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85.74	100.11	117.48	0.59

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US to see real GDP growth of 1.7% in 2025, 1.6% in 2026: S&P Global

S&P Global Ratings recently forecast below-potential US real gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 1.7 per cent in 2025 (up 0.2 percentage points from its previous expectation in May) and 1.6 per cent in 2026 as growth is restrained by slower population growth, tariffs, government cost-cutting, lower immigration level and a more uncertain operating environment for many businesses.

It thinks real GDP growth will weaken to 1.1 per cent by the fourth quarter (Q4) of 2025 from 2.5 per cent in Q4 2024.

It expects weaker growth in the near-term to soften the US labour market further in the next 12 months, with the unemployment rate rising to 4.6 per cent by the first half of next year, before gradually returning to its long-run average of 4.1 per cent by mid-2027. It believes tariffs will settle below their April peak in the coming months, but still materially higher than 2024, and therefore, anticipates core consumer price inflation of 3-3.5 per cent by the end of the year.

The Federal Reserve's funds rate is expected to be 3.75-4 per cent by end-2025 and will reach its nominal neutral of 3-3.25 per cent by end-2026, S&P Global Ratings said in a release. It thinks the US economy's resilience will wear a little thin in the second half of this year, when growth slips below trend and the unemployment rate rises. While the rating agency's base case is that the United States will avoid recession in the near term, it thinks the risk of a downturn is elevated despite the country's solid growth momentum at the start of the year.

There's a 30-35 per cent probability of a downturn starting in the next 12 months—notably higher than the post-World War II unconditional recession probability of 13 per cent, S&P Global Ratings noted. Uncertainty around trade, deregulation, fiscal policy, geopolitics, and immigration remains elevated.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 26, 2025

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US manufacturing slows in June amid tariff-driven inflation: S&P

US manufacturing activity continued expanding in June but at a slower pace, with growth dampened by falling exports and renewed inflationary pressures largely linked to tariffs. The US manufacturing PMI registered 52.8 in June, slightly down from 53 in May, reflecting the third-strongest output gain this year but remaining well below late—2024 highs, according to S&P Global.

Export orders declined in June, undermining total new business growth, though domestic demand remained strong. Stock building surged, as manufacturers accelerated input purchases to hedge against rising prices and potential supply disruptions. Input buying rose at the fastest pace in 37 months, driving inventories of both inputs and finished goods to near-record levels.

Manufacturing prices spiked, with input and output costs rising at the fastest rate since July 2022. Nearly two-thirds of manufacturers citing higher input costs attributed them to tariffs, and over half linked raised selling prices to the same. Price increases pushed overall inflation to the second-highest level since the start of 2023, signalling a potential rise in consumer inflation to around 4 per cent in the coming months, S&P Global Market Intelligence said in an economics commentary.

Employment in manufacturing rose at the sharpest pace in a year, as firms attempted to meet growing workloads. June saw the first rise in backlogs since September 2022, contributing to these jobs rebound. Despite the positive hiring trend, business confidence dipped slightly, reflecting persistent uncertainty over trade policy and tariffs. While manufacturing sentiment improved marginally, concerns over policy volatility under the new Trump administration lingered.

With inflation surging and growth slowing, analysts expect the Federal Reserve to keep interest rates unchanged at 4.25—4.5 per cent through the rest of 2025, adopting a cautious 'wait and see' approach. The forecast projects GDP growth under 1.5 per cent for the year—marking the weakest performance since 2009, excluding the pandemic.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 26, 2025

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China's textile dominance is reshaping Africa's fashion future

Africa's textile and apparel industry is undergoing a significant transformation, driven overwhelmingly by Chinese investment, trade policy and industrial strategy. While European nearshoring efforts focus on sustainability and proximity, China's approach—combining infrastructure, manufacturing and market access—has positioned it as the continent's undisputed industrial architect.

China-Africa bilateral trade hit a record $282 billion in 2023, underscoring a shift from mere trade to co-production, and Beijing is reshaping Africa's industrial landscape through factories, ports and policy.

Export surge

China's zero-tariff policy, effective since December 2024, grants duty-free access to 33 African nations, directly boosting exports. This month, China announced plans to remove tariffs for an additional twenty countries, granting them duty-free access to the world's largest consumer market.

While agricultural commodities like coffee and cocoa have reaped immediate benefits, the policy's most strategic impact lies in textiles and apparel. By eliminating tariffs on value-added goods, China is incentivising African nations to move beyond raw material exports and establish competitive manufacturing hubs. Kenya's horticulture sector, for example, already a $1 billion industry, is leveraging this policy to target premium Chinese markets via e-commerce platforms like Alibaba. Similarly, South African wine and organic cosmetics are gaining ground against European imports.

But the real game-changer is in fabrics and apparel. At the June 2025 China-Africa Textile and Garment Industry Cooperation Event in Changsha, officials unveiled plans to upgrade relations from "product export" to "co-construction of production capacity."

This shift is already materialising in Ethiopia, where Chinese-backed industrial parks like Hawassa and Mekelle have positioned the country as a fast-fashion alternative to Asia. Now, with the $700 million Addis

Tomorrow Special Economic Zone underway, Ethiopia is doubling down on its role as a textile export hub.

Full supply chains

China's strategy extends beyond tariff concessions. It is building end-to-end supply chains, integrating African cotton cultivation with spinning, weaving, and garment finishing. In Egypt, Lutai Group's $385 million vertically integrated mill—capable of spinning, weaving, and sewing shirts for export—exemplifies this model. Nearby, the $17 million Hightex decorative-fabrics plant in the Suez Canal Economic Zone will produce 20 million metres of cloth annually. Egypt now hosts over 2,800 active Chinese companies, with cumulative investments exceeding $8 billion, and plans for a dedicated Chinese textile city in Minya are advancing.

Morocco, too, is emerging as a critical node. The Mohammed VI Tangier Tech City, a 950-hectare industrial zone, is attracting Chinese giants like Sunrise Group, which is investing $240 million in textile plants. The zone's proximity to Europe, coupled with Morocco's free-trade agreements, makes it an ideal bridge for Chinese manufacturers targeting EU and US markets.

