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The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (TEXPROCIL)
Engineering Centre, 5th Floor, 9, Mathew Road, Mumbai 400004. Maharashtra State. INDIA
W. www.texprocil.org E. ibtex@texprocil.org T. +91-22-23632910 to 12 F. +91-22-23632914

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Here's What Could Happen With Container Congestion This Year

Imports at congested U.S. container ports are expected to grow modestly in the first half of the year, but continued high volumes will keep up the pressure that built as the economy bounced back from the pandemic last year, according to the monthly Global Port Tracker report released Wednesday by the National Retail Federation (NRF) and Hackett Associates.

"With Lunar New Year factory closings in Asia this month and the consequent drop in export production, North American terminals will have an opportunity to reduce existing congestion," Hackett Associates founder Ben Hackett said. "Nonetheless, backups cannot be erased quickly as long as terminals continue to face a lack of space brought on by the supply chain's inability to efficiently transfer cargo out of the terminals to its end destinations."

Hackett said congestion continues hampering gateways on both coasts and the Port of Los Angeles alone has around 40 ships waiting to dock. He noted that a shortage of equipment, worker availability and storage space at distribution centers and warehouses across the country remains problematic, as does the export of empty containers back to Asia.

"We're not going to see the dramatic growth in imports we saw this time last year, but the fact that volumes aren't falling is a clear sign of continued consumer demand," Jonathan Gold, vice president for supply chain and customs policy sat the NRF, Gold said.

"Last year set a new bar for imports, and the numbers remain high as consumers continue to spend despite Covid-19 and inflation. The slowdown in cargo growth will be welcome as the supply chain continues to try to adapt to these elevated volumes. Unfortunately, many experts expect ongoing disruptions throughout 2022 for a variety of reasons."

U.S. ports covered by Global Port Tracker are expected to handle 13 million 20-foot containers or equivalent units (TEU) during the first half of 2022, up 1.5 percent over the 12.8 million TEU handled during the same period in 2021. By contrast, the first half of 2021 saw a record 35.7 percent increase over the unusually slow first six months of 2020, when many Asian factories and U.S. stores shut down because of the pandemic.

The ports handled 2.09 million TEU in December, down 1.2 percent from November and 1 percent below a year earlier. Imports for all of 2021 totaled 25.8 million TEU, a 17.4 percent increase over 2020's record high of 22 million TEU that was set despite the pandemic.

Ports have not yet reported January numbers, but Global Port Tracker projected the month at 2.15 million TEU, up 4.4 percent year-over-year. The rest of the half is projected to have some see-sawing.

February cargo shipments are forecast to increase 8.7 percent to 2.04 million TEU, while March volume is expected to be down 6.7 percent, April to rise 2 percent to 2.19 million TEU, May to fall 2.6 percent to 2.27 million TEU and June to climb 5.2 percent to 2.26 million TEU.

According to the latest monthly trade update from Panjiva, the supply chain research unit of S&P Global Market Intelligence, U.S. seaborne imports fell 0.2 percent to 2.67 million TEU in January from the month before and 1.4 percent lower than January 2021.

Panjiva said in its report that this continues "what could be described as a post-holiday shipping hangover as carriers and ports continue to process backlogs."

The report showed that when U.S. imports from 2010 to the end of 2021 were calculated, January was 63,400 TEU above the trend line and comparable to the level recorded in 2019, which was 63,000 TEU above the trend. This is lower than 2021, when January imports were 176,200 TEU above the trend line.

Global Port Tracker provides historical data and forecasts for the U.S. ports of Los Angeles-Long Beach and Oakland, Calif., and Seattle and Tacoma, Wash., on the West Coast; New York-New Jersey; Port of Virginia; Charleston, S.C., Savannah, Ga., and Port Everglades, Miami and Jacksonville, Fla., on the East Coast, and Houston on the Gulf Coast.

Source: sourcingjournal.com– Feb 09, 2022

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China-Europe trade shows resilience with strong performance in 2021

Europe-China trade saw robust growth last year, exhibiting vigour and resilience in their economic cooperation in spite of a weak global recovery due to the pandemic. Official data showed China's trade with the European Union (EU) in 2021 amounted to $828.1 billion, up by 27.5 per cent year on year (YoY). China remained the EU's largest trading partner, while the latter was the former's second largest. Juergen Friedrich, chairman and chief executive at Germany Trade & Invest, told a Chinese news agency.

Juergen Friedrich, chairman and chief executive at Germany Trade & Invest, told a Chinese news agency that projections show the total trade volume between China and Germany is likely to reach a new record, thus making China Germany's largest trading partner for the sixth year in a row.

Noting that German companies import more goods from no other country than China, Friedrich added that German companies in China "continue to express investment intentions, including the localization of production and research and development" in China.

Supply bottlenecks and the Omicron variant wave have slowed down economic recovery, said a note published by the Liechtenstein-based VP Bank Group on its website in January.

Thomas Gitzel, chief economist at VP Bank, said that given the recovery of the supply chains and logistics between Germany and its major trading partners, especially China, he is optimistic about the growth prospect of the German foreign trade, the news agency reported.

