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NEWS CLIPPINGS

INTERNATIONAL NEWS	
No	**Topics**
1	2021/22 Xinjiang cotton quality improves obviously
2	US retail chains bounce back
3	Report notes global value chain resilience, shift beyond manufacturing
4	China further boosts development of 5G+industrial internet: report
5	Ethiopia's economy hit as major clothing maker PVH closes shop
6	USA: Acreage Increases Coming, Be Ready to Price 2022
7	Sri Lanka's import bill rises despite restrictions
8	Bangladesh apparel products may not get GSP Plus
9	Pakistan: Winter season: Textile sector lauds govt's approach to gas supply to export-oriented sector
10	Pakistan: Textile exports surge by 26.55pc to $6.02b in four months

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	NATIONAL NEWS
1	Importer-exporter codes not updated after Jan 2014 will be deactivated: DGFT
2	USTR, Goyal to discuss diverse trade issues
3	Finance Ministry notifies 12% GST rate on MMF, yarn, fabrics from January 1; corrects duty anomaly
4	Consumers to feel heat of higher input costs
5	Expo 2020 Dubai: India invites global investors to join its energy transition journey
6	Will make effort so that Manipur gets full advantage of FTAs: Union Minister Piyush Goyal
7	ECLGS: 64% of Rs 4.5 lakh crore credit guarantee scheme sanctioned to 1.25 crore MSMEs, others so far
8	Maharashtra Signs 25 MoUs To Bolster EV, Textiles And Data Center Sectors
9	Over 70,000 Indian exporters gear up for Black Friday, Cyber Monday sale via Amazon
10	Enrolment rising steadily on e-Shram portal, 8.43 crore registered till November 20

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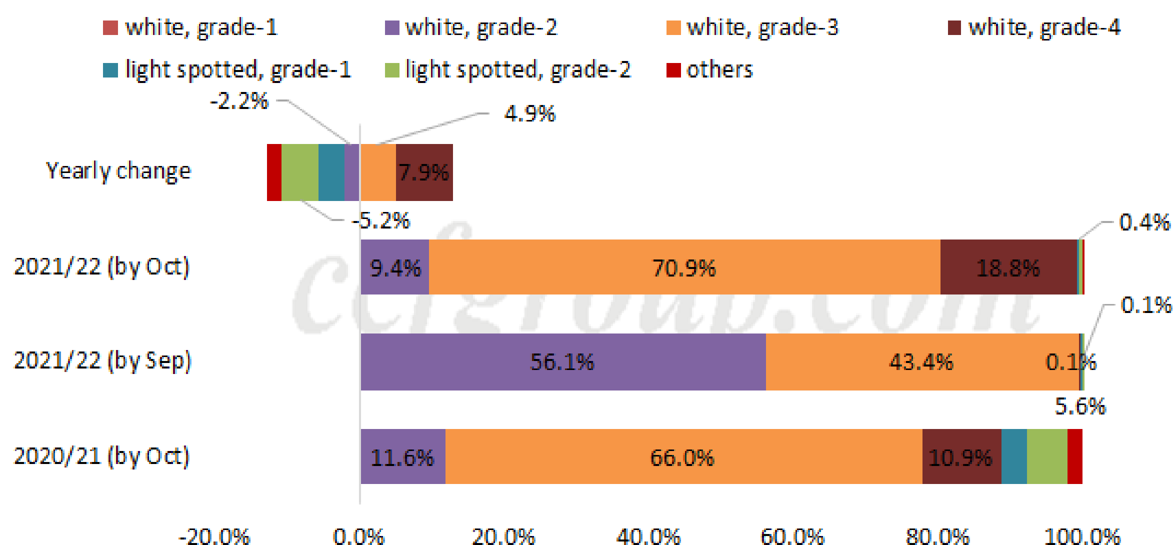
INSURANCE AND RISK ADVISORY

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

2021/22 Xinjiang cotton quality improves obviously

By Oct 31, 2021, ginning volumes of 2021/22 Xinjiang cotton totaled 1.5306 million tons, and inspection volumes totaled 1.1058 million tons, down 18% year on year. After growers are more willing to sell, the yearly decrement of inspection volumes narrows gradually. Though the ginning yield of 2021/22 Xinjiang cotton reduces slightly, the quality improves obviously. The supply of cotton with length at 29mm and 30mm and strength at 29gpt and 30gpt increases apparently in North Xinjiang. In South Xinjiang, the quality is inferior compared with that in North Xinjiang, but the quality also improves year on year. The quality structural problem improves, but due to high prices, downstream spinners are still hard to accept the level well. This article shows the yearly change of quality indicators of Xinjiang cotton by Oct 31, to clearly state the improvement on quality.

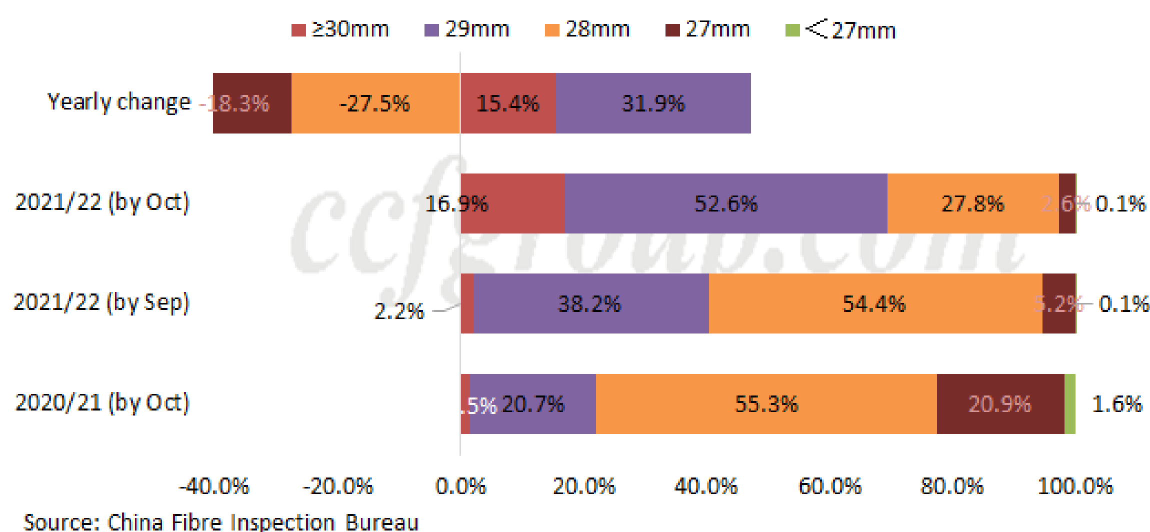
1. Color index



For color index, proportion of light spotted cotton was high last year, while in 2021/22 season, the proportion of light spotted cotton has decreased obviously, and that of white, grade-3 and white, grade-4 cotton increases. The color index improves. By end Oct, 2021, the proportion of white, grade-4 cotton and above quality approached 99.3%, up 10.6 percentage points from the same period of last year, while the proportion of light spotted, grade-1 and grade-2 cotton declined by 8.6 percentage points.