Challenges: Imbalances and Sustainability

Yet, this boom is not without friction. Trade imbalances persist. In early 2025, China's apparel exports to Africa still dwarfed African shipments to China, reinforcing Africa's role as a market rather than an equal partner. According to data from Fibre2Fashion's market intelligence tool TexPro, for the full year 2024, China's apparel exports totalled $153.408 billion, of which $7.256 billion (4.73 per cent) was shipped to Africa. Apparel imports from Africa during the year amounted to $208.323 million, representing 2.13 per cent of China's total apparel imports of $9.757 billion.

Meanwhile, the influx of cheap Chinese polyester and counterfeit prints continues to stifle local industries in countries like Nigeria, where textile imports from China are estimated at $6 billion annually.

Sustainability tensions also loom. While Europe pushes North African suppliers like Tunisia and Morocco to adopt circular production methods—recycled cotton exports from Tunisia jumped from 1.1 per cent in 2022 to 10.2 per cent in 2024—Chinese investments have faced scrutiny over environmental standards. African manufacturers, caught between Western sustainability demands and Chinese cost efficiency, warn that buyers want 'green' production but resist paying premium prices.

The Road Ahead

Africa's textile ascent hinges on leveraging Chinese capital while asserting control over value chains. The China-Africa Economic and Trade Expo, with $7 billion in proposed projects for 2025, signals deepening ties. True success, however, will require policies that ensure technology transfer, local ownership, and environmental accountability.

For now, China's dominance is unchallenged. From Ethiopia's industrial parks to Egypt's spinning mills and Morocco's export hubs, Beijing is not just investing in Africa's textile future—it is defining it. The question is whether African nations can harness this momentum to build self-sustaining industries, or if they risk becoming permanent secondary players in China's global supply chain.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 26, 2025

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In-Store Returns for Online Orders Are Crushing Retailers, Survey Shows

While online shopping has been a boon to many businesses, in-store returns are proving a crushing burden for retailers.

In fact, 43 percent say handling returns stemming from e-commerce purchases is one of their foremost challenges, according to a recent survey from Retail Systems Research (RSR) and retail technology provider Jumpmind. Those same retailers also said increases in return volumes has created new expenses due to employee workload and processing costs.

At the same time, retailers aren't capitalizing on what has been characterized as an upside of in-store returns: the chance to entice shoppers into another sale. The added touchpoint isn't actually providing them with much sales lift, the study showed, with just 17 percent of consumers spending more money during their returns visit.

That's a far grimmer estimate than retailers anticipated; 72 percent of those surveyed believe that in-person returns create new opportunities for in-store sales. While 40 percent do look for a similar item to exchange (perhaps in a different size or color), a full 43 percent simply return their purchase and walk out.

The study, which surveyed retail and store managers between December 2024 and January 2025, underscored the idea that while e-commerce has given shoppers convenience and near-unlimited product selection, that access has led to an unintended consequence for retailers—namely, a deluge of returns. The average return rate for online buys is three times higher than the rate for in-store purchases given practices like "bracketing," or buying the same product in different sizes with the intent to return what doesn't fit.

The practice might be beneficial for shoppers, but it's costing retailers money. According to the study's research, average return costs for retailers amount to between 15 and 30 percent of the original purchase price—a total impact of $550 billion per year. Notably, most retailers urge online shoppers to return unwanted purchases in stores to avoid the cost of shipping and handling.

But more than one in every 5 retailers also said their stores aren't equipped for advanced customer service functions, from online returns to online order pickups, despite 41 percent saying they know omnichannel fulfillment and returns require new tools, roles and workflows. A sour experience can leave a bad taste in a consumer's mouth—and that impression can be lasting. Ease of returns is often cited by shoppers as a top reason that they choose to shop at certain stores, and those that have modern processes in place for quick, seamless transactions tend to win out.

"Those retailers whose returns processes have not been overhauled since their (likely) creation during the pandemic are particularly challenged, as the processes they cobbled together in a hurry are not fit for today's scale of returns," Steve Rowen, managing partner at RSR, said in a statement. In fact, 65 percent of retailers reported that their current technology can't support "the future of shopping."

"The ability to accept a return is one thing; the ability to profitably handle that merchandise is far more complex," Rowen said. Lauren Cevallos, head of strategy and customer service at Jumpmind, noted that retailers are leaving money on the table by not optimizing in-store returns. "Instead, the cost and complexity of handling online returns is weighing down retailers' store efficiency and profitability," she explained. "Many are using disparate and legacy systems that make the process more challenging—for both store associates and customers."

Still, some 80 percent of sales still take place in retail stores, so it's crucial that retailers revamp and enhance their returns processes. As it stands, just 30 percent of retailers with POS systems older than five years said they feel confident they're delivering an innovated and differentiated experience, compared with 73 percent of those that have upgraded their systems in the past two years.

"Unfortunately, shoppers don't have much empathy for tech that isn't up to par," analysts wrote. "Retailers must be equipped to process returns efficiently and cost effectively. And those who treat returns as a transactional afterthought risk rising costs and lower customer satisfaction."

Source: sourcingjournal.com– June 25, 2025

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UK manufacturing output falls, but decline expected to slow: CBI

Manufacturing output volumes fell in the quarter to June, at a similarly steep pace to the three months to May, according to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI). Looking ahead, however, firms anticipate that the pace of decline will slow over the three months to September.

In June, expectations for average selling price inflation eased to 19 per cent from 26 per cent in May, though they remained above the long-run average of 7 per cent. Output volumes declined sharply in the three months to June, with a weighted balance of -23 per cent, slightly improving from -25 per cent in the previous quarter, as per CBI's latest monthly Industrial Trends Survey (ITS).

Manufacturers expect a slower decline in output over the next three months, forecasting a balance of -5 per cent.

Output fell in 14 out of 17 sub-sectors, particularly in chemicals, metal products, and mechanical engineering. Total order books were reported as below normal at -33 per cent, down from -30 per cent in May and well below the long-run average of -14 per cent.

Export order books also remained below normal, with a balance of -26 per cent, largely unchanged from -29 per cent last month and beneath the long-run average of -18 per cent. Stocks of finished goods were considered more than adequate at 6 per cent, though this too fell below the long-run average of 12 per cent.

"The UK's manufacturing sector is under significant pressure, contending with high energy costs, rising labour costs, pervasive skills shortages, and a volatile global economic environment. With departmental budgets now set following the Spending Review, businesses are looking to the government to dismantle barriers to growth ahead of the Autumn Budget," said Ben Jones, lead economist at CBI.

