circuit boards. This is followed by two more national awards for AT&S India operations in Nanjangud for quality and exports separately from ELCINA.

The AT&S India factory in Nanjangud has a dedicated modern waste water Recycling Plant and Multiple Effect Evaporator for fully treating the industrial effluent on-site and recycling them back again for production, utilities and gardening purposes on the 40 plus acre campus. AT&S India operations are fully compliant to the European Union mandate under Restriction of Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (RoHS), and the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH), along with the E-Waste (Management) Rules of Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India. ELCINA has awarded first prize to AT&S India for its comprehensive practices on environment protection and sustainable development.

AT&S India also received the ELCINA first prize for excellence in PCB manufacturing. This award is conferred in recognition of overall excellence in PCB manufacturing along with efforts to increase manufacturing output, investments in technological advancement and increase in production capacity in India. AT&S was adjudged as the award winner for the year

2022-23 under the category of large companies by an accomplished panel of eminent experts from both industry and government.

Additionally, AT&S India received two separate national awards for quality and exports from ELCINA. These ELCINA awards are highly respected in the electronics manufacturing industry in India at the national level.

A successful participant to the Production Linked Incentive Scheme (PLI) for electronic components under the Honourable Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), AT&S India Pvt Ltd. is an Accredited Four Star Exporter. It caters to global electronic solutions supply chain ecosystem based in US, Mexico, Germany, Austria and Asia-Pacific, from its environment friendly and technologically advanced facility at Nanjangud Industrial Area in Mysuru district of Karnataka.

Santosh Gundapi, Senior Director - Operations, AT&S India Pvt. Ltd., received the award from S Krishnan Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, at a glittering ceremony in New Delhi. He was accompanied by Charan H V, Senior Manager - NPI Technology, for excellence in PCB manufacturing and Ravi A, Head - EHS, for environment protection & sustainable development practices award. Vidya Sagar A, General Manager received the award for quality and K Manjunatha, Manager - Commercials, received the award for exports from the chief guest.

ELCINA or the Electronic Industries Association of India was established in 1967 as the first industry association supporting electronics hardware, when India's Electronics industry was still in its infancy. Since then, Electronic Industries Association of India has established itself as an interactive forum for electronics and IT manufacturers. Electronic Industries Association of India actively interacts with the government and advises it on policy and business environment issues.

By India Education Diary Bureau



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NEWS FROM SWEDEN

atg Luther & Maelzer to exhibit at the upcoming TPCA show in Taipei, Taiwan

atg Luther & Maelzer GmbH will use the upcoming TPCA show in Taipei, Taiwan to showcase their latest atg A7Plus technology. The tester will be on display at the atgLM Asia Booth # L-623 on October 25 - October 27, 2023 at the Nangang Exhibition Center in Taipei.

atg Luther & Maelzer Director of Sales Greater China & Taiwan Sven Fleischer commented: "The A7Plus is atg-LM' latest innovation in high performance, high accuracy flying probe testing. The A7Plus provides the flexibility of Flying probe test equipment while delivering high throughput. In combination with a fast test speed of up to 140 measurements per second the A7Plus will provide a competitive test solution for medium and large batch sizes.

Typical features such as high accuracy Kelvin 4 wire, Embedded Components and Latent defect test are available as well as different test area sizes for larger formats.

atg A7Plus: High Speed - High Accuracy Flying probe system

atg Luther & Maelzer GmbH, part of Mycronic AB (Sweden) is one of the leading suppliers of electrical testing solutions for the Printed Circuit Board industry.



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NEWS FROM THAILAND

Guanghe Technology Thailand project held a groundbreaking ceremony in Jinchi Industrial Park, Prachinburi, Thailand

On 27th September, Guanghe Technology Thailand project held a groundbreaking ceremony in Jinchi Industrial Park, Prachinburi, Thailand.

The Thailand project started this time is the first step in the global strategic deployment of Guanghe Technology. The project covers area of 160 acres and has a total investment scale of approximately US\$ 180 million.

The first phase of the Thai Guanghe project targets motherboards and card boards for Eagle stream and Birth stream server platforms, and various motherboards and card boards for AI servers. It is horizontally compatible with high-end PCBs in the communications industry and covers PCs downwards for the automotive industry. It is expected that after the first phase of the project is completed, annual sales will exceed US\$ 246 million.

Guanghe Technology is the number one supplier of server printed circuit boards among domestic-funded enterprises, and ranks third in the world in terms of market share of server printed circuit boards; in 2022, "Printed Circuit Boards for Server Motherboards" products won the seventh batch of national manufacturing individual champion products. After twenty years of hard work, Guanghe Technology has developed into a group-operated PCB manufacturer.



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NEWS FROM THE USA

ICAPE Group acquired operational assets of PCB Solutions, Ustek Incorporated, and Nujay Technologies Inc.