2021/22 Xinjiang cotton color index (volume, by end Oct, KT)			
Color index	2020/21	2021/22	Yearly change
white, grade-1	2.88	1.85	-1.03
white, grade-2	155.56	103.59	-51.98
white, grade-3	885.31	783.52	-101.80
white, grade-4	146.32	208.35	62.03
light spotted, grade-1	48.19	1.77	-46.42
light spotted, grade-2	74.93	4.43	-70.50
others	29.04	2.32	-26.72
white, grade-3 and above	1043.76	888.96	-154.80
Total	1342.24	1105.83	-236.41
Proportion in total	77.8%	80.4%	2.63%
Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau			

2. Length



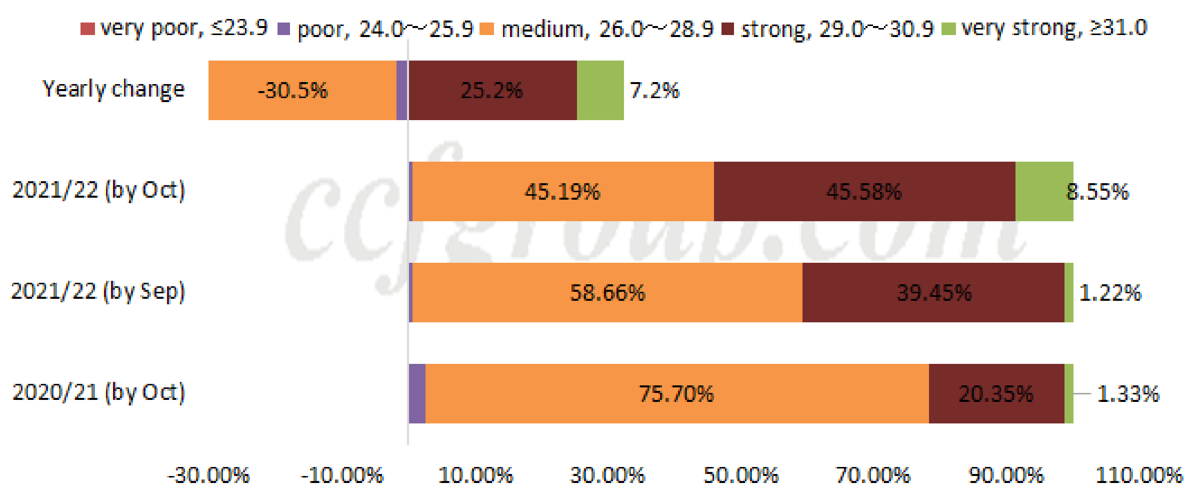
The quality on length index improves more obviously. The proportion of cotton with 29mm increased by 32 percentage points year on year, and that of cotton with 30mm increased by 15.4 percentage points. The quality structural problem improves apparently.

Due to the slower procurement progress this year, the yearly growth of cotton with length at 28mm and above on volumes is lower than that of cotton on proportion.

In terms of the proportion, by end Oct, the proportion of cotton with length at 28mm and above approached 97.3%, an increase of 19.8 percentage points year on year.

2021/22 Xinjiang cotton length index (volume, by end Oct, KT)			
Length	2020/21	2021/22	Yearly change
≥30mm	20.24	187.20	166.97
29mm	277.73	582.00	304.27
28mm	742.00	307.05	-434.95
27mm	280.37	28.79	-251.57
＜27mm	21.91	0.79	-21.12
length 28mm and above	1039.96	1076.25	36.28
Total	1342.24	1105.83	-236.41
Proportion in total	77.5%	97.3%	19.8%
Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau			

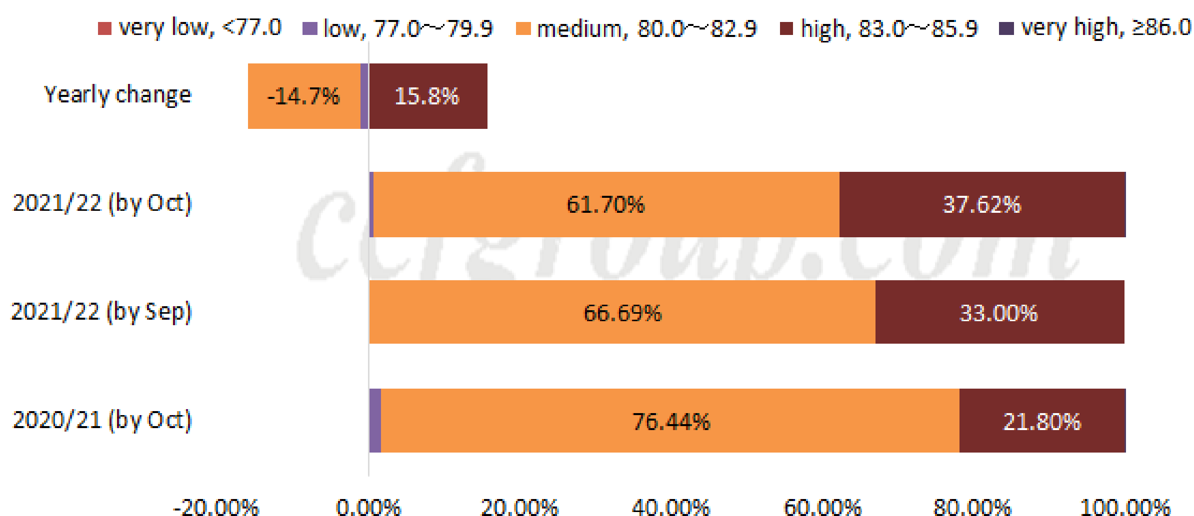
3. Breaking tenacity



2021/22 Xinjiang cotton breaking tenacity (volume, by end Oct, KT)			
	2020/21	2021/22	Yearly change
S1	17.79	94.52	76.73
S2	273.20	504.06	230.86
S3	1016.14	499.74	-516.40
S4	34.93	7.51	-27.43
S5	0.18	0.01	-0.16
S3 and above	1307.13	1098.31	-208.82
Total	1342.24	1105.83	-236.41
Proportion in total	97.4%	99.3%	1.94%
Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau			

The proportion of cotton at S3 declined by 30.5 percentage points year on year, and the strength is close to the 29gpt and above. The proportion of cotton with strength at 29gpt and above rose by 32.5 percentage points from the same period of last year.

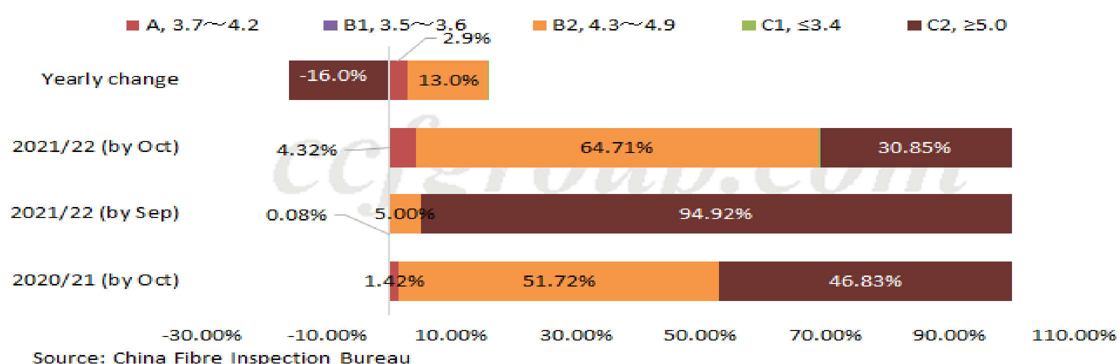
4. Length uniformity



2021/22 Xinjiang cotton length uniformity (volume, by end Oct, KT)			
	2020/21	2021/22	Yearly change
U1	0.13	0.17	0.04
U2	292.55	415.96	123.41
U3	1026.02	682.29	-343.73
U4	23.45	7.38	-16.07
U5	0.09	0.03	-0.06
U3 and above	1318.70	1098.42	-220.28
Total	1342.24	1105.83	-236.41
Proportion in total	98.2%	99.3%	1.08%
Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau			

The length uniformity also improves somewhat. The proportion of cotton at U2 and above rose by 15.8 percentage points year on year.