"Welcome progress has been made with the recent infrastructure and industrial strategies setting a clear long-term economic vision for the UK. This is complemented by a US-UK trade deal expected to mitigate tariff uncertainty, especially for automotive and aerospace, and British Steel's agreement to provide 337,000 tonnes of rail track for network rail."

“With long-term strategies presented, the government must now continue to back up its ambitions with short-term delivery. This includes rolling out welcome energy cost interventions as soon as possible; delivering on growth and skills levy flexibility; and pushing technology adoption to boost productivity,” added Jones.

“Businesses are ready to work in partnership to translate long-term ambitions into near-term investments, job creation and opportunities.”

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 26, 2025

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Morocco, Turkiye deepen trade ties to tackle textile-driven imbalance

Morocco and Turkiye have agreed to step up cooperation to expand bilateral trade and address ongoing imbalances arising out of textile imports, it was announced after a free trade agreement (FTA) joint committee meeting held in Ankara recently.

The announcement followed Morocco’s review of the 2006 FTA (revised five years ago), prompted by a trade deficit that has reached around $3 billion, according to Morocco's official data. This imbalance has been driven primarily by textile imports, with Moroccan manufacturers heavily reliant on Turkish fabric.

Both sides reached a consensus to elevate their trade volume beyond the current $5 billion, guided by the principle of ‘win-win cooperation’, Turkish deputy trade minister Mustafa Tuzcu said.

The FTA forms the foundation of economic ties between the two nations, pointing to the increasingly active role Turkish firms are playing in Morocco’s investment landscape. “Our companies are becoming stronger actors in Morocco’s improving investment environment,” he noted.

Turkish investments in Morocco now exceed $1 billion, with contractors having completed infrastructure projects worth $4.3 billion to date, Tuzcu was cited as saying by Turkish media reports.

When the FTA was last revised, Morocco had imposed a 90-per cent tariff on Turkish textile and clothing products to safeguard local producers and preserve jobs.

Despite the measure, Moroccan companies continue to import Turkish textiles due to limited local production.

Omer Hjira, Morocco’s deputy minister of foreign trade, said the aim is to increase Morocco’s exports to Turkiye, while encouraging more Turkish investment in the former.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 25, 2025

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Vietnam's GDP growth projected to slow to 5.4% in 2025: IMF

Assuming that high US tariffs take effect in the third quarter (Q3) this year, economic growth in Vietnam is projected to slow to 5.4 per cent in 2025 and decelerate further in 2026, according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

However, if global trade tensions subside, the economic outlook would significantly improve, the IMF said after one of its teams recently concluded the 2025 Article IV consultation with Vietnamese authorities.

“The outlook is heavily dependent on the outcome of trade negotiations and is constrained by elevated global uncertainty on trade policies and economic growth,” the IMF team leader Paulo Medas noted.

“Downside risks are high. A further escalation in global trade tensions or a tightening of global financial conditions could weaken further exports and investment. Domestically, financial stress could re-emerge from tighter financial conditions and high corporate indebtedness,” he said.

“On the upside, achieving non-discriminatory trade agreements and successfully implementing planned infrastructure and structural reforms could significantly boost medium-term growth,” he said.

“Given the uncertain outlook, policy priorities should focus on preserving macro-financial stability while navigating economic adjustments.

Fiscal policy, supported by low level of public debt, should take the lead in cushioning the near-term impact, especially under downside scenarios. Accelerated implementation of public investment and strengthening social safety nets would be important,” medas observed.

“Monetary policy has much more limited room and should be decisively focused on anchoring inflation expectations.

Allowing the exchange rate flexibility will be critical as the economy adjusts to the external shock. Some monetary easing could be considered if global interest rates decline as expected and inflation falls,” he noted.

"Further efforts are needed to strengthen financial sector soundness. To bolster banking system resilience, priorities include strengthening bank supervision, build liquidity and capital buffers, and further improving the bank resolution framework," he added.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 25, 2025

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NATIONAL NEWS

BTA likely to reduce India's goods trade surplus with US, says Crisil

The imminent bilateral trade agreements (BTA) with the US is likely to reduce India's goods trade surplus with that country, according to a research report by Crisil. During the financial year 2024-25, India's trade surplus with the US stood at $41.18 billion, according to data of the Indian government.

The report said after completion of trade pact, India will be able to import more energy, certain agriculture products and defence equipment among others. Although the US is India's largest export partner, there is scope to increase exports further in areas like smartphones, pharmaceutical products and labour-intensive exports such as textiles, gems and jewellery, the report said.

The US announced reciprocal tariffs on India and a host of other nations in April 2025, and then paused the increase for 90 days from April 10 to negotiate trade deals with these countries.

As India negotiates a trade deal with the US in the form of BTA, the first tranche is expected to be completed by September this year.

The report said that India should be prepared to see more imports from the US under BTA. This is because India's tariffs are much higher than the US and bringing these down would benefit the exporters in the US.

India's exports, however, are unlikely to see a major spike because the focus of the US administration is to reduce the trade deficit with India and most of the top exports are already duty-free.

The US is not only the world's largest economy, but also the world's largest importer, according to the report.

Source: business-standard.com– June 25, 2025

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Plurilateral agreements may help keep WTO relevant into the future

Earlier this month Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director general of the World Trade Organization (WTO), in her lecture at the London School of Economics, emphasised the need to speak up for the multilateral institution, particularly when the dominant funding economy has chosen to suppress its voice and relevance. Her statement augurs well for the WTO, which stands at a crossroads in terms of its fundamental processes and the objective of promoting freer and fairer trade. While there has been much talk about the United States blocking appointments to the Appellate Body of the Dispute Settlement Mechanism, the decline of the institution, in terms of both long-drawn negotiations and a lack of substantive outcomes, has long preceded this development.

It is well known that the expansion of membership of the WTO, from 23 founding members of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), to 128 in 1994 when GATT transitioned to the WTO, to 166 in 2024, has not been without challenge. Consensus based resolution of significant issues such as agricultural subsidies, non-agricultural market access, and services liberalisation has been hard to achieve, given the varied interests and sensitivities of developed, developing, and least-developed member countries.