According to data from China customs, Italy's trade with China grew by 34.1 per cent in 2021.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Feb 10, 2022

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China, Ecuador sign MoU to start FTA negotiations

China's commerce minister Wang Wentao and Ecuador's minister for production, foreign trade, investment and fisheries Julio Prado recently signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to start negotiations for a free trade agreement (FTA). In 2021, China-Ecuador bilateral trade totaled $10.95 billion, an increase of 44.5 per cent year on year.

The two sides launched a feasibility study on the FTA in September last year and completed it in January, according to a Chinese news agency. China has been Ecuador's second-largest trading partner for two consecutive years.

The signing of the FTA will help further tap the potential of bilateral trade and promote the sustained, stable and diversified development of bilateral trade, according to an official Chinese government statement.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Feb 10, 2022

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UK, S Korea enhanced trade deal following bumper year of trade

The United Kingdom and South Korea plan to start talks on an enhanced trade deal later this year, the UK government recently said. Trade between both sides totalled £13.3 billion in the year to September 2021—up by 11 per cent over the 2020 figure. In particular, UK exports to the latter have seen strong growth, increasing by 12 per cent in the same year.

UK international trade secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan recently hosted the inaugural UK-South Korea FTA Committee in London and meet her counterpart, Yeo Han-koo, to discuss increased trade and collaboration in key areas such as digital, the environment and supporting small business.

Following the global chip shortage and other supply chain issues caused by the pandemic, they also signed an agreement to strengthen supply chain resilience. As one of the UK's biggest trading partner for critical goods, the agreement will help ensure the continued smooth flow of key supplies between our two countries, an official release said.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Feb 09, 2022

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Sri Lanka's apparel & textile exports up 22.93% in 2021

The apparel and textile exports from the south Asian island nation of Sri Lanka rose by 22.93 per cent year-on-year to $5.415 billion in 2021. While clothing exports increased by 25.7 per cent, exports of woven fabrics surged drastically by 99.84 per cent during the year. Exports to the UK shot up by 15.22 per cent during the 12-month period.

In December 2021, the export earnings from apparel and textile improved by 17.88 per cent y-o-y to $531.05 million with a strong performance in exports of apparel (17.56 per cent) and woven fabrics (86.18 per cent), according to the provisional data released by the Sri Lanka Export Development Board (EDB).

Sri Lanka’s overall earnings from export were recorded at $15.12 billion from January to December 2021, including the estimated services data from October to December.

Releasing the data, the country’s trade minister Dr. Bandula Gunawardena appreciated the contribution of exporters to the economy, despite the unprecedented economic conditions they had to deal with and assured them of more support to reach a $20 billion target this year.

At the Sri Lanka Economic Summit 2021 organised by the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce (CCC) in December 2021, Hirdaramani Group director Aroon Hirdaramani said that the Sri Lanka’s apparel sector targets exports worth $8 billion by 2025 by raising investment in local supply chains.

Hirdaramani said only around half of Sri Lankan garment exports qualified for the generalised scheme of preferences plus (GSP+) tax concessions due to the rules of origin criteria, which concerns whether the clothing is sufficiently originating from the country applying for concessions.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Feb 09, 2022

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Cambodia's exports to Japan worth $1.752 bn in 2021, keen on FTA

Cambodia is keen to establish bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) with major trading partners, including Japan, its commerce ministry has said. Cambodia exported $1.752 billion worth of goods to Japan in 2021, a year-on-year (YoY) increase of 8.4 per cent, according to data from the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), which said two-way trade volume reached $2,332 million.

Cambodia imported $580 million worth of products from the East Asian nation—a rise of 19.7 per cent over the figure a year before, the report said. This made Cambodia's trade surplus with Japan at $1,172 million, decreasing $40 million from 2020.

JETRO listed garments and electrical and electronic components as key Cambodian exports to Japan; and machinery, electronics and high-tech products as the main imports.

Lim Heng, vice president of the Cambodia Chamber of Commerce, told a Cambodian newspaper that the FTA will boost trade activities between the two countries, particularly encouraging new investors from Japan and other countries to come to Cambodia to produce for exports to Japan.

Cambodia has signed bilateral free trade agreements with China and South Korea and is in the process of negotiating FTAs with Japan, India, Mongolia, Canada and the United Kingdom to diversify markets and boost exports.

The Ministry of Commerce has set up a working group to study and collect input from stakeholders and the private sector to develop strategies to maximise the benefits of implementing the free trade agreement to which Cambodia is a signatory.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Feb 09, 2022

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Portugal: 2021 was 'best year ever' for textile, clothing exports – association

Portuguese textile and clothing exports in 2021 recorded a record 5.419 billion euros, up 16.5% compared to 2020 and 3.9% above the pre-pandemic year of 2019, the sector association announced on Wednesday.

According to the Textile and Clothing Association of Portugal (ATP) in a statement, "contributing to this excellent result were the exports of knitted garments and home textiles". Knitted garments exported €2.336 billion, up €193 million (+9%) compared to 2019, while home textiles exported €763 million, up €112 million compared to 2019, representing growth of 17%.