5. Micronaire

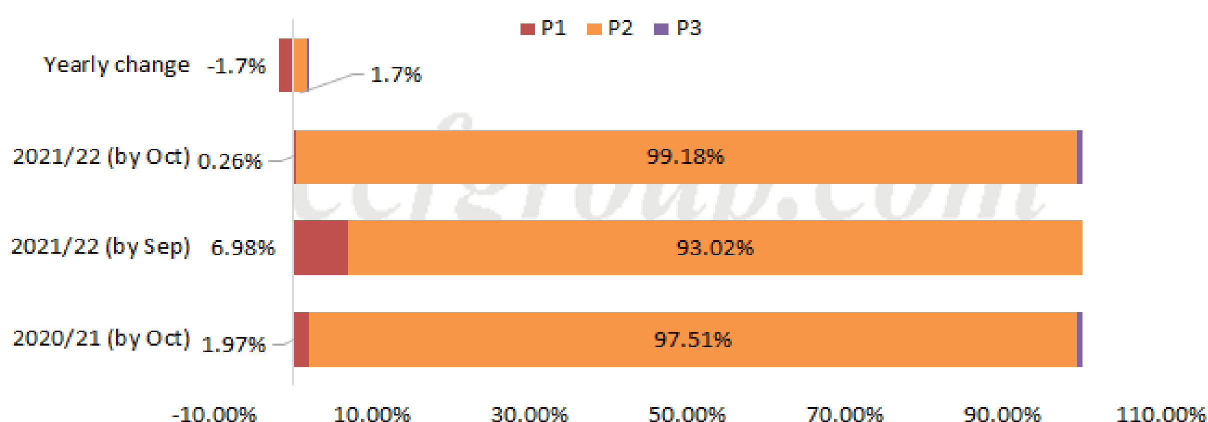


2021/22 Xinjiang cotton micronaire (volume, by end Oct, KT)			
	2020/21	2021/22	Yearly change
A, 3.7～4.2	19.07	47.79	28.73
B1, 3.5～3.6	0.32	1.07	0.75
B2, 4.3～4.9	694.14	715.60	21.47
C1, ≤3.4	0.14	0.26	0.12
C2, ≥5.0	628.58	341.10	-287.48
A+B	713.53	764.47	50.94
Total	1342.24	1105.83	-236.41
Proportion in total	53.2%	69.1%	16.0%
Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau			

For micronaire, the proportion of cotton at C2 declined by 16 percentage points year on year, and the micronaire was close to A and B2. The proportion of cotton at A and B rose by 16 percentage points year on year, accounting for 69.1% in total inspection volumes.

6. Ginning quality

2021/22 Xinjiang cotton ginning quality (proportion)



Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau

The proportion of cotton at P1 declined somewhat, while that of cotton at P2 rose, but the ginning quality remained good in general.

2021/22 Xinjiang cotton ginning quality (volume, by end Oct, KT)			
	2020/21	2021/22	Yearly change
P1	26.50	2.90	-23.60
P2	1308.76	1096.77	-211.99
P3	6.98	6.16	-0.82
P1+P2	1335.26	1099.67	-235.58
Total	1342.24	1105.83	-236.41
Proportion in total	99.5%	99.4%	-0.04%
Source: China Fibre Inspection Bureau			

Conclusion

Viewed from the quality indicators, the color index, length, strength and micronaire of new cotton improves apparently this season, and the quality structural problems turns improved.

In general, the proportion of cotton that meets the demand of Zhengzhou Commodity Exchange increases from 53.2% last year to 69.1%, and the obvious increase of cotton with 29mm and 29gpt and above gives the new cotton more premiums.

Source: ccfgroup.com– Nov 22, 2021

HOME

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US retail chains bounce back

American department store chains delivered strong results for the fiscal third quarter.

Though they are grappling with surging costs and snarled supply chains heading into the holiday shopping season they're rerouting shipping to less congested ports to get goods onto shelves and are paying higher wages and expanding benefits for its workers amid a tight labor market.

Sales at Macy's stores rose 35.6 per cent. The company booked strong sales of home goods, fragrances, jewelry, watches and sleepwear.Categories like dresses, men's tailored clothing and luggage continue to recover.

Macy's added 4.4 million new customers, a 28 per cent increase over 2019.Macy's was able to increase inventory 19.4 per cent compared with last year's third quarter and will launch a third-party marketplace that will expand its assortment of product categories and brands.

For Kohl's, sales rose 15.5 per cent. The launch of Sephora shops at Kohl's is getting a good response so far, with 25 per cent of those customers new to the retailer. They are also younger and more diverse. Overall inventory is down 25 per cent compared to 2019; women's inventory is down even more. The company's active wear is enjoying strong sales.

Both companies have raised their annual financial outlooks.

Source: fashionatingworld.com– Nov 20, 2021

HOME

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Report notes global value chain resilience, shift beyond manufacturing

Global value chains (GVCs) have proven to be resilient in the face of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as environmental and geopolitical shocks, says a new report co-published by the World Trade Organisation (WTO), the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and three other institutions. GVCs have played a key role in supporting economic recovery and are evolving in important ways, it said.

There has been no generalised reshoring of production in response to the pandemic, the report states, and GVCs have shown resilience, after initial disruptions, in addressing the needs for food and essential medical goods. The report details recent trends in GVCs, looking in particular at the increasing role of services and intellectual property, and sheds light on their importance for global economic recovery.

Among the recent trends in GVCs highlighted by the report is the growing contribution of developing countries, particularly Asian economies, which have dramatically increased their share of GVC trade. The three other institutions behind the 'Global Value Chain Development Report 2021: Beyond Production' are China's Research Institute for Global Value Chains at the University of International Business and Economics, Japan's Institute of Developing Economies and the China Development Research Foundation.

"As COVID-19 recedes, GVCs will no doubt be a major influence in the recovery to come. This recovery must be used to reinvigorate a trading system that serves and improves the lives of everyone," WTO director general Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala and ADB president Masatsugu Asakawa note in the foreword of the publication. "Understanding where, in these chains, value is created and how it is shared among its actors is central to ensure that everyone obtains a fair share in the gains from trade," they write.

The rise of services GVCs offers a new opportunity for developing countries to play a more active role in world trade and to boost economic growth, the report notes. It also explores the role of GVCs in spurring technological innovation.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Nov 22, 2021

HOME

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China further boosts development of 5G+industrial internet: report

China has been making remarkable progress in expanding the application scenarios of the 5G+industrial internet sector, which has become an important driving force to empower the digitalization, networking and intelligent transformation and upgrading of domestic industries, according to an industry report released on Sunday at the 2021 China 5G+ Industrial Internet Conference.

The Ministry of Industry and Information Technology (MIIT) also announced the second batch of ten application scenarios, ranging from logistics monitoring to production traceability, and five targeted industries for promoting the 5G+ industrial internet sector at the conference on Saturday, which was held in Wuhan, Central China's Hubei Province from Friday to Sunday, according to a post from the MIIT's official WeChat account.

The report, targeting the country's innovation in the 5G+industrial internet sector, released by the China Academy of Industrial Internet, noted that there are more than 1,800 5G+industrial internet projects under construction nationwide, covering more than 20 key industries and economic fields, Chinanews.com reported on Sunday.

The development of the 5G+industrial internet sector in China is still at an early stage, as the industrial integration will require a large amount of work and testing related to multiple aspects, since 5G technology has been commercialized for only two years, Xiang Ligang, director-general of the Beijing-based Information Consumption Alliance, told the Global Times on Sunday.

According to the MIIT's post, the second batch of ten application scenarios extends to virtual site services, logistics monitoring, enterprise cooperation, production process traceability, equipment prediction and maintenance, and other scenarios.

The five new targeted industries are the petrochemical and chemical industry, construction material industry, port industry, textile industry and home appliance industry.

Xiang noted that several key industries such as ports have adopted 5G+ industrial internet processes over the past two years to transform and upgrade their industrial structure. This has increased the production efficiency and leveled up the degree of automation of industrial operations while reducing the cost.

The development of the 5G+ industrial internet sector will enter a fast development phase with more industries soon picking up the pace.

Mawan port in Shenzhen, South China's Guangdong Province, the first 5G smart port in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, opened on November 14.

This move eliminated 93 operators and reduced carbon emissions by over 90 percent after the port's renovation, Guangdong-based news website Southcn.com reported

Chinese Vice Premier Liu He noted in a written speech delivered to the conference on Saturday that industries should fully take advantage of the country's rich 5G application scenarios and first-mover advantage in 5G network layout, in a bid to tackle the shortcomings of the industrial internet, while bravely exploring disruptive technology paths and creatively solving industrial challenges, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

Liu also emphasized the necessity of strengthening the management of data as it is becoming a significant production factor, and he urged relevant local authorities and different industries to establish innovative mechanisms and platforms to properly manage and supervise the use and allocation of data, while enhancing support for enterprises' innovation.

Source: globaltimes.cn– Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Ethiopia's economy hit as major clothing maker PVH closes shop

Ethiopia's once rapidly growing economy is taking another hit because of its yearlong war as global clothing manufacturer PVH Corp. says it is closing its facility there because of the "speed and volatility of the escalating situation."