ICAPE Group, a worldwide distributor of technology products including printed circuit boards, has revealed its acquisition of the operational assets of three US-based companies: PCB Solutions, Ustek Incorporated, and Nujay Technologies Inc.

The three companies whose assets are acquired by ICAPE Group have specialised in PCB trading in the United States for over twenty years. PCB Solutions and Ustek Incorporated also trade in technical parts, representing the first one 10% of its business and for the latter almost 30%. In total, the three companies gather a portfolio of over 180 North American customers, from a wide variety of industries, ranging from medical equipment design to the automotive sector. In 2022, these three companies generated cumulative net revenue of over \$5 million and an EBITDA margin of over 10%. The proportion of customers shared with ICAPE Group is very low, standing below 10%.

Established in the United States through its subsidiary ICAPE USA for PCB distribution, and its subsidiary CIPEM USA for its activity related to technical parts, ICAPE Group significantly strengthens its footprint on this major market by gathering a strong pool of industrial customers, as well as new distribution channels, especially local ones. The different locations of these new structures (in Ohio, California, and Utah) also enable the Group to cover the entire US territory. As with previous acquisitions, and in line with ICAPE Group's external growth strategy, these assets offer strong potential in terms of purchasing and commercial synergies with the Group's local subsidiaries and are highly profitable.

Yann Duigou, CEO of ICAPE Group, stated: “Since the launch of our external growth strategy in 2021, all acquisitions made by ICAPE Group have been focused on the European continent. By acquiring the assets of PCB Solutions, Nujay Technologies Inc., and Ustek Incorporated, we are proud to significantly strengthen the international footprint of our solutions dedicated to printed circuit boards and technical parts, as well as the value-creation potential of our North American subsidiaries.

The assets we integrate today brought us a substantial portfolio of over 180 North American customers from a wide variety of industries, as well as their dedicated distribution channels, both in the United States and in Asia. By joining ICAPE Group, these assets will be able to benefit from numerous synergies as well as from the expertise of our subsidiaries to deliver the highest possible quality of service to their local customers, which should ensure us significant post-integration profitable growth in the short to medium term.”

These asset acquisitions are financed 100% in cash and will be integrated into the Group’s accounts from October 1, 2023. The PCB trading activities will be integrated into the ICAPE USA subsidiary, and the activities dedicated to the distribution of technical parts into the CIPEM USA entity.

pcbdirectory.com



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RAW MATERIAL NEWS

Apple may change its PCB material to RCC adhesive-backed copper foil material (Resin Coated Copper, referred to as RCC) next year, which will benefit Lianmao and Nanya.

The TPCA state that there are rumours in the printed circuit and carrier board circles that in order to allow more space for electronic products, Apple may change the substrate material to RCC adhesive-backed copper foil material (Resin Coated Copper, referred to as RCC).

In the past, RCC was mainly supplied by the Japanese company AJINOMOTO. Currently, among Taiwan's copper foil substrate factories, Lianmao is the earliest manufacturer to produce it. It has also entered the certification stage of Apple PCB factory.

Foreign news reports that Apple will start using a new material, RCC adhesive-backed copper foil material, from 2024 to make the printed circuit board (PCB) thinner. If the PCB is thinner, this will free up more space to place larger batteries and components in Apple's mobile phones, watches tablets, laptops, etc. In fact, Apple's watches and tablets use RCC adhesive-backed copper foil materials, but currently they are mainly used on the carrier board side to connect the carrier board to the PCB.

The carrier board factory currently supplying the products is Nanya Circuits boards, and related RCC adhesive-backed copper foil materials are mostly supplied by Japanese companies AJINOMOTO, Mitsubishi Gas, Hitachi, etc., but the most important supplier is AJINOMOTO, which supplies ABF substrates.

As for the Taiwan copper foil substrate factory, Lianmao has invested in the

R&D of RCC adhesive copper foil materials some time back. It is also the first manufacturer to mass-produce. In July this year, it began to send samples to Apple's Taiwan PCB supplier for certification.

As Apple's PCB manufacturers are mostly Taiwanese, and due to cost pressure (Taiwanese manufacturers have a higher selling price than Japanese manufacturers), after Apple completely switches PCB materials to RCC, Lianmao is also expected to become the main beneficiary of Apple's change in PCB materials.



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NEWS FROM THE TPCA

Apple's new iPhone drives PCB output value of Taiwanese factories to recover quarter by quarter in the second half of the year

According to data from research institutions, PCB output value of Taiwanese factories is expected to recover quarter by quarter in the second half of the year, driven by the new iPhone. However, although it is expected to recover quarter by quarter in the second half of the year, the recovery will be suppressed by the impact of the overall economic environment and the first half of the year. It is predicted that 2023 the output value of Taiwan's PCB industry is still declining throughout the year, with an estimated annual decline of 16.8%.