In contrast, woven garments "failed to recover from the effects of the pandemic", exporting €796 million, down €189 million compared to 2019, registering a 19% drop. In terms of export destinations for the sector, France reinforced its second place in the 'ranking' and was the market with the largest increase in absolute terms, with an increase of 119 million euros (equivalent to +18%).

The French market now accounts for 15% of total textiles and clothing exports. The US was the non-EU destination that grew the most, with an increase of 107 million Euros (+31.5%), and now represents 8% of the sector's total exports.

Conversely, Spain, although continuing to lead the table of the sector's main export destinations, was the one that suffered the biggest drop: minus 220 million euros, or -14%. If, in 2019, the Spanish market represented 31% of the total, in 2021 its weight fell to 25%.

According to the ATP, whose analysis is based on international trade in goods data released today by Portugal's National Statistics Institute (INE), in 2021 the sector's trade balance had a positive balance of 1.168 billion euros, with a coverage rate of 127%.

Source: macaubusiness.com– Feb 10, 2022

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Pakistan: Govt, stakeholders reach consensus on cash subsidy for textile sector

A formal decision in this regard was taken in the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet. The policy is expected to be presented in the next cabinet meeting for approval.

An official source privy to the meeting told Dawn that it was decided that concessionary tariff on electricity and gas will be provided to processing industries only. However, it was decided that a separate policy will be worked out for the captive power plants in consultation with the Commerce Division.

As per the decision, proper work will be made on evolving competitive energy prices, while taking into account the regional countries. The working will be presented in the budgetary documents along with an allocation of amounts in the upcoming budget.

The proposed policy, which will be the third such plan, estimates three scenarios including measures that will lift the textile and clothing exports to a minimum of $15.7 billion and a maximum of $20.8bn by end of the year 2025.

The policy is laden with measures to tackle issues confronting the textile sector amid Covid-19 that has resulted in supply chain disruptions, affected global prices of commodities hitting trade adversely. It also addresses the issues of the withdrawal of SRO-1125 and cost of doing business.

Furthermore, the policy should attract domestic and foreign investment in the textiles value chain and the development of value-added sectors, with prime focus on small and medium enterprises (SMEs). However, the incentives only focus on reducing the cost of doing business in existing industries and no specific link is proposed to either enhance exports or expand production lines.

The past policies only subsidised export proceeds instead of widening the production line. The textile and clothing industries are operating at full capacity to meet buyers' demands.

Under the policy, the government will continue supply of subsidised electricity and lower rates for the supply of RLNG and system gas. The government will also allocate for payments under the Drawback of Local Taxes and Levy (DLTL) scheme. Currently, the government provides cash subsidy under the DLTL scheme launched by the previous government.

It was also decided in principle to bring no change in the existing Export Finance Scheme (EFS) and Long Term Financing Facility (LTFF) schemes.

It is also under consideration to revive LTFF and refinance scheme for SMEs and indirect exporters. Textile machinery and spare parts, accessories, dyes, and chemicals will also be included in LTFF schemes of the State Bank of Pakistan. Similarly, a brand development fund will be launched besides revitalising the Pakistan Textile City Ltd (PTCL) and Karachi Garment City Ltd (KGCL). Special Economic Zone status will be granted to PTCL and KGCL.

Source: dawn.com– Feb 10, 2022

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Pakistan: ECC approves revised Textiles and Apparel Policy 2020-25

The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC), after deliberation, approved the revised Textiles and Apparel Policy 2020-25 with certain amendments. The ECC discussed in details and approved summary submitted by Ministry of Communication for issuance of sovereign guarantee or SBLC worth of Rs. 6944.0 million against Operational Viability Gap Funding (VGF) for the construction of Sialkot (Sambrial) – Kharian Motorway project on BOT basis. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Mr. Shaukat Tarin presided over the Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Wednesday.

Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Syed Fakhar Imam, Federal Minister for Energy Mr. Hammad Azhar, Federal Minister for Privatization Muhammedmian Soomro, Adviser to the PM on Commerce and Investment Abdul Razak Dawood, Federal Secretaries and senior officers attended the meeting.

The Ministry of Commerce submitted revised Textiles and Apparel Policy, 2020-25 after incorporating few changes along-with implementation report. The Ministry of Energy, Petroleum Division submitted a summary on 15 years' extension of lease contract between Saindak Metals Limited and MCC China for Saindak Copper Gold Project.

The ECC after detailed discussion allowed the extension of the lease contract and recommended reviewing the financial aspect of the project annually by the professional expertise. It also approved the Ministry of Energy, Petroleum Division's summary on determination of RLNG sale price for PLL's supply to K-Electric (KE).

The ECC also considered and approved Technical Supplementary Grants submitted by different Ministries/Divisions. It deferred Power Division's two summaries on Settlement of Payables to Government Owned Power Plants and Reinstatement of Tax on dividend for investors/shareholders of IPPs.