The company's statement, emailed to The Associated Press, comes two weeks after U.S. President Joe Biden announced he would cut Ethiopia from a U.S. trade programme, the African Growth and Opportunity Act, because of "gross violations of internationally recognised human rights." The sanction goes into effect on January 1.

PVH, whose brands include Calvin Klein and Tommy Hilfiger, has been a marquee occupant of Ethiopia's model industrial park in the city of Hawassa, where Africa's second-most populous country has made clear its aspirations of rapid, Chinese-style development.

PVH in the past has said AGOA helped to convince it to set up in Ethiopia. H&M, another high-profile occupant at the Hawassa park, did not respond to an AP request about its plans.

Ethiopia's war and the many reported atrocities on all sides have led some in the business world to press Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and his government for a cease-fire and humanitarian access to the blockaded Tigray region, echoing ongoing efforts by envoys from both the U.S. and African Union.

Thousands of people have been killed as Ethiopian and allied forces fight the Tigray ones who long dominated the national government before Abiy came to power in 2018.

The conflict has been marked by gang-rapes, forced expulsions and manmade famine.

"We continue to emphasise to the government of Ethiopia the need for all parties to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid and supplies to those who need it and see this as a first step toward the cessation of hostilities and a process that will result in lasting peace," Stephen Lamar, president of the American Apparel & Footwear Association, told the AP in an email.

"As the crisis spreads – and if Ethiopia does lose AGOA eligibility – companies will increasingly be unable to source from Ethiopia. This will hurt Ethiopia's economy, particularly the women who comprise the bulk of the workforce in the country's apparel industry," Mr. Lamar added.

The harm to low-income workers far from the war is an argument that Ethiopia's government made as it openly lobbied against losing AGOA eligibility.

Ethiopia's chief trade negotiator Mamo Mihretu has asserted that millions of workers would be affected.

But the Biden administration, which last week said it was not imposing sanctions on Ethiopia's government and rival Tigray forces "to allow time and space" to see if diplomatic efforts make progress, ran out of patience.
The AGOA announcement "is making people in the business world especially anxious.

It certainly makes it less economically smart to be there," Mike Posner, assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor in the Obama administration, told the AP.

"I'd say we have very limited time now to try to tamp down the rhetoric and find a way to the bargaining table," Mr. Posner said, addressing Ethiopia's leadership. "This could be disastrous for the economy." Warnings about the economy have been growing as Ethiopia's government pours resources into the war.

In its World Economic Outlook report last month, the International Monetary Fund said projections for 2022 to 2026 "are omitted due to an unusually high degree of uncertainty."

Businesses such as PVH had entered Ethiopia because of the government's push in recent years to build a network of industrial parks to make clothing and footwear for export, along with the country's large population of more than 110 million people and wages that are "significantly lower than even places such as Bangladesh and Cambodia," Mr. Posner said.

"But the instability has brought businesses' thinking to a tipping point," he said.

Chinese and other companies may continue to operate in the industrial parks, but Ethiopia is a tiny market in the global economy, Mr. Posner said: “If Ethiopia’s government thinks it can make this work by shutting out the U.S. or Europe and only selling to Chinese or Indian customers, I think it’s going to be disappointed.”

Source: thehindu.com– Nov 19, 2021

HOME

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USA: Acreage Increases Coming, Be Ready to Price 2022

The March futures contract has become the nearby contract as the expiring December moves to first notice day. Now, being the lead month, the March contract is expected to move higher and assume the priced leadership that was enjoyed by the December contract, now trading at 119 cents. Thus, March will likely plow through the same ground that pushed prices 119 cents and higher.

As many have commented since December was back near 96 cents, "The rally is over." Yet, we should not be surprised to see a trade up to 125 cents, basis March, or even a trade up to 135 cents. This market is facing a serious export dilemma, but on-call sales simply continue to feed a raging bull. There are signals suggesting a weaker bull – not in the near term, but later. The remaining old crop contracts March, May, and July are still being fed a mixture of rich fundamentals that should keep them biting into the 120s.

The big bear facing old crop contracts continues to be concerns over exports and the fact that a reduction in export shipments will simply be shifted into carryover stocks, essentially on a 1:1 basis, thereby increasing 2021-22 ending stocks. Net export sales for the week ending Nov. 11 totaled 157,300 bales – a decent number of sales on the surface. But the breakdown included 20,600 bales of Pima and only 136,700 bales of upland. Shipments were a dreaded 84,400 bales total with upland being 77,900 and Pima 6,500 bales.

It may be too robust to suggest that shipments may fall to only 14 million bales, down 1.5 million from USDA's current estimate. However, the current weak pace of shipments was not expected by anyone just two months ago. It would be wrong to give up on USDA's estimate just yet, but the odds are that U.S. exports will not climb above 15 million bales, much less make the USDA estimate of 15.5 million bales.

If exports are so dreary, then how does the bull continue to look so strong? Simply, the all but broken record we have played for months – on-call sales versus on-call purchases, that is, the known need to buy futures contracts versus the known need to sell futures contracts. One must be tired of the discussion, but it has led to higher and higher prices.

Too, higher prices are likely just around the corner. While higher prices are not guaranteed, this week's data showed that some 12,969,000 bales must be bought via (March, May, July) futures, and only some 1,883,200 bales

need to be sold via futures (March, May, July). Thus, the known need to buy futures contract dwarfs the need to sell contracts.

While on-call sales are "more bullish" than potential export woes are "bearish," the market may begin to see the bulls and bears become more active in their war games against each other. Demand must be strong if prices are to be sustained into the 2022 crop. Yet, the on-call sales will substitute for demand right now. Thus, if one wants to work the bear side of the market, the potential is there. Yet, I contend it is too early to result in lower prices.

The bearish argument awaits more information surrounding 2022 plantings. Such information is in the market. Note the December contract has had major difficulty climbing above 92-93 cents. Yes, those levels have been touched. However, with the passing of each trading day, it has become more difficult for December 2022 futures to climb above that level. The market has a built-in radar that – given the near 30-cent spread between December 2021 and December 2022 respective futures prices – a very large increase in the area seeded to cotton in 2022 is forthcoming.

Growers are suggesting acreage increases of 15 to 25% above 2021 plantings. Too, given the almost certainty that the 2022 government price insurance program will be in the very high 80s to low 90s range, 2022 plantings will see a very sharp increase.

For those contemplating increasing acreage in 2022 – since you like the price enough to plant more – then I strongly suggest that you like the price enough to fix the price on the expected increase in production, subject to selling no more than half the expected production rule. For the seasoned grower, it is time to price at least half of your 2022 expected production.

Source: cottongrower.com– Nov 19, 2021

HOME

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Sri Lanka's import bill rises despite restrictions

Sri Lanka's import bill has risen significantly so far this year despite restrictions.

Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal said Sri Lanka is growing at 7% per annum from the year 2006 to 2014.

"Thereafter we did hit a fairly low patch, growth was stagnant. But at the same time, we should not be discouraged by that," the CBSL Governor said.

He said that getting back to a 6%+ growth is not difficult adding that it also must be ensured that exports revenue is improved.

A Central Bank report shows Sri Lanka has spent nearly USD 15 billion on imports between January and September this year.

This is higher than USD 11.7 billion spent within the same period last year.

The Government had spent USD 2.6 billion to import fuel with a percentage of 36 increase from the amount spent on fuel imports last year.

According to the CBSL report, the country had only generated USD 8.9 billion through exports in the first 9 months of this year.

Textile and garments were the most exported products.

As the imports were higher than the exports, the deficit in the trade account had widened to USD 6 billion in the first nine months.

The deficit during the same period last year stood at USD 4.3 billion.

Source: newsfirst.lk– Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Bangladesh apparel products may not get GSP Plus

Experts and exporters fear that if the proposed EU generalised scheme of preferences for 2024-34 is implemented, Bangladesh's readymade garment and textile products may not get duty-free benefits under the GSP Plus system in the European market.

They said that after graduating from the least developed country to a developing one, it would be difficult for Bangladesh to comply with some of the provisions of the proposed EU GSP scheme.

