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The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council [TEXPROCIL]
Engineering Centre, 5th Floor, 9, Mathew Road, Mumbai - 400 004. Maharashtra State. INDIA
W. www.texprocil.org E. enews@texprocil.org T. +91-22-2363 2910 to 12 F. +91-22-2363 2914

IBTEX No. 73 of 2018 April 09, 2018

USD 65 | EUR 79.65 | GBP 91.59 | JPY 0.61

Cotton Market

Spot Price (Ex. Gin), 28.50-29 mm

Rs./Bale	Rs./Candy	USD Cent/lb
19338	40450	**79.41**

Domestic Futures Price (Ex. Gin), April

Rs./Bale	Rs./Candy	USD Cent/lb
20620	43132	**84.67**

International Futures Price

NY ICE USD Cents/lb (May 2018)	82.54
ZCE Cotton: Yuan/MT (Jan 2018)	14,760
ZCE Cotton: USD Cents/lb	**90.28**
Cotlook A Index – Physical	**90.05**

Cotton guide: The week gone by was chaotic for most of the asset classes traded across the globe. Cotton per se was highly volatile. During the week it plunged on Wednesday and again by Friday all the losses were eroded and ended the futures for May delivery higher by more than 100 points at 82.54 cents per pound.

However the other months have not performed so much and gains were between 20 to 30 points. The spread between May to July maintained around 40 points and large position roll over from May to July is Scheduled this week for Goldman Sachs funds.

On the trading perspective average volumes were higher in the last week vis-a-vis previous week and stood around 50 to 60K contracts a day and the open interests were largely on the higher side.

With the price, volume and open interests trend suggests the broad trend is positive however short term views for Cotton is flickering as well as volatile. From the pricr analysis we continue to consider 81 as key support level and unless that is being respected market could again go ahead approach 84 to 84.50 cents as immediate target area. Basically 81 to 84 is the range that we are looking at in the near term.

Nonetheless any unforeseen events or comments related to China-US trade war might might spoil the short term direction.

No major news on Cotton except that the monthly USDA supply demand report is Scheduled on 10th of April. We think this will have significant effect on market as it may give better understanding on US crop number and possible next year sowing update and ending stocks of last year.

Lastly the US exports have been goof and the latest numbers stood above average. We believe if the trade dispute dilutes then US would be happy to see it's exportable number increasing substantially further in next one month and that should probably push the ICE above the recent high of 86.60 and hit towards 90.

This is a pretty longer period outlook that we are perceiving in the market unless otherwise major change happens and ICE does not correxț again below 78 cents per pound.

On the domestic front the spot price of S-6 continues at Rs. 19680 per bale that is around Rs. 41130 per candy where are the April future is quoted around Rs. 20630 per bale Rs. 43100 per candy. The spread between Spot and Future is around Rs. 2000 per candy which has been maintaining higher for the past one month. Such scenario is unhealthy for the market as arbitragers continue to take advantage over.

From the price perspective we think spot price may remain elevated amid lower arrivals expected in May. The futures might remain steady between Rs. 20400 to Rs.20900 per bale.

Compiled By Kotak Commodities Research Desk , contact us : mailto:research@kotakcommodities.com, Source: Reuters, MCX, Market source

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Mayhem on bourses: Global trade war fears battering all equity markets

Global equity markets are seeing heightened volatility due to the risk of a global trade war. Benchmark indices of almost all the countries have come off since February-end when US President Donald Trump first threatened to impose sanctions on imports of steel and aluminium.

Even markets such as India, despite low exposure to the US economy and their stock markets, has seen high turbulence due to the risk-off sentiment among overseas investors created by the trade war fears.

Analysts see the selling pressure persisting in the week ahead as the Dow Jones index of the US plunged 2.3 per cent and slipped into correction territory on Friday. The index had dropped as much as 3.1 per cent intra-day on Friday after the US administration said it was weighing tariffs on additional $100 billion worth of Chinese imports. A Chinese commerce official promised to fight back with a “major response”.