Source: dailytimes.com.pk– Feb 10, 2022

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NATIONAL NEWS

Australia's trade minister to visit India to advance FTA negotiations

Commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal will have several meetings with Aust-ra-lia's trade, tourism and investment minister Dan Tehan to advance negotiations on the Compre-hensive Economic Coope-ration Agr-ee-ment (CECA) between both nations.

An official statement by Tehan's office on Tuesday said he will travel to India to advance negotiations on a free trade agreement (FTA) and promote Australia as a premium destination for students and tourists.

"Mr Goyal and I have been in regular contact over the Christmas/New Year period because we are both committed to concluding an interim free trade agreement. Nothing can replace face-to-face meetings to help speed up the process in the interest of both countries. Australia and India are important trading partners, and we share a strong desire to further enhance our bilateral trade relationship," an official statement said.

India and Australia had set a tight deadline of concluding an early harvest agreement — a precursor to FTA or CECA in this case — by December 25, as more work needed to be done towards the deal.

Sources said the meeting between the ministers was crucial as both nations were yet to agree on respective demand lists. The proposed deal is likely to include lower tariff and greater market access for Indian exporters in areas such as textiles, pharmaceuticals, footwear, leat-her. On the other hand, Austr-alia is seeking lower tariffs for dairy products, milk, premium wines, among other items.

"CECA is a potential game-changer in opening opportunities for both Australia and India. It is also an important piece of our post-Covid economic recovery," Tehan said.

Source: business-standard.com– Feb 10, 2022

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RBI Monetary Policy: Repo rate unchanged at 4% for 10th consecutive time

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) kept the repo rate unchanged at 4 per cent for the tenth consecutive time while maintaining an 'accommodative stance' as long as necessary, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das announced on Thursday.

The central bank governor said that the MPC had voted unanimously 5:1 to maintain the accommodative stance and added that the reverse repo rate too was kept unchanged at 3.35 per cent.

The central bank had last revised its policy repo rate or the short-term lending rate on May 22, 2020, in an off-policy cycle to perk up demand by cutting the interest rate to a historic low.

During the speech on the RBI's key decisions, Das said that India is charting a different course of recovery from rest of the world and the country is poised to grow at fastest pace year-on-year among major economies as per projections by IMF. This recovery is supported by large scale vaccination and sustained fiscal and monetary support.

Speaking on the GDP, Das said that the real GDP growth is projected at 7.8 per cent for the next financial year 2022-23 (FY23). The RBI governor said that real GDP growth of 9.2 per cent in the current fiscal (FY22) will take the economy above the pre-pandemic level.

Speaking about inflation, the RBI governor said that the CPI inflation projection for the current financial year 2021-22 (FY22) is retained at 5.3 per cent while the retail inflation for the next fiscal (FY23) is projected at 4.5 per cent.

Source: indianexpress.com– Feb 10, 2022

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India is in discussion with ASEAN to start FTA review: Patel

India is in discussion with the 10-nation bloc ASEAN for initiating the review of the free-trade agreement in goods between the two regions to seek more market access for domestic products, Parliament was informed on Wednesday. Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel said the market access issues and trade barriers being faced in ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries and China are being regularly taken up with individual countries through bilateral engagements.

"The Government of India is in discussion with ASEAN countries for initiating the review of ASEAN-India trade in goods agreement to seek more market access for Indian products," she said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha. In a separate reply, she said that to increase exports including apparel exports, India is actively negotiating regional trade agreements (RTAs)/ FTAs with a number of countries including the UAE, Australia, Canada, Israel and the UK.

"Ongoing FTA negotiations will also provide more favourable market access to products exported from India," she said. The minister said that textile and apparel export growth has been facing adverse impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and higher import tariffs in key markets such as the European Union and the United Kingdom as compared to zero duty access in these countries to competing countries like Bangladesh and Cambodia.

Replying to a question on export dues, she said the government has released Rs 56,027 crore in order to clear pending export incentive dues to exporters. This is for various schemes - Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (Rs 33,010 crore, Service Exports from India Scheme (Rs 10,002 crore), Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (Rs 5,286 crore), Rebate of State Levies (Rs 330 crore), and Remission of Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (Rs 2,568 crore) and other legacy schemes like Target Plus Scheme, Focus Product Scheme.

"It is estimated that such benefits would be disbursed to more than 45,000 exporters, out of which the majority would be in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) category," Patel said. Clearance of dues under these schemes is dependent on meeting the eligibility criteria by the applicant exporter, whose applications are scrutinised for any deficiency.

Source: economictimes.indiatimes.com– Feb 09, 2022

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ALLOCATION OF FUNDS TO STARTUPS

Many Ministries/ Departments of Government of India and State governments have implemented Schemes for funding and supporting startups in different sectors and areas. Details of funding or progress of startups is not centrally maintained.

To provide seed funding to startups through approved incubators across all sectors and areas, the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme was launched by Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade on 16th April, 2021.

A grant of Rs. 945 crore has been approved for period of 4 years starting from 2021-22 under the Scheme. As on 31st December, 2021, Rs. 232.75 crore have been approved as grant to 58 incubators, and 146 startups have been funded by such approved incubators.