Experts and exporters urged the government to work with the EU to remove the provisions from the proposed scheme, which might be restrictive to Bangladesh apparel and textile products for availing duty benefits under the GSP Plus.

The European Commission on September 22 unveiled the new legislative proposal for the new EU GSP regulation for the period 2024 2034 that might be passed in the EU parliament in September-October in 2022.

'As per the provisions set out in the newly proposed GSP provisions, it seems that Bangladesh is now likely to qualify for GSP+ after its LDC graduation but the specified EU "safeguards" would exclude the country's clothing exports from any tariff preferences,' Policy Research Institute of Bangladesh director Abdur Razzaque told New Age on Saturday.

He said that in the newly proposed EU GSP, the EU had removed the import share criterion for accessing GSP+, which would not have allowed Bangladesh to benefit from GSP+.

As an LDC, Bangladesh is enjoying duty-free market access in the EU under Everything But Arms scheme.

Under the existing GSP scheme Bangladesh is not eligible for applying GSP+ benefits in the EU as the country's share in EU GSP-covered imports are much higher than the required 7.4 per cent.

Although the new proposals have suggested removing the import share criterion, they have also specified that if the combined share of knitwear, woven and home textile items from a country exceeds 6 per cent of the total

EU imports of the same products, safeguard measures would be triggered to remove duty-free market access for these products.

Razzaque said that Bangladesh's share in the total EU imports of clothing items was more than 13 per cent.

'So the safeguard clauses will be applicable to Bangladesh,' he said.

'With an apparel share higher than 6 per cent of the total EU imports, it would still be possible to obtain duty-free preferences if Bangladesh's share of S-11b products (HS 61+62+63) as percentage of all EU GSP-covered imports of the same products were less than 37 per cent,' he said.

However, the corresponding Bangladesh share was estimated to be almost 50 per cent, Razzaque said.

He said that Bangladesh would benefit from GSP+ preferential access.

However, its apparel items would face most favoured nation tariff rates in the EU, he said.

'That is, if the proposed rules remain unchanged, the average tariff rate on apparel exports from Bangladesh to the EU will rise from the currently zero to on average close to 12 per cent,' Razzaque, also the chairman of Research and Policy Integration for Development, said.

He said that apparel exporters had already discussed the issue with the government and requested it to take proper diplomatic initiatives to ensure duty-free market access for apparel products in the EU under GSP+ after the graduation of the country from the LDC to developing one.

He said that Bangladesh should now engage with the EU so that the restrictive EU safeguard provisions could be removed to allow Bangladeshi apparel exporters to continue to get benefits from duty-free market access under the GSP+.

'The proposed EU GSP regulation for the period 2024 2034 is fearsome for the Bangladesh apparel and textile sector,' said Mohammad Hatem, executive president of the Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

He said that in the proposals, there were many provisions which would limit the facility for Bangladesh in the EU markets.

'It would not possible for Bangladesh to fulfil many of the conditions in the new GSP proposals and our apparel and textile products may not get facility under the GSP+,' Hatem said.

Source: newagebd.net– Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Pakistan: Winter season: Textile sector lauds govt's approach to gas supply to export-oriented sector

The value-added textile export sector profoundly appreciates the government thoughtfulness to ensure uninterrupted supply to the export industries during winter season.

The textile exporters are fully aware about the gas shortage during winter season and admire the government and Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) for their initiative to support the export industry. Referring the meeting of

Federal Minister Energy Barrister Hammad Azhar held recently and in view of hike in POL prices globally, the textile exporters across Pakistan are willing to pay for next three months $9 per MMBTU for RLNG for Captive Power Plants and $6.5 per MMBTU for their boilers provided the Ministry ensures uninterrupted gas supply with required pressure.

This was stated by Muhammad Jawed Bilwani Chairman Pakistan Apparel Forum.

Jawed Bilwani stated that it is the demand value added textile industry from all over Pakistan to supply gas uninterrupted and they supported the government to provide RLNG for next three months at $9 per MMBTU for RLNG for Captive Power Plants and $6.5 per MMBTU for boilers and ensured uninterrupted gas supply with required pressure, however, the textile exporters of Karachi have a problem that export-oriented industries of Karachi have never given RLNG gas on the concessional tariff of either $6.5 per MMBTU all inclusive or $9 per MMBTU all inclusive despite of the daylight fact that the export industries of Karachi generates 54 percent of total exports.

The textile exporters are highly annoyed and disturbed due to this sheer discrimination and dubious conduct on the part of the government as they have never been given on the concessional tariffs as compared to other parts of the country. Several of our members' exporters of Karachi have only RLNG connections (no indigenous gas

connections) and currently, SSGCL is charging RLNG @ $15.62 per MMBTU and even on this excessive tariff the required gas pressure is not available in the pipeline and there are also gas outages of approximately 12

hours on daily basis during day time. While in other areas of Pakistan RLNG gas is provided to export

industries at rate of $6.5 and for Karachi for 100 percent export industries having only RLNG connection is provided RLNG at rate of $15.62.

Bilwani articulated that the Federal Ministry of Commerce is working hard to execute all pragmatic steps and initiatives to support and facilitate the exporters in order to enhance the national exports.

Source: brecorder.com– Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Pakistan: Textile exports surge by 26.55pc to $6.02b in four months

The exports of textile commodities witnessed an increase of 26.55 percent during the first four months of the current fiscal year (2021-22) as compared to the corresponding period of last year and went up by over 24 percent on year-on-year basis (YoY).

The textile exports were recorded at $6021.815 million in July-October (2021-221) against the exports of $4758.473 million in July-October (2010-21), showing growth of 26.55 percent, according to latest data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

The textile commodities that contributed in trade growth included cotton yarn, exports of which increased from $230.329 million last year to $394.765 million during the current year, showing growth of 71.39 percent.

Likewise, the exports of cotton cloth increased by 18.54 percent, from $624.878 to $740.710, cotton (carded or combed) by 100 percent to $1.543 from zero exports last year, yarn (other than cotton yarn) increased by 114.55 percent, from $8.035 million to $17.239 million whereas exports of knitwear increased by 34.45 percent, from $1182.604 to $1601.778.

In addition, the exports of bed wear increased to $1091.124 million from $899.555, showing growth of 21.30 percent, towels by 14.17 percent, from $283.255 million to $323.385 million, readymade garments by 22.34 percent, from $947.070 million to $1158.603 million, art, silk and synthetic textile by 36.20 percent, from $105.225 million to $143.320 million, madeup articles (excluding bedwear and towels) by 11.55 percent, from 240.776 million to $268.582 million whereas the exports of all other textile materials increased by 27.73 percent, from $195.695 million to $249.956 million.

The textile commodities that witnessed negative growth in trade included raw cotton, exports of which decreased by 100 percent, from $0.523 million to zero exports and tents, canvas and Tarpulin, the exports of which decreased by 23.98 percent, from $40.528 million to $30.810 million.

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the textile exports increased by 24.24 percent during the month of October 2021 as compared to the same month of last year. The exports during October 2021 were recorded at $1600.934 million against the exports of $1288.620 million during October 2020.

On month-on-month basis, the exports from the country witnessed increase of 7.65 percent during October 2021 when compared to the exports of $1487.144 million in September 2021.

Meanwhile, food group exports from the country witnessed an increase of 26.91 percent during first four months of current financial year 2021-22 as compared the exports of corresponding period of last year. The country exported food commodities worth $1434.398 million during July-October (2021-22) as compared the exports of $1130.250 million during July-October (2020-21), showing growth of 26.91 percent, according the latest data released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

The commodities that contributed in positive growth included rice export of which increased by 19.04 from $499.442 million to $594.528 million during the period under review while the export of tobacco increased to $11.420 million from $8.375 million, showing growth of 36.36 percent.

The export of fruits rose by 21.29 percent from $118.101 million to $143.242 million whereas the export of vegetables witnessed nominal increase of 2.01 percent to $68.372 million from $67.028 million. Similarly, the spices export also surged to 18.83 percent from $26.417 percent to $31.391 million while the oil seeds, nuts and kernals exports increased by 804.52 percent to $ 84.853 million to $ 9.381 million.