The agreements on trade facilitation and, more recently, on fisheries subsidies were concluded after prolonged and difficult negotiations, each stretching over more than a decade. While a persistent negotiating impasse on major issues has resulted in the WTO's first and only trade liberalisation "round", the Doha Development Agenda, being effectively suspended, most ministerial meetings have ended up with only administrative decisions related to the implementation of earlier agreements. The rules and provisions at the WTO have hence undergone limited, if any, evolution beyond what was achieved in the last round of GATT.

However, the imperatives of evolving global trade, which is increasingly driven by global value chains (GVCs), have led to free trade agreements (FTAs) and issue-based plurilateral agreements (PAs) becoming the alternative routes for rule-making. The FTAs, permitted under GATT Article XXIV and involving liberalisation of "substantially all trade" among two or more member economies, have witnessed remarkable proliferation in the 21st century. From less than 100 in 2000, the number of FTAs notified to the WTO is well over 600 in 2025.

Along with an increase in their number, FTAs have also acquired greater depth, with most now encompassing a substantial number of higher-grade provisions related to intellectual property, investment and services liberalisation, and environment and sustainable governance (ESG). Once criticised for overlapping membership and consequent complexity of rules of origin across multiple FTAs, mega regional trade agreements, particularly those with common and cumulative rules of origin, have contributed to the ease of FTA utilisation for member economies. A large number of developing economies have been benefitted, through their participation in FTAs, and increased their integration with GVCs and their share of global trade.

The PAs, also under the aegis of the WTO, and initiated by a subset of like-minded member nations on specific issues or sectors, have however progressed at a much slower pace than FTAs. The first PA under the WTO was the Information Technology Agreement signed in 1996, whereby participating nations provided duty-free trade for a set of identified information technology products to all WTO members. In more recent times, though PAs on new-age policy areas such as e-commerce, investment facilitation, and alternative interim dispute settlement process have been initiated, participation of major economies and conclusive negotiations have been hard to achieve.

In fact, PAs have been contentious, as the interested subset of member economies initiating negotiations on a specific issue is sometimes considered as not fully representative of the entire WTO membership. Consequently, the exclusivity of PAs engenders apprehensions of possible power play in agenda-setting and the according of a first-mover advantage in rule-setting to participant nations. This is viewed not just as undermining the consensus -based approach of negotiations that is integral to the WTO, but also as negating the long struggle of developing countries post-Uruguay Round in establishing development as the avowed objective of the Doha Development Agenda while keeping “non-trade” issues at bay. However, much has since changed in the context of global trade.

Firstly, the underlying mechanism of the 21st Century GVC-led global trade needs to be understood as an inextricable nexus between liberalisation of trade in goods, investment and services. An appropriate set of rules and regulatory framework in each of these domains is therefore necessary to facilitate global trade. Secondly, issues classified as "non-trade" by some economies, including India, and being resisted for negotiations under the PA route are already covered in greater depth in FTAs. For example, while plurilateral negotiations on investment facilitation are being challenged by some WTO members, investment chapters in most FTAs of the 21st century go well beyond investment facilitation to include deeper provisions on investment protection, investor-state dispute resolution, and intellectual property rights. Similarly, ESG-related provisions, many of which were long considered as non-trade issues, have seen a significant increase in FTAs in the 2010s. Thirdly, where PA negotiations do not take off or are long delayed, interested countries have opted for sector-specific bilateral agreements outside of the WTO. For example, US-Japan and Australia-Singapore signed a bilateral digital trade agreement in 2020. More recently, the EU and South Korea concluded a digital trade agreement in March 2025. Fourthly, we are in an era of growing protectionist unilateralism and trade policy uncertainty. There is, therefore, a greater need for consistency in global trade rules.

Given these developments, it may be more appropriate to expend negotiating capital on defining the rules for participation and negotiation in these plurilateral formulations with "variable geometry," rather than persist with a futile pursuit of elusive consensus-based decision-making processes at the WTO. This would require alternative mechanisms, perhaps in terms of determining a threshold share of global trade for nations initiating a discussion in a plurilateral formation, or in terms of a majority rule to identify issues that can be taken up for negotiation under the aegis of a plurilateral formulation. Simultaneously, an effort should be made to deal with the issues of legality in including PA-negotiated outcomes as rules in the WTO.

In order to prevent the WTO from being consigned to the sidelines, catering only to routine administrative measures on past agreements, and to assist its evolution in consonance with the imperatives of a fast-developing global trade context, a combination of alternative instruments — FTAs and PAs — is required. The latter entails serious cooperative efforts to redefine the decision-making process at the WTO.

Source: business-standard.com– June 25, 2025

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Outline for GST 2.0: Steps that will make it a good and simple tax

The eight-year journey of goods and services tax (GST) has been much like the mythological story of the churning of the ocean by the devas: The toxins of transition, aided by technical glitches in the system software, surfaced early — but now we are seeing the nectar of higher revenues, with two consecutive months of gross GST revenues exceeding ₹2 trillion.

While GST reform was truly transformational, some work remains. The tariff winds are nudging policymakers to rationalise GST rates. The key point here is that rate rationalisation should not be viewed in isolation as a revenue exercise, but as one integrated with trade policy and broader macroeconomic objectives. In its trade negotiations with the UK, EU, and the US, India is seeking greater market access for labour-intensive manufacturing sectors such as textiles, leather, food processing, and toys. It logically follows that domestic taxes on products of these sectors must be at the merit rate under GST.

The critical question, then, is what that merit rate should be. There is a strong case for making the merit rate 8 per cent instead of 5 per cent. Otherwise, crucial input tax credits (ITC) will accumulate and these products will not be able to fully utilise ITC on key imports.

On the import policy side, all single-use inputs and intermediates used in these four sectors should bear zero import duty, along with a waiver of all non-trade barriers, including quality control orders. This integration between GST rate rationalisation and trade policy will stimulate employment by raising the employment elasticity of investment, which has dropped from 0.44 in 2000 to 0.16 in 2024.

Once we have the merit rate of 8 per cent, we can merge the 12 per cent slab into the 18 per cent standard rate after bringing medicines and textiles to the merit rate. With this, the textile sector, which has a dual rate of 5 per cent (for cotton yarn and lower-value apparel) and 12 per cent (for higher-value apparel), will uniformly bear the single merit rate of 8 per cent. In addition, bringing all food products under the merit rate will remove the multiplicity of classification disputes currently widely commented upon in the media.