Information about seed funding from other schemes of Ministries/Departments of Government of India or State Governments is not maintained centrally.

This information was given by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Shri Som Parkash, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

Source: pib.gov.in– Feb 09, 2022

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INFORMATION OF VARIOUS SCHEMES

Central Government follows the principle of "Minimum Government - Maximum Governance", under which efforts are being made to reduce public interface with government authorities and provide information, as far as possible through online modes.

The details about the schemes of Ministry of MSME are made available through the web portals of Ministry and its attached and field offices. The field offices of the Ministry of MSME, located in various States and Union Territories inter-alia also create awareness about the schemes through seminars/workshops and meetings with Industry Associations.

Government has undertaken a systematic exercise across Central Ministries/Departments and States/UTs to eliminate or reduce compliances which have an adverse impact on time and cost of businesses including MSMEs and Startups.

Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have the facility of single window clearance mechanism along with a dedicated Customs wing for faster approval and clearance of goods and services supplied by the SEZ units for export as well as to Domestic Tariff Area (DTA).

As far as EOUs are concerned, faster clearances are available for export and there is also time-bound procedure for DTA sale permission, which is granted within 2 days as per the provisions contained in existing Foreign Trade Policy 2015-20 read with Handbook of Procedures.

This information was given by the Minister of State in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Shri Som Parkash, in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

Source: pib.gov.in– Feb 09, 2022

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Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman to address RBI board on Feb 14

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to address the post-budget meeting of the RBI's central board on Monday and highlight key points of the Union Budget 2022-23, including the fiscal consolidation roadmap and high capex plan.

It has been a custom that the finance minister addresses the RBI board, consisting of RBI Governor and existing four deputy governors, after the budget.

The meeting has been scheduled for February 14 where she would be addressing the board members and talk about announcements made in the Budget to perk up growth hit by three waves of COVID-19, sources said.

The Budget 2022-23 presented earlier this month estimates a nominal gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 11.1 per cent.

The government expects this growth to be fuelled by a massive capital spending programme outlined in the Budget with a view to crowd-in private investment by reinvigorating economic activities and creating demand.

The finance minister raised capital expenditure (capex) by 35.4 per cent for the financial year 2022-23 to Rs 7.5 lakh crore to continue the public investment-led recovery of the pandemic-battered economy. The capex this year is pegged at Rs 5.5 lakh crore.

The spending on building multimodal logistics parks, metro systems, highways, and trains is expected to create demand for the private sector as all the projects are to be implemented through contractors.

With regard to borrowing, the government plans to borrow a record Rs 11.6 lakh crore from the market in 2022-23 to meet its expenditure requirement to prop up the economy. This is nearly Rs 2 lakh crore higher than the current year's Budget estimate of Rs 9.7 lakh crore.

Even the gross borrowing for the next financial year will be the highest-ever at Rs 14,95,000 crore as against Rs 12,05,500 crore Budget Estimate (BE) for 2021-22.

Fiscal deficit -- the excess of government expenditure over its revenues -- is estimated to come down to 6.4 per cent of GDP next year as against 6.9 per cent pegged for the current fiscal ending March 31.

The Reserve Bank is likely to maintain the status quo on the key policy rate in its next bi-monthly monetary policy to be announced on Thursday in view of elevated level of inflation.

Experts, however, are of the opinion that RBI's monetary policy committee (MPC) may change the policy stance from 'accommodative' to 'neutral' and tinker with the reverse-repo rate as part of the liquidity normalisation process.

The MPC has been mandated by the government to keep the inflation in the range of 2-6 per cent.

Source: business-standard.com– Feb 10, 2022

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Cotton stakeholders' meeting postponed for lack of latest crop data

The meet was scheduled on Feb 10

The second stakeholders' meeting under the aegis of Government of India's Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption (COCPC) has been postponed due to lack of availability of latest crop data, a notice from the Textile Commissioner's office stated.

The second meeting of stakeholders was scheduled for February 10 as was informed in an official notice issued on January 28. Citing non-availability of latest advance estimate on cotton production for the current season 2021-22, the Textile Commissioner's Office decided to postpone the cotton stakeholders meeting, which includes trade representatives, exporters, ginners and government officials.

The postponement notice issued on Wednesday informed that the "Second meeting of the stakeholders for the cotton season 2021 - 22, fixed on 10. 02.2022 has been postponed due to non-availability of the latest advance estimate on Cotton Production for the current cotton season 2021-22 from Directorate of Cotton Development (DCD), Ministry of Agriculture, Nagpur."

The next date of meeting would be intimated on receipt of the information from DCD, the Textile Commissioner's notice said. Committee on Cotton Production and Consumption (COCPC) has replaced the erstwhile Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) to assess the cotton crop and trade situation in the country.

Source: thehindubusinessline.com– Feb 09, 2022

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India received total FDI of $54.1 bn during April-Nov 2021-22

India has received total foreign direct investment (FDI) of USD 54.1 billion during April-November 2021-22, as against USD 81.97 billion in 2020-21, Parliament was informed on Wednesday.