The export of meat and meat preparations increased by 2.60 percent as its export increased from $101.907 million last year to $104.558 million while the all other food items export rose by 68.81 percent from 177.510 million to $299.650 million, it added.

Meanwhile, on year-on-year basis, the food group exports also increased by 28.16 percent to $414.720 million during October 2021 as compared to the export of $323.590 million during last year. On yearly basis, the export of rice increased by 22.99%, fruits by 15.80%, tobacco by 19.48 %, spices by 26.29 %, oil seeds, nuts and kernals by 664.10% and all other food items by 58.86 percent. However, the export of fish and fish preparations decreased by 9.72 percent, vegetables by 26.66 percent and meat and meat preparations by 0.96 percent. On month-on-month basis the export of food

commodities also increased by 15.41 in October 2021 as compared to the exports of $359.331 million in September 2021.

On monthly basis, the exports of rice rose by 19.87 percent, fish and fish preparation by 23.16 percent, fruits by 7.46 percent, vegetables by 47.61 percent, tobacco by 30.13 percent, oil seeds, nuts and kernals by 21.35 percent and all other food items by10.51 percent. However, the export of meat and its preparations decreased by 8.56 percent, and spices by 12.97 percent, it added.

Source: nation.com.pk– Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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NATIONAL NEWS

Importer-exporter codes not updated after Jan 2014 will be deactivated: DGFT

The IEC holders who have not yet updated the relevant information can do that till December 5.

The Commerce Ministry's foreign trade arm DGFT will deactivate all importer-exporter codes (IECs) that have not been updated after January 1, 2014, with effect from December 6, 2021, a move which would help in knowing the actual number of real traders in the country.

The Importer-Exporter Code (IEC) is a key business identification number that is mandatory for exports or imports. No person shall make any import or export except under an IEC number granted by the DGFT.

On August 8, this year, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) had directed all IEC holders to ensure that details in their IEC are updated electronically every year during the April-June period.

"All IECs which have not been updated after January 1, 2014 shall be deactivated with effect from December 6, 2021," according to DGFT's trade notice.

The IEC holders who have not yet updated the relevant information can do that till December 5.

IEC that would be deactivated, would have the opportunity for automatic re-activation after December 6. For that, a trader would have to navigate to the DGFT website and update their relevant information.

"Upon successful updation, the given IEC shall be activated again and transmitted accordingly to the Customs system with the updated status," the notice said.

According to an industry expert, de-activation of IECs helps in reducing the base load of the directorate and it helps in knowing the actual number of real exporters and importers in the country.

The nature of the firm obtaining an IEC includes proprietorship, partnership, LLP, limited company, trust, and society. After the introduction of GST (Goods and Services Tax), the IEC number is the same as the PAN of the firm.

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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USTR, Goyal to discuss diverse trade issues

US Trade Representative Katherine Tai is expected to thrash out pending issues such as penal tariffs on steel, market access for medical equipment, dairy, digital tax and non-tariff barriers while setting the agenda for the growth of India-US trade and investment with her counterpart Piyush Goyal, during her two-day visit to India starting Monday.

Goyal and Tai, who will participate in the India-US Trade Policy Forum set to be revived after a hiatus of four years, are also likely to discuss the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) meet where India and the US hold differing views on issues such as carve-outs for developing nations in fisheries subsidies and public stockholding.

“This will be an important event as the new USTR will visit India and have an in-person meeting with Goyal for the first time. There are a number of issues flowing from actions of the Trump regime, such as US duties on Indian steel and withdrawal of GSP benefits for Indian exporters, and it will give Indian officials a chance to understand how the Biden administration wants to tackle these,” an official tracking the matter told BusinessLine.

Digital equalisation levy

The USTR team, on the other hand, will be keen to pursue issues such as India’s plans of revoking the 2 per cent digital equalisation levy on global online players such as Facebook and Google, greater market access for medical equipment and dairy products, India’s proposed personal data protection laws and further bridging of the US’ trade deficit with India.

The US is amongst India’s top trading partners with exports valued at $51.62 billion in 2020-21 and imports at $28.88 billion resulting in a trade deficit of about $23 billion for the US.

The Trump government had imposed a 25 per cent tariff on steel imports and 10 per cent on aluminium from several countries including India, China, Japan, the EU and South Korea in 2018 under Section 232 of the US Trade Expansion Act.

In response, India imposed retaliatory tariffs on 28 items imported from the US which included apples, walnuts, certain steel items and chemicals.

The USTR recently decided to withdraw the penal duties on steel imports from the EU while countries such as the UK and South Korea are in a dialogue with the US over the same issue.

“India would readily withdraw the retaliatory duties if the duties on steel and aluminium are withdrawn. However, if the US wants to extract more concessions, the resolution could get difficult,” the official said.

Diverse issues

The Biden administration has not shown much enthusiasm yet in pushing the previous regime’s unfinished agenda of a free trade agreement with India, but Tai is expected to continue pressing for more market access in medical equipment and dairy. She is also likely to stress the need to share data, push e-commerce and strengthen IPR norms.

Although India has said that it would revoke digital taxes imposed on international online companies after the global tax reform agreement, to counter tax evasion by large digital companies is in place, Tai and her team may want to underscore the importance of taking action fast.

Timing her visit just before the WTO MC12 beginning on November 30 in Geneva, Tai is expected to discuss crucial areas where India and the US are in disagreement including India’s stress on special and differential treatment in agriculture talks and special carve-outs in the area of fisheries subsidies.

Source: thehindubusinessline.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Finance Ministry notifies 12% GST rate on MMF, yarn, fabrics from January 1; corrects duty anomaly

The finance ministry has notified uniform 12 per cent GST rate on manmade fibre (MMF), yarn, fabrics and apparel, thereby addressing the inverted tax structure in the MMF textile value chain.

Currently, tax rate on MMF, MMF yarn and MMF fabrics is 18 per cent, 12 per cent and 5 per cent, respectively.

The taxation of inputs at higher rates than finished products created build up of credits and cascading costs. It further led to accumulation of taxes at various stages of the MMF value chain and blockage of crucial working capital for the industry.

The GST Council, chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and comprising state finance ministers, had in its previous meeting on September 17 decided that the inverted duty anomalies in the textile sector would be corrected from January 1, 2022.

Giving effect to this decision, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) on November 18 notified 12 per cent GST rate for MMF, MMF yarn and MMF fabrics.

Experts said though there is a provision in GST law to claim the unutilised Input Tax Credit (ITC) as a refund, there were other complications and resulted in more compliance burden. The inverted tax structure caused an effective increase in the rate of taxation of the sector.

The world textiles trade has been moving towards MMF but India was not able to take advantage of the trend as its MMF segment was throttled by the inverted tax regime, they said, adding the correction in duty anomaly will help the segment grow and emerge as a big job provider.

EY Tax Partner Bipin Sapra said the rate changes in the textile industry is the first of the changes promised by the GST Council with an aim to rectify inverted duty structure and bring an efficient tax structure for a given sector.

Source: economictimes.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Consumers to feel heat of higher input costs

Freight cost has cooled 5-15%, depending on the destination, from the peak of $10,000-12,000 in August for carrying a container from or onwards to India.

Freight rates have eased from the peak and container availability has improved for India's exporters and importers of apparel and agricultural commodities to consumer electronics, but high input costs could force them to increase prices in the coming months, according to industry insiders.

Prices of television, smartphones, refrigerators and air-conditioners are likely to increase 5-6% by next month and another round of price hikes is expected in January-February, due to a 10-12% rise in input cost.

Apparel exporters are renegotiating rates with big brands to pass on higher cost, while prices of agriculture commodities such as basmati rice have already gone up amid crop damage due to the inclement weather in India affecting production and supplies.

Freight cost has cooled 5-15%, depending on the destination, from the peak of $10,000-12,000 in August for carrying a container from or onwards to India.

While this is still high compared with $3,000-4,000 at the beginning of the year, exporters expect the easing of prices and the improvement in container availability to help further boost India's exports, which rose 43% in October to $35.65 billion.