The next step in the rationalisation exercise is to phase out all exemptions. The guiding principle should be to restrict exemptions to those that were value-added tax-exempt in the pre-GST regime, as recommended by the Committee on Dual Control, Threshold & Exemptions in its 2015 report. The non-exempted products would move to the merit rate.

Another area of rationalisation is the thinning of items in the 28 per cent slab. All durable white goods — including air conditioners and dishwashers — should be moved to the 18 per cent slab. This would expand the market for these products, making domestic investment more viable. Similarly, two-wheelers should also be brought under the 18 per cent slab.

Finally, the big-ticket change would be bringing cement down from 28 per cent to 18 per cent. While this will result in significant revenue loss, it would be partly offset by reduced expenditure on construction projects. The measure would also give a boost to affordable housing, which is currently lagging.

To compensate for the revenue loss from cement, the government should raise the duty on gold and gold ornaments from 3 per cent to 6 per cent. According to an NCAER study, the top two income deciles account for over 80 per cent of the purchase and sale of these items. The tradeoff may be justifiable on grounds of equity.

The biggest complexity in the GST system arises from the compensation cess, levied at different rates using different measures on sin goods like cigarettes, aerated water and pan masala. As the cess is set to expire next year, this is an opportunity to merge it into the general rate of 40 per cent, levied on an ad valorem basis uniformly on all sin goods. At present, if we factor in the compensation cess and add it to the 28 per cent rate, the overall rate ranges from 36 per cent to 38 per cent.

This can be rounded off to 40 per cent to raise the average GST incidence, which has declined since the pre-GST era. The rationalisation exercise can also be used to green the GST.

All electric vehicles, regardless of size, should be moved from the current 28 per cent slab to 18 per cent. This would result in a three-tier slab structure of 8, 18 and 40 per cent, with minimal exemptions and the phasing out of multiple cess rates.

The proposed GST structure would achieve several objectives — simplify the rate structure, eliminate multiple cesses, boost labour-intensive manufacturing, and green the GST. It would also raise the incidence of GST duties from the present level of around 12 per cent without stoking inflationary pressures. A wide section of the population would benefit from lower taxes on mass-consumption goods such as medicines, clothing, and affordable housing.

Further, integrating GST rationalisation with trade policy will stimulate foreign and domestic investments in labour-intensive manufacturing by lowering the cost of doing business. The GST 2.0 structure outlined above could be followed later by GST 3.0. Its implementation would require expanding GST coverage to sectors such as electricity, real estate, and parts of the petroleum sector — a move that would significantly impact factor market reforms.

To forge consensus with the states, a white paper — perhaps prepared by the chief economic adviser in consultation with the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)—should be submitted to the NITI Aayog for circulation and discussion. This could then be brought to the GST council for acceptance.

In conclusion, the suggested rationalisation exercise will make GST a good and simple tax. The GST journey also offers a lesson for other reforms, demonstrating what can be achieved when the Centre and the States sincerely embrace cooperative federalism.

Source: business-standard.com– June 23, 2025

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Lower US tariffs on textile items can make India competitive: CRISIL

The US-India bilateral trade agreement (BTA) under negotiation will likely lead to reduction in India's goods trade surplus with the United States, and India would be able to import more energy products, certain agriculture products and defence equipment, among others, from the latter, according to CRISIL.

Although the United States is India's largest export partner, there is scope to increase exports further in areas like smartphones, certain pharma products and labour-intensive exports like textiles and gems and jewellery, the S&P Global company said in a note.

As the first tranche of the proposed BTA is targeted to be completed by the fall of 2025, India should be prepared to see more imports from the United States as India's tariffs are much higher than those of the United States and bringing these down would be advantageous to US exporters.

CRISIL does foresee some scope for India to increase its exports to the United States.

Textile products are among the major exports to the United States that attract tariffs. Lower tariffs under the BTA can help India compete with other major textile exporters like Bangladesh, China and Vietnam.

While some textile products like toilet linen, kitchen linen and bed linen already have a considerable market share (which should get bolstered by the tariff reduction), the market penetration is low for products in the readymade garment (RMG) space, CRISIL noted. These stand to gain with a tariff reduction.

"Synergies in textile trade can be enhanced from a zero or reduced duty on India's import of cotton from the US, particularly as India's cotton production is declining. This can help cater to the rising demand for RMG from the US, provided the duties on such imports are reduced," it added.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 26, 2025

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No sign of panic among Indian exporters; shift to Cape of Good Hope route

Amid uncertainties over the Iran-Israel ceasefire, Indian exporters remain largely relieved, indicating that most of their shipments remain unaffected so far. Nearly 96 per cent of India's container traffic has already shifted to the Cape of Good Hope route. From automobile majors like Bajaj to textile industry players, most sectors are now targeting the US, European, and African markets via this alternative route, amid the ongoing instability in West Asia. According to industry players, the minimal Indian cargo navigating through the Strait of Hormuz and Red Sea has not faced any disruption so far.

"We have already started an increase in freight to Europe, Latin America, and Africa. There will be delays in shipping schedules, by around 10 days, due to re-routing through the Cape of Good Hope route," said Rakesh Sharma, executive director, Bajaj Auto. However, automakers fear a possible rise in freight and insurance rates.

Iran controls the northern side of the Strait of Hormuz, a passage which handles a good share of global trade. "Already 96 per cent of the container traffic is taking this route. We are not facing any issue at this point. The Cape of Good Hope takes some extra time. However, the freight rates are also down to Europe compared to what they were a year ago," said Sunil Vaswani, Executive Director, Container Shipping Lines Association.

While the shipments to Europe, the US, and Africa remain unaffected, the only concern for the Indian industry is the West Asia markets. "We are not facing any impact at all, as West Asia's share of our exports is minuscule. For the three major consumers—the US, Europe, and the UK—we are taking the Cape of Good Hope already," said Elangovan Viswanathan, president of the Buying Agents Association in the textile sector, and managing director of SNQS Internationals.

To tap the West Asian market, the Indian industry is exploring alternate points like Fujairah port in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the Gulf of Oman and Salalah port in Oman.

Source: business-standard.com– June 24, 2025

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Trade pacts with US, EU, India may not boost short-term UK growth: S&P

The United Kingdom's trade agreements with the United States, the European Union (EU) and India will do little to boost economic growth in the short term as they are either too narrow, or, in the case of the UK-US trade deal, still leave exporters worse off than before, according to S&P Global Ratings.