Total FDI comprises equity inflows, reinvested earnings and other capital.

FDI inflows serve an important role in augmenting domestic capital and help to promote industrial development and employment generation across various sectors and industries, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said in a written reply in the Lok Sabha.

In a separate reply, the minister said as on January 31, 16,737 startups have been recognised by the ministry.

In another reply to a question in the Lok Sabha, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Som Parkash said to provide seed funding to startups through approved incubators across all sectors and areas, the Startup India Seed Fund Scheme was launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) on April 16, 2021.

"A grant of Rs 945 crore has been approved for a period of 4 years starting from 2021-22 under the scheme," he said.

As on December 31, 2021, Rs 232.75 crore has been approved as grant to 58 incubators, and 146 startups have been funded by such approved incubators, he added.

Source: business-standard.com– Feb 09, 2022

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Govt's e-portal for biz approvals off to a brisk start: How does it work

Nearly five months after its soft launch, the government's e-portal, the National Single Window System (NSWS), is seeing a significant increase in the number of investors using it to get a bunch of approvals for their ventures.

The first clearance was granted on 18 January. Since then, the progress has been good. Out of the 1,258 registered users on the portal, 378 were registered in the last one week, a senior government official told Business Standard.

The NSWS is a digital platform to help investors identify and apply for approvals, depending on their business requirements. Since an investment proposal typically requires a series of approvals and clearances across various states and government departments, the idea behind the NSWS is to do away with the need for multiple applications across various portals and multiple office visits so that approvals can come faster and in a more systematic way.

Most of the approvals in progress on the NSWS are from the ministry of corporate affairs and the ministry of consumer affairs, food and public distribution, with 33 and 295 approval requests respectively.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), which is spearheading the initiative, is now trying to bring end-to-end approvals for various programmes on the NSWS. These include granting registration certificates for vehicle-scrapping facilities, the registration of jewellers for selling hallmarked jewellery and so on.

"The first approval that was granted was for a vehicle scrapping facility in Gujarat. We are working with industry departments of the states to put the entire scheme on board and get all approvals related to it," the official said, adding that the DPIIT was also working with the road transport and highways ministry to expedite it.

The DPIIT has also been holding a series of meetings with industry associations and urging them to encourage bus-iness people to use the portal.

So far, 143 central approvals have been granted on the NSWS, while 489 approvals are pending.

Currently, 20 ministries and government departments and 13 states are linked to the NSWS. The states are: Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Maha-rashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Telan-gana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttara-khand, Karnataka. The union territory of Jammu and Kash-mir is also linked to the portal.

“The focus is now on boarding the remaining union territories over the next 20 days. Discussions with Assam and Rajasthan are also in progress. Some states already ha-ve a single window (system),” the official cited above said.

One of the biggest challenges of the portal, which remains in a testing phase, is to ensure coordination with multiple stakeholders and getting the states on board.

“It is difficult for all states to be on the same page due to difficulty in aligning with state laws, overlapping issues, lack of manpower, etc. Besides, states also need to be ready with the digital infrastructure ,” Atul Pandey, partner at Khaitan and Co, said.

Source: business-standard.com– Feb 10, 2022

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Ministry of Textiles provides Rs. 314.80 crore subsidy support to Textile industry including MSMEs and small textile manufacturing units through ATUFS and Powertex India

Ministry of Textiles has been providing subsidy support to textile industry, including Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and small textile manufacturing units across the country through schemes such as Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS) and Powertex India. Details of support provided under the schemes are given in Annexure-I. Details of textile units provided support under ATUFS and Powertex India Scheme are given in Annexure-II. **Annexure I : Details of schemes implemented for the benefit of textile industry including small manufacturers**

S No.	Name of the scheme	Details of assistance	Duration of implementation
1.	Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS)	Capital Investment subsidy (CIS) for technology upgradation @ 15% for garmenting and technical textiles segments with a cap of Rs. 30 crore and @ 10% for weaving, processing, jute, silk and handloom segments with a cap of Rs. 20 crore is provided to individual entity.	January, 2016 to March, 2022
2.	Powertex India Scheme	In situ upgradation, Yarn bank scheme, work shed projects for strengthening decentralized powerloom sector	

Annexure II : **Details of textile units provided support under ATUFS and Powertex India Scheme**

S No.	**Name of the Scheme**	**Number of units/ beneficiaries**	**Amount of assistance (in Rs. crore)**
1.	Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS)	785	314.80
2.	Powertex India Scheme:	In situ scheme – 3351	30.71
		Work shed projects – 18	7.01
		Yarn Bank projects - 11	2.80

This information was given by the Minister of State for Textiles Smt. Darshana Jardosh in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

Source: pib.gov.in– Feb 09, 2022

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Technological Training Centres

Under Skill India Mission, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) through its various schemes such as Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) and Craftsmen Training Scheme (CTS) is delivering training to meet technological changes to compete with foreign manufacturers. However, there are no centres by the name of Technological Training Centre under any scheme of the Ministry.