Exporters were finding it tough to renegotiate prices earlier this year when freight rates were increasing, as buyers, worried about a possible third wave of the pandemic in India and the ability of suppliers to meet their commitments in that event, were unwilling to pay more.

"Now, that the spread of Covid is somewhat under control and the vaccination has picked up across the globe, overseas apparel buyers including the big brands like Zara, Mango and others have agreed to take into consideration a portion of the freight cost while fixing prices," said Lalit Thukral, president of the Noida Apparel Export Cluster.

However, what is pinching the apparel industry is the rising yarn prices. "It has gone up by more than 60% in the last one year. We have to increase prices of our products, but we are not sure whether buyers will accept it," he added.

"The container pile-up has reduced and it's available in about a week than what it was earlier," said Poorna Seenivasan, president at Gokaldas Exports, a large manufacturer and exporter of apparel.

Consumer electronic companies, which are among the largest importers of components, said shipping and air freight rates from China and Hong Kong have come down by about 10-15% from the peak in August. Container rates are now varying between $6,000 and $6,500 from China, compared with $7,000 even a month back. Air freight from Hong Kong is down to HK$36-37 a kg from HK$44-45.

"The rates are marginally down but still higher than what it was in the June quarter when it was around $3,500 per container. We understand rates would continue to remain on an elevated level and hence the input cost pressure remains, leaving little room to not hike prices," said Godrej Appliances business head Kamal Nandi.

Source: economictimes.indiatimes.com- Nov 22, 2021

HOME

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Expo 2020 Dubai: India invites global investors to join its energy transition journey

India has invited global companies to invest in its energy transition and work with it to achieve its vision to expand the green footprint by more than doubling the share of natural gas in the country's energy basket.

Addressing investors virtually during a roadshow on Saturday ahead of the 11th round of bidding for city gas distribution (CGD), Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri said that the demand for natural gas within India has seen an upward tick from the past.

"The growth of the CGD industry showcases natural gas as a responsible alternative to its more polluting fossil fuel counterparts," he told investors gathered at the Indian pavilion at EXPO2020 Dubai.

"When the NDA government took office in 2014, only 34 geographical areas covering 9 per cent population and 2.7 per cent of India's geographical area were covered by CGD networks and on the completion of the 11th round, 96 per cent of the country's population and 86 per cent of its geographic area would be covered under CGD network. The expected investment because of the concluded CGD bidding rounds is nearing a total of rupees 1.2 lakh crore," he said.

Tarun Kapoor, Secretary, Petroleum and Natural Gas, invited the private sector to invest in the oil and gas sector as there are huge business opportunities. "We want the private sector to come in a big way to join the Indian oil and gas sector.

So far, public sector is leading, playing probably the very major role, but now, we want more and more companies from the private sector to join them," he said during a keynote address. "While some of the companies have already invested in city gas distribution, we want some new companies also to come in, as the business opportunity is huge. And we want the distribution networks to come up very fast in India," Kapoor said.

Talking about the upstream industry, he said, "India has not yet fully explored its oil and gas reserves, and as we move along and we start exploring more and more area, we will certainly have more discoveries."

The latest bidding round will offer 65 geographical areas spread over 19 states and one Union Territory, which would cover around 25 per cent of India's population. "Natural gas is the future, and it will be the most important component of India's energy bouquet to realise our vision of net-zero by 2070," said Shrikant Madhav Vaidya, Chairman, Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL).

Manoj Jain, Chairman & Managing Director, Gas Authority of India Ltd. (GAIL), said, "GAIL has been a pioneer in CGD in India, and we are currently operating in 62 geographical areas. We are committed to covering the entire India with gas pipelines, including J&K, soon." S C L Das, Director General, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons; Gajendra Singh, Member, PNGRB; Suresh Manglani, CEO, Adani Gas Ltd, along with various CGD players from the public and private sector, also attended the bidding. India is currently the third-largest primary energy consumer after China, and the USA, and it is one of the fastest-growing energy consumers across the world. The country aims to enhance the share of natural gas in its energy basket from 7.6 per cent to 15 per cent by 2030.

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Will make effort so that Manipur gets full advantage of FTAs: Union Minister Piyush Goyal

The Centre will make every possible effort so that Manipur gets full advantage of free-trade agreement (FTA) as the state is a gateway to Myanmar and ASEAN countries, Union Minister Piyush Goyal has said.

The minister stated this on Saturday during an interaction with industry bodies of Manipur.

India and the 10-nation ASEAN bloc implemented an FTA in January 2010. Under a free-trade agreement, two trading partners reduce or eliminate customs duties on the maximum number of goods traded between them. Besides, they liberalise norms to enhance trade in services and boost investments.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members are Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, Brunei and Laos.

“The Union minister also assured that his ministry will make every possible effort so that Manipur gets full advantage of the free-trade agreement as the state is a gateway to Myanmar and ASEAN countries,” an official statement said on Sunday.

Goyal said that a lot of efforts have been made and special infrastructural development projects have been initiated for the promotion of industry, trade and commerce in the region including the North-East Industrial Development Scheme and sanctioning of the Integrated Development and Promotion of Industrial Projects.

He also urged the industrial bodies to undertake cooperative ventures and start-ups to promote the industry and commercial trade as well as share technology and common platforms to optimise the outcome of the efforts.

“Northeast states will be taken care of to go on their own identity and not to rush either to Delhi or Kolkata for every issue,” he added.

During the interaction, representatives of industrial unions of the state that participated include Manipur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Indo-Myanmar Border Traders’ Union, All Manipur Entrepreneurs’ Association,

Business Excellence Group, Manipur Power loom Development Association, Manipur Handloom and Handicraft Entrepreneurs Artisan Development Society.

They raised issues pertaining to the need of introduction of transit duty system, reduction in visa fees, opening of trade-related offices, DGFT, Exim Bank, and RBI forex cells at Imphal, development of multi modal logistics park, transport subsidies to export and import traders, up-gradation of Imphal Airport with facilities of cold storage, and customs office.

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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ECLGS: 64% of Rs 4.5 lakh crore credit guarantee scheme sanctioned to 1.25 crore MSMEs, others so far

Credit and Finance for MSMEs: The Modi government's Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) has so far sanctioned 64.4 per cent of the total scheme limit of Rs 4.5 lakh crore that was extended from Rs 3 lakh crore in June this year.

The information was shared by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently at a virtual event. This is up from over Rs 2.86 lakh crore loans sanctioned as of September 24, 2021, to over 1.15 crore borrowers. Also over 95 per cent of the guarantees under the scheme were for MSMEs, Finance Ministry had said in a statement in September.

Out of Rs 4.5 lakh crore, loans worth Rs 2.90 lakh crore were sanctioned so far. "Under the credit guarantee scheme (ECLGS), which was announced by the government, over around Rs 2.90 lakh crore loans have been sanctioned.

With this support, over 1.25 crore beneficiaries have strengthened their businesses. The majority of them are MSMEs," PM Modi said on November 12 at the virtual launch of the RBI Retail Direct Scheme and the Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme. However, details on loans disbursed weren't shared.

However, as of July 2, 2021, Rs 2.14 lakh crore loans were disbursed by partner banks and NBFCs, as per the information shared by the MSME Minister Narayan Rane in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha.

In September, the government had announced another extension to the scheme by six months — till March 31, 2022, or till guarantees for the scheme limit of Rs 4.5 lakh crore are issued, whichever is earlier. This was the fifth extension given to the scheme since its launch in May last year. Originally announced till October last year, ECLGS was extended to November followed by March 2021, June and then September along with subsequent expansion in scope as well to include more sectors and markets.

ECLGS was also modified in September for borrowers under ECLGS 1.0 and 2.0 to make them eligible for additional credit support of up to 10 per cent of total credit outstanding as of February 29, 2020, or March 31, 2021, whichever is higher.

Moreover, businesses who have not availed assistance under ECLGS can avail credit support of up to 30 per cent of their credit outstanding as of March 31, 2021.

The government also allowed enterprises in sectors specified under ECLGS 3.0, who have previously not availed ECLGS, to avail credit support up to 40 per cent of their credit outstanding as of March 31 to the maximum of Rs 200 crore per borrower.