The US-UK agreement has not yet been implemented in full. When this will happen, and exactly what shape the agreement will take, are still uncertain. In addition, the agreement still leaves tariffs higher than they were before, at 10 per cent for most products, it noted.

"Even if the UK is slightly better off in terms of trade with the US than other countries, UK-US trade will still be lower than it would have been under the tariffs before April 2, 2025," S&P Global Ratings said.
The UK-EU agreement is narrow in scope, even if it suggests that the United Kingdom may have put Brexit aside in favour of cooperation.

Finally, the country's trade agreement with India will give British exporters more options as they seek to diversify their trading partners. However, even if India is a fast-growing market, the UK-India trade deal is smaller in terms of economic significance than the UK's narrow deal with the EU, according to British Treasury estimate, i.e., £4.8 billion versus £9.0 billion in the long run.

India is a smaller trading partner, buying only around 2 per cent of total UK goods exports in the past 12 months, compared with around 64 per cent for the EU and United States combined, S&P Global noted.

The UK economy is weaker than it looks from the first quarter (Q1 2025) statistics and has shed 280,000 jobs in the past 12 months, it observed.

Surveys point to subdued demand, especially in manufacturing, and consumers continue to save much more than they have historically.

The Bank of England (BoE) will continue to take a gradual approach to cutting rates, as volatile economic data continue to point to elevated price pressures even though the labour market is cooling down. S&P Global expects one rate cut per quarter until February 2026, which should help investment and consumption rebound more quickly.

The country's economy expanded by 0.7 per cent quarter on quarter in Q1 2025.

Consumers have continued to lower their expectations for the economy. This is likely to be motivating higher savings than usual, preventing a stronger recovery in household spending.

Retail sales dropped by 2.6 per cent in May 2025, reversing earlier yearly gains.

The UK gross domestic product is likely to contract in the second quarter, reflecting the subdued trends and a drop-off in trade with the United States, as the new tariffs have now kicked in. Exports to the United States were already 31 per cent down month on month in April this year.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 25, 2025

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As sowing season nears end, cotton belt in north likely to shrink further

Despite a little rebound in Punjab, cotton sowing in Haryana and Rajasthan remains sluggish as the 2024-25 season nears its end. The northern cotton belt is once again staring at a potential decline in the total area under the crop, compounding fears already triggered by erratic weather and pest attacks.

Punjab has so far covered 1.13 lakh hectares under cotton sowing, Haryana (3.80 lakh ha), Rajasthan (5.17 lakh ha) including both the upper and lower regions. With sowing almost concluded and monsoon timelines tightening, agricultural officials in both the states are expressing cautious optimism, but admit that matching previous year's acreage looks unlikely.

In contrast, Punjab has defined the trend a bit by marking a 15% increase in cotton sowing this year — coming out from a historic low, yet just a partial recovery. In 2023-24, Punjab's cotton area had crashed to just below 1 lakh hectares, a sharp decline from 2.14 lakh hectares the previous year (2022-23) — a whopping over 50% reduction.

In Haryana, this year's figures are quite low as compared to 4.76 lakh hectares in 2023-24 and from 5.78 lakh hectares in 2022-23. Now, the officials are hoping to touch 4 lakh hectares by the season's end. In Rajasthan, the crop has seen a significant downfall in two years as it was 6.62 lakh hectares last year (2024-25), which was down from 10.04 lakh hectares in 2023-24. the delayed sowing continuing until June-end.

Collectively, the northern region has witnessed 10.10 lakh hectares so far, which is around 2.35 lakh hectares less from last year when the area under the crop in three states was 12.35 lakh hectares and around 7.86 lakh hectares less than 2023-24, when the total area under cotton in three states was 17.96 lakh hectares.

The once-thriving northern cotton belt is now losing the ground fast. Officials in Punjab, meanwhile, said their area is shrinking due to frequent pest attacks on the crop and the availability of ground water to the farmers of Punjab cotton belt, making them prefer assured paddy crop over cotton now.

Haryana attributes the sluggish sowing to a delay in water release from Punjab's Bhakra canal system in May and June, which slowed irrigation cycles. "The cotton area remained low this year due to water shortages, but we hope to achieve 4 lakh hectares," a senior official from the Haryana Agriculture Department said.

In Rajasthan, the sowing season was delayed due to hot weather conditions as several farmers are even required to sow the crop twice or thrice, a senior officer from the Rajasthan Agriculture Department said, adding that this pushed back the optimal planting window.

"We expect the sowing to continue until June-end, but the full recovery of last year's acreage is unlikely," a state agriculture officer said.

Beyond weather and water, cotton growers across all these three states have been battling the persistent pink bollworm infestation, which has decimated yields and eroded the farmers' confidence. Punjab has been the worst affected, with some experts urging the state to rope in entomologists and pest management scientists to curb the pest menace. Notably, the state once cultivated over 8 lakh hectares under cotton in the early 2000s — a fraction of what it grows now.

The shrinking cotton cultivation area in the North region comprising Punjab, Haryana, Upper Rajasthan, and Lower Rajasthan has resulted in modest cotton production this year compared to the previous year.

In Punjab, cotton production was only 1.50 lakh bales (of 170 kg each) in 2024-25 (up to April 30 this year) compared to 3.65 lakh bales in 2023-24 during the same period. In Haryana, production dropped to 6.98 lakh bales from 13.30 lakh bales last year. Upper Rajasthan produced 9.77 lakh bales, and Lower Rajasthan produced 8.60 lakh bales compared to 15.47 lakh bales and 13.20 lakh bales, respectively, in the previous year.

The North zone's contribution to the total national cotton production fell to just 10% this year, down from 14% last year (as of April-end). The primary cause of this decline is the reduction in the cotton-growing area, particularly in Punjab, which is a growing concern.

For the 2024-25 season, the minimum support price (MSP) announced by the Central government is Rs 7,710 per quintal for medium staple cotton and Rs 8,110 per quintal for long staple cotton. Farmers can typically harvest eight to 12 quintals of cotton per acre, provided there is no pest attack and weather conditions remain favorable. In North, farmers predominantly grow medium staple cotton.

The decline in cotton production has severely impacted Punjab’s once-thriving ginning and spinning industry. “We were expecting a significant increase in cotton acreage this season in the northern states, especially in Haryana and Rajasthan.