Under PMKVY, training is being imparted at affiliated and accredited training centres in various National Skills Qualification Framework (NSQF) aligned job roles including technology driven curriculum designed by Sector Skill Councils (SSCs) which are industry-led bodies. The present version of PMKVY i.e. PMKVY 3.0 has been designed as a demand-driven scheme with bottom-up approach for identification and mapping of job roles.

Under Scheme, focus has been given for skilling on digital technology and Industry 4.0. The Sector Skill Councils (SSCs), which are autonomous industry-led bodies, have also created job roles on new and emerging digital technologies and industry 4.0 skills like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Internet of Things (IoT). State-wise number of accredited and affiliated Training Centres including PMKK till date under PMKVY is given at column (b) of Annexure I-(A).

MSDE through Directorate General of Training (DGT) is implementing CTS scheme to provide long term training through 14,711 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) in 143 trades. State and sector wise details of ITIs are given at column (a) of Annexure I-(A) and Annexure I-(B), respectively. Further, to meet skilling requirements arising out of changes and upgradation in technology, DGT has rolled out new-age courses.

Additionally, Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) through National Manufacturing Competitiveness Programme (NMCP) is supporting MSMEs to develop global competitiveness. This program provides technological training through Tool Rooms (TRs) / Technology Centres (TCs). MSME in its endeavour to provide the right stimulus for the growth of the industry in the country – particularly with the objective of helping the micro, small and medium enterprises, has established 18 TRs/TCs all over in India.

Out of these 18 TRs/TCs, 10 provide invaluable service to the Indian industry by way of precision tooling and providing well trained manpower in the area of tool and die making. The remaining 8 TRs/TCs are product specific centres to look into MSMEs specific problems and render technical services, developed & upgraded technologies and training in specific product groups like Foundry & Forging, Electronics, Electrical Measuring Instruments, Fragrance & Flavour, Glass, Sport Shoes, and develop footwear designing to promote exports and provide training for manpower in footwear Industry. Click here for more details.

Source: pib.gov.in– Feb 09, 2022

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A total of 1,77,825 Weavers and Artisans are registered on Government-e-Marketplace (GeM)

A total of 1,77,825 artisans and weavers are registered on Government-e-Marketplace (GeM) to sell their products directly to various Government departments and organizations.

The State/UT- wise details is annexed at Annexure-I. Total sales figure as recorded on GeM portal since July 2020 till date comes to Rs 118.30 crore by the registered artisans and weavers.

1,116 artisans & weavers have registered themselves on GeM portal. Total sales figure as recorded on GeM portal since July 2020 till date comes to Rs 19.43 crore by the registered artisans and weavers for Delhi.

Click here for more details

Source: pib.gov.in– Feb 09, 2022

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Government to provide support @ 90% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs.40crores for first two projects (each) in the Twelve States / UTs under SITP

Government to provide support @ 90% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs.40crores for first two projects (each) in the Twelve States / UTs under SITP

With an objective to provide financial assistance to a group of entrepreneurs to establish state-of-the-art infrastructure facilities in a cluster for setting up their textile units, confirming to international environmental and social standards and thereby mobilize private investment in the textile sector and generate fresh employment opportunities, the government has been implementing Scheme for Industrial parks (SITP) since 2005. For each park, there is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) formed by the representatives of local industry, financial institutions, State industrial and infrastructural corporations and other agencies of State and Central Governments. The SPV is registered under the Companies Act.

The project cost covers common infrastructure and buildings for production/ support activities (including textile machinery, textiles engineering, accessories, packaging) depending on the need of textile park. The total financial support by GoI is limited to 40% of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs.40 crores. However, support will be provided @90% of the project cost subject to a ceiling of Rs.40crores for first two projects (each) in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and UT of Laddakh and UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

Recently, the Government has approved setting up of 7 (Seven) PM Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks in Greenfield/Brownfield sites to develop world class infrastructure including plug and play facility with an outlay of Rs.4445 Crore for a period of seven years upto 2027-28.

The PM MITRA Parks Scheme shall be implemented on pan-India basis and is intended for holistic development of the textile sector. The willing state governments having ready availability of contiguous and encumbrance-free land parcel of 1000+ acres are eligible to apply under the Scheme.

It is envisaged to be on Public Private Partnership (PPP) mode. There is a provision of Development Capital Support (DCS) @30% of the project cost with a maximum support of Rs.500 Cr and Rs.200 Cr per park for Greenfield and Brownfield PM MITRA Park, respectively for creation of core Infrastructure.

Chief Secretaries of all State Governments have been requested to send proposals for setting up PM MITRA Parks in their respective states by 15.3.2022.

This information was given by the Minister of State for Textiles Smt. Darshana Jardosh in a written reply in the Lok Sabha today.

Source: pib.gov.in– Feb 09, 2022

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Cargo volumes at dozen major ports rose 9.13 % during April-January to 592 mt

Cargo handled at India's dozen state-owned major ports rose 9.13 per cent during April-January period to 592.020 million tonnes (mt) from 542.478 mt a year ago.

The 12 major ports handled a combined 9.336 million 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) in containers, 22.18 per cent more than the 7.641 million TEUs handled during April-January of FY21.