China’s tit-for-tat approach to US tariff announcements have spooked investors and raised prospects of a full-blown trade war. Investors fear rising protectionism could weaken global growth, raise inflation and hurt corporate earnings.

Experts say markets are eyeing two key events this week. These include the renegotiations of the North American Free Trade Agreement (Nafta) and key speech by Chinese President Xi Jinping on Tuesday. Amid the deteriorating relations between the US and China, the markets are likely to take cues on any references made by Xi to the trade dispute with the world’s largest economy.

Tensions between Beijeng and Washington have been on the boil after US last week released a list of 1,300 products from China to be targeted with higher tariffs to curb misuse of US intellectual property. China had responded by announcing its plan to impose steep tariffs on $50 billion of US imports such as soybeans, airplanes and cars. The latest turbulence in the market was caused by US decision to up the ante against China with the $100-billion tariff threat.

MAYHEM ON BOURSES

High economic and high stock market exposure	Decline (%)	High economic but low stock market exposure	Decline (%)
Switzerland	-9.8	Thailand	-6.1
Canada	-6.5	Singapore	-4.7
Taiwan	-4.0	China	-12.7
Low economic and low stock market exposure	Decline (%)	Low economic but high stock market exposure	Decline (%)
Brazil	-3.5	Netherlands	-6.1
India	-7.6	UK	-7.8
Australia	-5.9	Sweden	-8.3

Economic and stock market exposure with respect to North America; Decline is the fall in benchmark indices from 2018 high Source: Citi Research; Exchanges

"Trump is proposing another $100 billion of Chinese imports to be subject to tariff hike. Our base case remains that a negotiated solution will be reached, but the extra $100 billion raises the risks if negotiations fail," said Shane Oliver, head of investment strategy, AMP Capital.

A 10 per cent rise in trade costs could lower global GDP growth by 100 to 150 basis points, says Citibank in a report quoting estimates by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Markets such as Brazil, India, Australia and South Africa, whose share of exports to the US is low, are also seeing their stock markets getting punished amid flaring up of tensions between the two largest economies.

"For India, we believe minimal impact of the moves thus far, but risks if these escalate and global growth gets hurt. Also, global risk-off could hurt Indian markets given that valuations are still at a premium," said Citibank analysts Surendra Goyal and Vijit Jain in a report dated March 25.

The Indian market is currently down 7.6 per cent from the 2018 highs. Part of this correction is due to domestic factors, such as the banking fraud, political uncertainty and rising oil prices. However, the recent weakness is largely on account of global trade tensions.

The three largest exports from India to the US are jewellery, pharmaceuticals and textiles. Pharma and IT services are the two key sectors listed as high risks due to possible trade actions from the US. In an event of the escalation of the trade war, stocks in these two sectors, along with metals, could see the biggest correction, say analysts, who suggest domestic cyclicals and consumer stocks could be better plays at this juncture.

While trade will dominate the markets this week, investors will be hoping the March quarter result announcement will give them some reason to cheer. Source: business-standard.com- Apr 08, 2018

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Pakistan: Textile exports up

In the backdrop of reports about declining trends in exports and the federal government efforts to stem the rout , keep the imports at reasonable level and bring about improvements in various sectors, it is quite good to note that country's textile exports have started showing upward trend and have registered 7.2 per cent upward growth to 8.79 billion dollars in first eight months of current financial year July 2017 to February 2018.

According to the reports in the newspapers, textile exports, which account for around 60 per cent of the country's total exports, accounting to 8.21 billion dollars during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year.

During the period under , knitwear exports recorded the highest 13.3 per cent, readymade garments rose by 13.1 per cent, bed wear exports increased by 4.5 per cent, cotton cloth however remained flat so on and so forth.

It is a matter of bitter record that the country's exports have been showing downward trend during the last four years but exports package of Rs 180 billion announced by the federal government in January 2017 comprising rebates and tax concessions have encouraged the exporters to view for additional shares in the international market for Pakistani goods.

On the other hand, the federal government is also trying to keep the imports at the low level to the maximum level but still essential items like petroleum products , machinery, fertilizer, insecticides, platic material , medicinal products have to be imported in varying quantities to meet the domestic requirements.