Looking forward to 2024, IEK International Institute of Obstetrics and Technology expects that terminal inventory adjustment should come to an end, and major markets such as mobile phones, computers, and semiconductors will enter the recovery stage. Coupled with continued demand for electric vehicles, AI servers, and satellite communications, it is predicted that Taiwan's PCB industry will resume growth in 2024, reaching 8.1%.

According to IEK analysis, the growth momentum of PCB products in the third quarter of 2023 is estimated to be that whilst multi-layer boards have been successfully destocked by computer terminals, orders have gradually recovered, and products such as automotive boards and servers have continued to inject momentum. Mainly benefiting from the demand for new iPhone models, FPC will have good growth momentum in the third quarter. In addition, FPC for laptops and automobiles is also expected to continue the demand from the previous quarter.

As for HDI, the agency indicated it will simultaneously benefit from the sales effect of new iPhone models, as well as other high-end products such as ADAS, satellite communications and other products to support growth. Carrier boards are subject to customer inventory adjustments that are still continuing, and the order status is conservative. However, with the launch of new mobile phone products, it is expected that it will first drive the recovery of BT carrier boards.

The agency reported that although Taiwan's PCB industry is optimistic about the third quarter of 2023, it still needs to be cautious. Although the quarterly growth is expected to be outstanding, considering the high base period last year, the annual growth will face a relatively large decline. The manufacturing output value in the third quarter of 2023 is estimated to be 201.4 billion yuan. Quarterly growth was 19.0% and annual decline was 20.7%.

(News source: United News Network)

Taiwan PCB industry eyes staggered recovery, Bolstered by automotive and AI

Although the PCB industry is expected to gradually recover from its slump beginning in the second half of 2023, industry experts still predict a significant annual decline of 16.8% due to pressures from the economy at large, marking an end to the year-on-year growth the industry has seen since 2018. According to sources in the supply chain, 2023 is expected to be the toughest year for Taiwan's PCB industry.

However, some sources anticipate a recovery in 2024 for the key smartphone, notebook, and semiconductor markets, and with electric vehicles (EV), AI servers, and satellite communications driving demand, Taiwan's PCB industry can look forward to an annual growth of 8% in 2024. Yet other sources in the supply chain maintain a pessimistic outlook, only expecting recovery in the second half of 2025 at the earliest.

As PCB industry experts point out, automotive and AI applications have been the only two end-use sectors to see growth in 2023. Automotive suppliers have benefited from governments around the world adopting energy saving policies, and carmakers increasing EV production capacities; meanwhile, the phenomenal rise of ChatGPT has driven an increase in orders for AI servers.

According to data from LMC Automotive, global automobile sales totaled 22.18 million units in the second quarter of 2023, marking a year-on-year growth of nearly 20%. Industry sources suggest this is partially due to a lower base line in 2022 as a result of supply shortages, and also because of price cuts from Tesla and BYD driving sales volumes for battery electric vehicles (BEV).

In addition, with previous parts shortages and shipping bottlenecks driving down consumer demand, automotive electronics suppliers have had a chance to normalize their supply. Chin Poon, Tripod Technology, Dynamic Electronics, and First Hi-tec all expect stellar performance for the second half of 2023 with increasing order volumes and production capacity.

As the other main driver for the PCB industry, AI applications have seen a impressive blossoming, with cloud service providers each releasing their own AI models. In addition to large language models (LLM), AI applications such as autonomous driving vehicles have seen steady progress, and will continue to expand as they grow mature.

For PCB heavyweight Gold Circuit Electronics, revenues in August were mainly driven by substantial shipments of universal baseboards (UBB). Market expectations see the company potentially achieving a record number of orders for the fourth quarter, and promising mid- and long-term prospects with increasing AI penetration and 400G/800G transceiver shipments.

As the economic situation remains murky into the fourth quarter, growth will depend on whether or not smartphones, notebooks, and other end-use applications see a rise in demand. In this regard, October revenues will provide more insight. Judging from past economic cycles and other objective indicators, industry experts believe a recovery is in store for 2024, but still advise cautious optimism for the future.

Monday 2 October 2023

Janet Kang, Taipei; Kevin Wang, DIGITIMES Asia



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International Diary

2023

22nd EIPC Technical Snapshot Webinar

Registrations via www.eipc.org

October

EIPC @ Productronica 2023

Stand B3-529

14-17 November

München, Germany

23rd EIPC Technical Snapshot Webinar

Registrations via www.eipc.org

December

2024

EIPC Winter Conference

Visit Schweizer Electronic AG

Schramberg/Villingen-Schwenningen, Germany

Tuesday 30 & Wednesday 31 January

EIPC Summer Conference

Tuesday 4 & Wednesday 5 June

Location TBC