However, it is disappointing the actual area under cotton is far below expectations. This will further hurt the ginning industry, which is under stress. Since 2004, around 400 ginning units have been shut down, and only 22 are functional,” Bhagwan Bansal, president of Punjab Ginners’ Association, said.

Source: indianexpress.com– June 26, 2025

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CBIC streamlines review, revision and appeal in DGGI notice cases

To provide faster dispute resolution, the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) has developed a detailed mechanism for reviewing, revising, and appealing adjudicating orders in show-cause notices issued by the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI). Experts feel such a mechanism will mainly help banking, insurance, online gaming, real estate, e-commerce, hospitality, FMCG, and logistics resolve GST disputes.

A circular issued by CBIC said that the mechanism aims “to ensure uniformity in the procedure for review, revision, and appeal against the Orders-in-Original (O-I-Os) adjudicated by Common Adjudicating Authorities.” According to Rajat Mohan, Senior Partner at AMRG & Associates, over the past few years, the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI) has significantly widened the scope of its investigations, targeting sectors with complex supply chains, digital business models, or aggressive tax positions. These include banking, insurance, online gaming, real estate, e-commerce, hospitality, FMCG, and logistics—each facing large-scale scrutiny involving multi-jurisdictional transactions and intricate valuation issues.

Principal commissioner named as reviewing authority

“While such investigations are essential for preserving the integrity of the GST regime, they have often resulted in procedural uncertainty for taxpayers, especially when show cause notices were adjudicated by Common Adjudicating Authorities (CAAs) without clarity on the appellate or revisional process. This created delays in legal remedy, compliance fatigue, and a risk of double jeopardy in cases spanning multiple states,” he said.

Now, the circular prescribes the Principal Commissioner or Commissioner of Central Tax under whom the Common Adjudicating Authority (Additional/ Joint Commissioner) is posted shall be the reviewing authority regarding O-I-Os. An appeal can be made before the Commissioner (Appeals). The review and appeal process will be carried out under Section 107 of the CGST Act, which empowers any aggrieved party to appeal within three months of the decision.

Section 108 of the CGST Act prescribes that a Revisional Authority can review any GST-related decision or order made by a subordinate officer if it thinks it is wrong and negatively affects government revenue. The circular says designates the Principal Commissioner or Commissioner of Central Tax under whom the Common Adjudicating Authority (Additional/ Joint Commissioner) is posted as the Revisional Authority.
Relief for sectors under DGGI scrutiny

“The reviewing or revisional authority for such orders may seek comments on the O-I-O from the concerned DGGI formation before proceeding to decide on the order passed by the CAA,” the circular said.

According to experts, this circular provides long-awaited relief by clearly designating the appropriate reviewing, revisional, and appellate authorities based on the CAA’s territorial posting. For taxpayers, this brings predictability, faster dispute resolution, and procedural safeguards—particularly relevant in recent high-stakes investigations involving fake ITC networks, offshore gaming portals, and shell-company-linked financial frauds.

“This structural reform is a step toward restoring trust and balance in the enforcement process and is likely to significantly reduce litigation arising from technical jurisdictional errors. It also improves confidence among compliant businesses, especially in sectors that are under sustained regulatory watch,” Mohan concluded.

Source: thehindubusinessline.com– June 25, 2025

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Tiruppur, India's knitwear powerhouse defies odds, challenges global giants

In the global textile manufacturing market, where countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam leverage preferential trade agreements (FTAs) to dominate export markets, India's Tiruppur stands as a remarkable anomaly. Dubbed the 'Knitwear Capital of India' this unassuming city in Tamil Nadu has, against all odds, transformed itself into a global manufacturing powerhouse, demonstrating an astonishing trajectory of growth and resilience.

From a modest $1.21 million in 1985 (Rs 15 crore), Tiruppur's textile exports are confirmed to have risen to over $4.71 billion (Rs 40,000 crore) in fiscal year 2024-25, almost 2,667-fold increase and a consistent 22 per cent CAGR over four decades. This phenomenal success story is not just about numbers; it's about an unparalleled ecosystem, a dedicated workforce, and a strategic vision that has allowed Tiruppur to carve out a significant niche on the world stage.

A self-contained ecosystem of efficiency

One of Tiruppur's most formidable strengths lies in its integrated industrial ecosystem. Boasting an estimated 28,000 manufacturing units, the city covers every stage of the textile value chain within its own geographical confines. From knitting and dyeing to printing, embroidery, and final garmenting, the entire process is meticulously managed within Tiruppur. This vertical integration drastically reduces lead times, cuts logistical costs, and allows for unparalleled quality control and flexibility – factors that are highly prized by global brands.

"The ability to control every aspect of production under one roof gives us a significant edge," explains A Sakthivel, President, Tiruppur Exporters' Association (TEA), a collective representing 1,400 exporters. "We can respond quickly to changing fashion trends and deliver orders with remarkable efficiency, even for complex designs and large volumes."

Dominating India's knitwear exports

Tiruppur's influence extends far beyond its export figures. In FY25, the city is projected to account for an astounding 90 per cent of India's total cotton knitwear exports and contribute a significant 55 per cent to the nation's overall knitwear exports. This dominance is not limited to international markets; Tiruppur also supplies apparel worth a staggering $3.18 billion (Rs 27,000 crore) for domestic consumption, cementing its role as a cornerstone of India's textile industry.

Empowered workforce

The economic ripple effect of Tiruppur's growth is profound. The industry directly employs 6 lakh people and indirectly supports another 2 lakh workers. What's particularly noteworthy is that 65 per cent of this direct workforce comprises semi-literate women workers from rural areas. Tiruppur has become a beacon of economic empowerment for these women, providing them with stable employment, skill development, and improved livelihoods. The industry's focus on inclusive growth has contributed significantly to social upliftment in the region.

Competing without the crutch of FTAs

Tiruppur's success story becomes even more compelling when considering the competitive landscape. Unlike major textile exporting nations such as Bangladesh and Vietnam, which benefit from extensive Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with key markets like the European Union and the United States, India often faces tariffs on its textile exports. Despite this disadvantage, Tiruppur has consistently demonstrated robust growth.

"We are growing at a rate of 15-18 per cent annually, and in FY25, Tiruppur's exports will cross $4.71 billion," states Sakthivel with confidence. This growth is a testament to the industry's ability to offer compelling value propositions beyond just price.