Of this, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), India's busiest state-run container gateway, handled 4.7 million TEUs from 3.687 million TEUs during the same period last year, according to the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.

Thermal and steam coal shipments, through the dozen ports, grew the most during the April-January period, climbing 27.29 per cent to 79.188 mt during the ten months of FY22 from 62.211 mt a year earlier, according to the ministry.

Coking coal and other coal cargo declined 5.69 per cent to 40.922 mt from 43.389 mt a year earlier.

Shipments of iron ore including pellets declined 27.23 per cent to 41.370 mt from 56.849 mt a year earlier.

Deendayal Port Authority, India's biggest state-owned port by volumes, handled 107.834 mt of cargo between April and January from 95.094 mt last year, posting a growth of 13.40 per cent.

Source: thehindubusinessline.com– Feb 09, 2022

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How this small textile manufacturer is recycling plastic water bottles to make fashion sustainable

Mumbai-based Kapil Bhatia has been in the textile sector for more than 20 years, still he hardly knew about ways to reduce carbon emissions by the clothing industry.

According to the World Economic Forum, the fashion apparel industry worldwide produces 10 per cent of all humanity's carbon emissions, dries up water sources, and pollutes rivers and streams. It was only in early 2019 when Bhatia dug deeper into the problem and realised how recycled plastic could be one of the ways for the sector to shed some emissions or waste generated every year.

Most plastics live forever. They break down into millions of tiny particles but never gets decomposed. According to the UK-based Allen Macarthur Foundation, which works on ideas of building a circular economy, there could be more plastic than fish in the oceans by 2050. It stresses on changing the way humans design, use, and reuse plastics.

"I had heard about recycled synthetic fabric but didn't have much idea about it. In 2019, during a uniform and corporate wear expo in Mumbai, a visitor asked me about making T-shirts, track pants, trousers and blazers out of recycled plastic. While I told him that we could look at manufacturing them but I had to first figure out what it entailed.

I found that if you recycle a PET bottle, it goes back to its raw form of plastic pellets. From plastic pellets you can make recycled polyester fibre," Bhatia, who has been making uniforms and corporate wear since 2000, told Financial Express Online.

To cater to the opportunity of recycled synthetic fabric, Bhatia launched his direct-to-consumer (D2C) recycled fabric brand UNIREC under the parent entity Brandstore India to manufacture blazers, trousers, sleeveless jackets, and T-shirts from recycled PET bottles.

The company focuses on stitching the apparel and have outsourced the recycling part. The recycled fabric is sourced from third-party manufacturers who procure yarn from yarn manufacturers who are further connected to multiple recyclers of plastic bottles into the recycled fibre.

Every garment made by UNIREC helps recycle 8-10 PET bottles of one litre, said Bhatia as he explained the size of the problem. “In India, around 1 lakh PET bottles are used every minute, of which up to 90 per cent bottles are recycled while around 10,000 bottles end up at landfill sites and water bodies. A pile of these waste bottles would take less than 21 minutes to grow taller than Statue of Unity which is 182 meters high,” said Bhatia.

While these mountains of trash should cause panic among stakeholders, Bhatia claimed awareness to be the biggest challenge restricting the recycled fabric segment from becoming mainstream and thereby helping in reducing the carbon emissions of the garment sector.

Apart from retail, UNIREC has started supplying recycled fabric uniforms to corporates. It is currently working with IDBI Bank for a section of its employees while orders from a pharma company and a sports body are in pipeline. Bhatia has also pitched the fabric to its existing over 150 customers – Indian Navy, PVR, Starbucks, McDonald’s, and others — in its traditional fabric business. “If businesses adopt recycled fabric, then the least they would do is offset their daily consumption of plastic in their offices such as disposables,” he added.

While UNIREC was launched right before Covid struck in early 2020, it wasn’t operational until late last year. The company currently makes 2,000 recycled garments every month that are retailed via its online portal. UNIREC would now expand through the e-commerce channel.

On the corporate side, it aims to add over 150 brands to its portfolio. “This year we are targeting to sell at least 1 lakh garments. As of now, the revenue is less than a crore but we would easily be ramping up to around Rs 4 crore by end of 2022,” said Bhatia.

In order to phase out single-use plastic by 2022, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change had notified the Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules, 2021, in August last year. The rules prohibited single-use plastic items with low utility and high littering potential. These items included earbuds with plastic sticks, plastic sticks for balloons, plastic flags, candy sticks, ice-cream sticks, thermocol for decoration, plates, cups, glasses, cutlery such as forks, spoons, knives, straw, trays, wrapping or packing films around sweet boxes, invitation cards, and cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, and stirrers.

According to a statement by the ministry, India had piloted a resolution on addressing single-use plastic products pollution in the 4th United Nations Environment Assembly held in 2019.

The Indian textile and apparel market was pegged at $100 billion in FY19 and is likely to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 12 per cent to reach the $220-billion mark by 2025-26, as per India Brand Equity Foundation.

Source: financialexpress.com– Feb 09, 2022

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