To reduce the import of petroleum products, it is essential that efforts should be accelerated for oil exploration and at the same time, motorists should be motivated through officially launched campaign to conserve and ensure they keep the avoidable journeys on the lowest keeping in mind that precious foreign exchange resources of the country are being spent on POL imports outsourcing the exports earnings.

Source: nation.com.pk- Apr 08, 2018

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Taking Turkey to WTO

According to a recent news item, the government is considering to challenge, in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), Turkey's refusal to grant GSP Plus treatment to imports originating in Pakistan. How strong is Pakistan's case? GSP Plus is part of the European Union's GSP scheme for developing and least developed countries (LDCs).

The EU-Turkey customs union provides that Turkey shall apply the same import tariffs as done by the EU on imports from a third country. The exception to this rule is agricultural products which are not covered by the customs union.

Import tariffs are either Most Favoured Nation (MFN) or preferential. In either case, Turkey is bound to follow the EU. Thus when the EU enters into a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with a third country, Turkey also starts FTA negotiations with that country so as to maintain the EU's level of trade preferences.

How strong is Pakistan's case?

But what about unilateral preferences like the GSP? Is Turkey required to accord the same level of preferential treatment to the same beneficiary countries as done by the EU? The answer is in the affirmative.

The EU-Turkey customs union does not create any exception with respect to any scheme. Reference may be made to Article 16 of the Customs Union Agreement, 1995, which states in categorical terms:

"With a view to harmonising its commercial policy with that of the Community [EU], Turkey shall align itself progressively with the preferential customs regime of the Community within five years as from the date of entry into force of this Decision. This alignment will concern both the autonomous regimes and preferential agreements with third countries.”

Hence, according to The Handbook on Turkey’s GSP Scheme, issued by the Ministry of Customs and Trade, Turkey initiated its GSP scheme on January 1, 2002 and the scheme was fully harmonised with that of the EU by 2006.

The Handbook further states that preferences would be granted to all the products covered by the EU’s GSP including suspension of tariffs on imports from the countries included in GSP Plus.

In fact, Turkey does normally give the same level of GSP treatment to beneficiary countries as the EU does.

For instance, under a sub arrangement of the GSP meant for LDCs, Turkey, following the EU, gives duty free treatment to import of garments from Bangladesh.

Remember EU’s, as well as Turkey’s, average MFN tariffs for garments are 9.5 per cent. By the same token, Turkey gives duty free treatment to import of garments from Georgia, which is a beneficiary of GSP Plus.

However, Turkey applies 9.5pc tariffs on average on import of garments from Pakistan, whereas the EU imports garments from Pakistan duty free under GSP Plus. The same goes for other products included in the scheme.

Out of the 10 countries which are benefiting from the EU’s GSP Plus, Pakistan and Armenia are the two countries whose GSP Plus status has been withheld by Turkey for no valid reason.

Perhaps Turkey feels that granting a substantial Margin of Preference (MoP) to import of textiles and garments from Pakistan will hurt its domestic industry.

To add insult to injury, Turkey imposed additional duties of some textiles products from Pakistan since 2011. It has maintained this unfair stance despite excellent political relations between the two countries, which is a reminder that political and economic relations have separate dynamics.

Pakistan qualified for GSP Plus on January 1, 2014. The same year, bilateral FTA negotiations with Turkey started.

Previously, Turkey did not concur with Pakistan's request for an FTA for the perfectly valid reason that an FTA with Pakistan was possible only if Pakistan had such an arrangement with the EU. Instead of sorting out the GSP Plus issue, the two countries engaged in FTA negotiations, which now face bottlenecks mainly because of EU-Turkey customs union.

Under the Dispute Settlement Understanding (DSU) of the WTO, a member can file a complaint against another member on two grounds: One, the respondent country has violated some specific provision of a WTO agreement.

Two, an action by the respondent country has caused nullification or impairment of benefits to the complainant arising out of the multilateral treaty even if no provision of WTO law is violated.