Global brands take notice

The quality, reliability, and efficiency offered by Tiruppur manufacturers have not gone unnoticed by global giants. Leading apparel brands such as Walmart, Primark, Tesco, Marks & Spencer, Warner Bros, and Tommy Hilfiger are actively placing fresh and substantial orders with Tiruppur units. The city exports approximately 35 per cent of its production to the European Union, another 35 per cent to the US, and around 10 per cent to the Middle East and Canada, underscoring its broad international appeal.

Resilience and innovation

There are numerous success stories within Tiruppur. For instance, many units have invested heavily in sustainable manufacturing practices, including zero-liquid discharge (ZLD) dyeing units and renewable energy sources, addressing growing environmental concerns of international buyers. This proactive approach to sustainability, often without direct government mandates, further enhances their appeal to ethically conscious brands.

Moreover, several companies have embraced technological advancements, integrating automation in various stages of production and adopting enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems to streamline operations and enhance efficiency. This continuous drive for innovation ensures that Tiruppur remains at the cutting edge of manufacturing capabilities.

What lies ahead…

While Tiruppur's journey has been extraordinary, challenges remain. The lack of FTAs continues to be a hurdle, putting Indian exporters at a tariff disadvantage. Additionally, rising labor costs and the need for continuous skill upgradation are ongoing concerns. However, the industry's historical ability to adapt and innovate suggests that Tiruppur is well-positioned to navigate these challenges.

The 'Knitwear Capital of India' is not just a regional success story; it's a powerful demonstration of how a focused industrial cluster, driven by entrepreneurship, innovation, and a dedicated workforce, can compete and thrive on the global stage, even without the preferential treatment enjoyed by its rivals. Tiruppur's journey serves as an inspiring blueprint for other aspiring manufacturing hubs, proving that homegrown excellence can indeed conquer global markets.

Source: fashionatingworld.com– June 25, 2025

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Indian polyester, viscose yarn up on fibre cost hike, export optimism

Polyester and viscose yarn prices surged by ₹2–4 per kg in the Indian yarn market. A recent price hike in virgin polyester fibre and renewed optimism following the ceasefire between Israel and Iran supported polyester yarn prices in the Ludhiana and Surat markets. Higher shipping freight charges, fluctuations in the Indian rupee–US dollar exchange rate, and increased demand also fuelled the price rise in viscose yarn.

Polyester spun and specialised yarns gained an additional ₹2–3 per kg. Last week, Indian virgin polyester fibre producers raised prices following a surge in crude oil. The US strike on Iranian nuclear sites had triggered fear and uncertainty, leading to a sharp rise in crude oil prices. However, prices dropped after the ceasefire announcement. A trader from the Surat market told Fibre2Fashion, "Polyester yarn prices surged as the recent increase in polyester fibre raised the cost of production. Demand from the consumer industry also improved, as the ceasefire reduced risks to international trade. There are now bright prospects for garment export orders from the West."

In Surat, 30 count polyester spun yarn was traded at ₹148-150 (~$1.72-1.74) per kg (GST extra); 40 count poly spun yarn at ₹165-167 (~$1.92-1.94) per kg; 50/48 fully drawn yarn (FDY) at ₹123-124 (~$1.43-1.44) per kg; 75/72 FDY at ₹114-115 (~$1.32-1.34) per kg; 75 bright yarn at ₹103-114 (~$1.20-1.32) per kg.

The Ludhiana market also recorded a rise in prices for PC and polyester spun yarn. Prices increased by up to ₹4 per kg for various products in the polyester value chain. According to a trader from Ludhiana, the price hike in virgin polyester fibre encouraged greater buying of polyester yarn. Buyers were keen to book polyester yarn in anticipation of further price increases.

In Ludhiana, 30 count PC combed yarn (48/52) traded at ₹202-210 (~$2.35-2.44) per kg (GST inclusive); 30 count PC carded yarn (65/35) at ₹190-200 (~$2.21-2.32) per kg; 20 recycled polyester yarn at ₹122-127 (~$1.42-1.48) per kg; 30 count polyester spun at ₹160-170 (~$1.86-1.97) per kg (GST inclusive); recycled polyester fibre (PET bottle fibre) at ₹80-82 (~$0.93-0.95) per kg and virgin polyester fibre at ₹103.50 (~$1.20) per kg.

Surat and Mumbai markets also witnessed gains in viscose yarn prices. In addition to optimism over higher export orders, a weaker Indian rupee against the US dollar increased the landed cost of imported supplies. Geopolitical tensions also caused a sharp rise in shipping freight charges, further raising the cost of imports. Trade sources in Mumbai reported that the cost of imported viscose rose due to the weaker rupee and elevated freight costs. Moreover, southern mills have reduced viscose yarn production, tightening market availability. Similarly, vortex yarn prices rose by ₹2–3 per kg in the Surat market due to strong demand. However, viscose compact yarn eased by ₹2 per kg, as the wider price gap with other viscose varieties discouraged demand.

In Mumbai, imported 30 count viscose vortex yarn was priced at ₹209-215 (~$2.43-2.50) per kg; and local 30 count ring-spun viscose yarn at ₹211-218 (~$2.45-2.53) per kg in this market. In Surat, 30 viscose compact yarn (local) was sold at ₹220-221 (~$2.56-2.57) per kg (GST extra) and 30 viscose vortex yarn at ₹208-210 (~$2.42-2.54) per kg.

In north India, cotton prices also increased by ₹10 per maund of 37.2 kg. Better demand and the rise in ICE cotton futures allowed sellers to raise their asking prices. A stronger ICE performance also encouraged buyers to make more deals. Trade sources noted that private ginners and stockists hold minimal cotton stocks. They remain cautious about releasing inventory, given the availability of time until the season ends in late September.

Cotton arrivals in north India totalled 550 bales (170 kg each), including 400 bales in Haryana and 150 in upper Rajasthan. No fresh arrivals were reported in lower Rajasthan and Punjab. Cotton prices in Punjab ranged from ₹5,740-5,750 (~$66.67–66.79) per maund of 37.2 kg; in Haryana, ₹5,540–5,600 (~$64.35–65.04); in upper Rajasthan, ₹5,700–5,810 (~$66.21–67.48); and in lower Rajasthan, prices stood at ₹53,500–54,900 (~$621.40–637.66) per candy of 356 kg.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– June 25, 2025

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