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Maharashtra Signs 25 MoUs To Bolster EV, Textiles And Data Center Sectors

Kick-starting the Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0 initiative to draw investments to the State of Maharashtra, 25 MoUs worth Rs 15,260 crores ($2 billion) have been signed in the presence of Minister of Industries, Subhash Desai.

Under Magnetic Maharashtra 2.0, now in its 7th edition and its 1st international edition in World Expo in Dubai, the government of Maharashtra is participating between 19th November 2021 and 2nd December 2021.

The delegation is led by Subhash Desai who is joined by a senior delegation including Additional Chief Secretary (Industries)- Baldev Singh, IAS, Directorate of Industries, Harshadeep Kamble, IAS, Chief Executive Officer Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation- P. Anbalagan, IAS and Joint Chief Executive Officer Maharashtra Industrial Development Corporation- Amgothu Sri Ranga.

Maharashtra has always been a global investment hub and is home to some of the largest and most successful business houses in the country. The state has been at the forefront of FDI inflows in India, attracting the largest share of approximately One-Third of India's cumulative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows during April 2000 – 2020. The state's journey has included an increase in FDI inflow from INR 2,543 Crores in 2004-05 to INR 79,216 Crores in 2019-20.

The consolidated efforts of the Industries department, their robust policies and visionary leadership of the state government has boosted industrial growth and boosted investor confidence, positioning the state to be one of the most favored investment destinations of the country, thereby flourishing the industrial sector of the state.

The MoUs signed, which have the potential to generate employment for 10,851 people, are in key thrust sectors which are auto & auto components, logistics, EV, textiles, data center, phama, bio-fuels and energy. It is interesting to note that all the interested FDI investors are of the sectors where Maharashtra has dedicated promotion policies. This signifies the importance of the state government's pro-activeness in policy development and good governance.

Moreover, at least several companies from 6 countries such as Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Korea, Germany and Italy will be investing in Maharashtra.

Source: outlookindia.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Over 70,000 Indian exporters gear up for Black Friday, Cyber Monday sale via Amazon

Indian exporters are launching over 52,000 new products on Amazon's global websites for the upcoming holiday season.

Amazon India on Sunday said over 70,000 Indian exporters, who are part of its Global Selling programme, will offer millions of ‘Made in India’ products to global customers during the annual Black Friday and Cyber Monday (BFCM) sale. The Black Friday and Cyber Monday sale starts on November 25 and ends on November 29.

Indian exporters are launching over 52,000 new products on Amazon’s global websites for the upcoming holiday season, according to a statement. Amazon customers globally will be able to discover and enjoy a range of products across categories, including Home and Kitchen, STEM Toys, Apparel, Health and Personal Care, Office Products, Jewellery, Beauty and Furniture by exporters across India, it added.

Black Friday and Cyber Monday are significant events marking the beginning of the holiday season in the US with large-scale shopping from customers for gifts for friends and family. Black Friday is celebrated a day after Thanksgiving with retailers wooing potential shoppers with special deals and discounts. Online retailers had started offering special promotions on the Monday that followed Thanksgiving weekend (similar to Black Friday sale by brick-and-mortar stores), hence the name Cyber Monday.

Amazon said it works with Indian exporters to help them identify key holiday shopping trends to bring in relevant product assortment; supports them with logistics solutions to get their inventory ready, and guides them to market their products through a range of deals and advertising options.

“The BFCM sale marks the beginning of the global holiday season. Coming right after the festive season in India, it has traditionally been a key growth period for our selling partners and with more and more people relying on e-commerce for products globally, we believe that the 2021 BFCM sale period will help accelerate the exports business for our sellers,” Amazon India Director of Global Trade Abhijit Kamra said.

He added that e-commerce exports help lower the entry barrier for Indian MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises) to build and scale their exports business. "Through Amazon Global Selling, we will continue to make exports easy and accessible for MSMEs across India and contribute to the government's vision of boosting exports," he said.

Some of the globally popular Indian brands from Amazon Global Selling who would be offering their unique products and creations this holiday season include Skillmatics (toys); clothing brands like Virgin Crafts and Stylore; and Vahdam (tea brand).

Amazon Global Selling is one of Amazon's flagship programme that helps Indian MSMEs start or expand their exports business using e-commerce. The programme was launched in India in 2015 to help Indian exporters reach customers worldwide through Amazon's international websites and marketplaces.

Currently, there are more than 70,000 exporters across India on the programme. Amazon Global Selling has surpassed USD 3 billion in cumulative sales till now. In January 2020, Amazon had made three important commitments to India "digitally enabling 10 million MSMEs in India, enabling exports worth USD 10 billion and creating one million incremental jobs" by 2025.

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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Enrolment rising steadily on e-Shram portal, 8.43 crore registered till November 20

As many as 8.43 crore unorganised sector workers have registered on the e-Shram portal till November 20 and enrolments are rising steadily, the labour ministry said on Sunday.

"As per the recent data on the number of Unorganised Sector workers registration at the e-Shram portal since it was operational on 26th August 2021, the number of such registrations has been rising steadily over the 12 weeks," the ministry said in a statement.

As on November 20, 2021, which is more than 12 weeks since registrations started, 8,43,89,193 unorganised sector workers have registered on the portal.

As per week-wise data, the 10th week (November 2 – 8) saw the maximum increase at 1,15,66,985 registrations, followed by the seventh week (October 12 – 18) at 86,83,881.

In the past four days, (from November 17 to 20), around 57,24,286 registrations have been recorded, it added.

In the previous six weeks since October 5, a spike in registration of unorganised sector workers through State Seva Kendras has been recorded. The largest such increase occurred in the preceding week (November 9 to 16), almost doubling from 24,842 to 53,970 registrations. As on November 20, the number of such registrations stands at 86,067, it stated.

Over the past 12 weeks, the states of West Bengal, Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar posted the highest average growth rates of more than 15 per cent in registration of workers on the e-Shram portal, the statement said.

In the 12th week (November 9 to 16), registrations were particularly high for Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and moderately high in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Punjab, Odisha and Bihar.

As of November 20, the top five occupational categories for workers registered on the portal are — agriculture (53.2 per cent, 4,48,76,425 registrations), construction (12.1 per cent, 1,02,58,713), domestic and household workers (8.8 per cent, 74,22,236), apparel (6.3 per cent,

52,89,110) and capital goods and manufacturing (3.3 per cent, 27,60,050 registrations).

Further, two important sub-categories of agriculture workers are ‘crop farm labourers’ and ‘field crop and vegetable growers’ (with nearly 20 lakh registrations), it added.

The top five occupational categories of women unorganised sector workers are — agriculture (2.1 crore), domestic and household workers (71 lakh), apparel (46 lakh), construction (23 lakh) and miscellaneous (17.98 lakh).

Correspondingly, the top five occupational categories for male workers are — agriculture (2.3 crore), construction (78 lakh), automobile and transportation (22.1 lakh), capital goods and manufacturing (18.9 lakh) and miscellaneous (7.7 lakh).

Initially, a lower share of workers getting registered on the portal were providing details of their bank accounts. However, this share has gone up substantially, from 47 per cent in the first week to 86.3 per cent in the 12th week, it said.

Additionally, nominee details of the workers were provided by only 38 per cent of workers in the first week and 88 per cent in the 12th week.

Income-group wise analysis shows that on an average, 91 per cent of the total workers registered are in the monthly income slab of less than Rs 10,000.

The share of workers in the monthly income slab of Rs 21,000 and above is just 0.61 per cent.

Gender-wise analysis indicates that during the first six weeks after the portal’s launch, among the workers getting registered, the share of male workers was slightly higher (more than 51 per cent). However, in the last six weeks, the share of females workers has become higher as compared to the males.

As on November 20, out of the total registrations, 48.2 per cent (4,06,86,429) were male workers and 51.8 per cent (4,37,00,713) female workers.

The registration for 'others' in terms of gender has been slow, with around 2,095 total registrations completed by November 20, it stated.

The e-Shram portal is aimed at building a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW).

The portal seeks to boost last-mile delivery of welfare schemes for over 38 crore unorganised workers in the country.

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 21, 2021

HOME

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