The legal basis of the GSP is "Differential and More Favourable Treatment Reciprocity and Fuller Participation of Developing Countries: Decision of 1979," commonly known as the Enabling Clause, and which is now part of the WTO family of agreements.

The Enabling Clause does not make it obligatory upon a WTO member to grant unilateral preferences, such as GSP, to other countries. It is for each member to decide whether to grant GSP treatment as well as to decide the MoP, eligibility criteria, and product coverage.

However, the Clause provides that unilateral preferential treatment should be general (or broad-based) in terms of product coverage and non-discriminatory. Hence, a country which is otherwise eligible for GSP Plus cannot be excluded from it.

Since Turkey has granted GSP Plus to eight out of the 10 eligible countries, excluding of Pakistan from the arrangement is prima facie a violation of the Enabling Clause and thus WTO.

The EU-Turkey customs union, which makes it obligatory upon Turkey to adopt EU tariffs, is not part of WTO body of agreements.

However, the customs union, which, like other bilateral preferential trade agreements, runs counter to the WTO's MFN principle, is allowed under Article XXIV of GATT, which is part of WTO, as an exception to the MFN clause.

Thus Pakistan can take the position that by excluding it from GSP Plus, Turkey has caused nullification or impairment of its benefits, which it might have accrued under Article XXIV of GATT.

It follows that Pakistan has a strong case on GSP Plus against Turkey. However, whether the government actually decides to take Turkey to the WTO is anybody's guess.

Source: dawn.com- Apr 09 2018

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New German industry office opens in Colombo

An office titled the "Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka" was opened in Colombo on Tuesday with Malik Samarawickrama, Minister of International Trade; Dr. Martin Wansleben, CEO, Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Jorn Rohde, German Ambassador in Sri Lanka, in attendance.

Dr. Wansleben said that there is a huge growth potential for German companies in Asia and the Sri Lankan market will open up even more opportunities for German industry and commerce. With the opening of this office, their network of German Chambers of Commerce around the world will grow to 140 offices in 92 countries.

He indicated that the annual growth of Sri Lanka German economic relations is 5 per cent and with Sri Lanka becoming a maritime hub across Asia, Africa and Europe, Sri Lanka's exports to Germany grew by 13 per cent in 2017. German exports grew by 81 per cent to over 570 million Euros in 2017 reaching a total bilateral trade volume of more than 1.26 billion Euros.

Sri Lanka raises more interests, he said, for German sourcing in the sectors of food and textiles. He said that German foreign direct investment in Sri Lanka amounts to around 170 million Euros, listing Sri Lanka in a global approach among countries number 86 and ranking 3rd as a target location in South Asia after India and Pakistan.

The establishment of the Delegation office in Colombo is supported by the German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy and coordinated by the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK) and the Network of German Chambers of Commerce Abroad (AHKs).

The head of the New Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Sri Lanka is Andreas Hergenroether. He has been working for the organization for 20 years and headed the offices in Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan and Egypt before coming to Colombo.
Malik Samarawickrama, Minister of International Trade, expressed confidence that the setting of this office in Colombo would result in productive business in both countries.

He said Germany is a country which maintains high standards, quality and punctuality, where the standards of German industry are very high and Sri Lanka could learn many lessons.

He pointed out that Germany is more resilient than other European areas of economy where the importance was on the business climate and labour laws with a strong economic foundation. He said that Sri Lanka is focusing on economic reforms and making steady progress and the German companies would see the results of those reforms.

The newly passed income tax laws, he said provide a progressive modern and transparent tax policy and the rates are now lower than many countries in the region. As policy the Central Bank is moving towards a market economy based on exchange rate to check inflation. The reform initiatives are focused to catalyze growth and create better jobs to the people.

German Ambassador Jorn Rohde said that the new industry office is equipped with professionals and requested the corporates in Sri Lanka to make use of that expertise. This leads to enter the German and European markets and stressed that European market has 500 million consumers.

Source: sundaytimes.lk- Apr 08 2018

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Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters Association (İTHİB) recognised successful export leaders

Successful Turkish textiles producers has been recognised by Istanbul Textile and Raw Materials Exporters Association (İTHİB) at the Raffles Istanbul Zorlu Center on 23 March who contributed to the country's economy with their achievements in the textiles sector.

The event was attended by Turkey's Minister of economy Nihat Zeybekci, platinum and gold signs who were given to the companies that exported the most products in 2017.

The ceremony started with the speeches, by the most successful exporters in textiles and raw materials sector were awarded. 36 platinum plates and 58 gold plates were given out, and three companies received a special award at the end of the ceremony.

The textiles export leader was AKSA Acrylic Chemical Industry. AK-PA Textile Export Marketing Kordsa Teknik Tekstil AS, Zorlu Dış Ticaret and Zorluteks Textile Trading and Industry company Companies like Kadifeteks, Roja Brode Sanayi, were also recognised with the highest added value, and S3 Yarn, the company with the highest increase in exports.

Minister of Economy Nihat Zeybekci stated that investment incentive document worth over 125 billion liras will be given to investors. He further added that at end of the textiles in Turkey has never and will never come. Turkey will continue through different dimensions in textiles.

Ismail Gulle İTHİB president has promised to export US$ 12 billion in value in 2018, together with the sector representatives.

Source: fashionatingworld.com- Apr 07, 2018

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Pakistan: Value addition in textile industry stressed

FAISALABAD: The Pakistan Textile Exporters Association (PTEA) has stressed focus on value-addition in the textile industry as sustainable growth hinges upon it.

Conducive policies are imperative for immediate revival and uplift of the economy, said officials.

PTEA Chairperson Mian Shaiq Jawed said value-addition is key to success and the government must focus on capturing a greater share in regional and international trade through it.

He stressed to facilitate the import of cheaper raw materials and export finished products after adding value. Countries all over the world encourage value addition to earn more foreign exchange, he said, adding that textile exports of Bangladesh are touching $30 billion despite the fact that they do not grow cotton and produce finished textile products with imported raw material.

“All emerging economies have implemented reforms by removing impediments, which have helped them increase their exports. We need to follow their footsteps and take our industry into the right direction to achieve our national goal,” Jawed added.

He lamented that the textile industry is unable to tap its potential in accordance with its capacity while regional peers are multiplying their exports owing to the low cost of doing business. High production cost is a major hurdle in export growth.

Appreciating the government’s efforts, the PTEA official said that duty drawbacks under the prime minister’s package helped increase textile exports, as figures have been gradually increasing since June. However, complete implementation of the scheme is still needed, he added.

Source: tribune.com.pk- Apr 07, 2018

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Angola to re-launch cotton production in Malanje

Angola's ministry of agriculture and forestry is considering financing projects to re-launch cotton production in northern Malanje province. The ministry is in discussion with China and Japan to finance the projects for re-launching cotton as well as rice cultivation, according to secretary of state for Agriculture and Livestock, Carlos Alberto Jaime.

Cotton is being grown on around 10,000 hectares in a phased manner along the perimeter of Capanda Agro-industrial hub (PAC), located in the municipality of Cacuso, and in Baixa de Cassanje region, which comprises the municipalities of Cahombo, Quela and Cunda-dia-Base, Angolan news agency ANGOP reported.

The ministry is also considering reduction of costs of agricultural inputs so as to increase profits of farmers.

Source: fibre2fashion.com- Apr 08, 2018

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UK retailers slow in adopting new Instagram technology

British retailers are yet to fully harness the selling power of a brand new Instagram shopping feature, according to published research by cloud-based retail software provider Cybertill. More than four-fifths of the retailers ignored the new feature aimed at helping retailers drive traffic to their e-commerce platforms in the first week of its launch.

The new Shopping feature, including New Look, Screwfix, Miss Selfridge and River Island, was rolled out by Instagram to business accounts in the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Brazil, Canada, Spain and Australia recently.

A mere 8 per cent of UK brands have made use of the photo tags that drive users to buy the Instagrammed-goods online, according to a Cybertill press release.

None of the top five retailers in the United Kingdom — ASOS, ASDA, Tesco, Argos and Next — have enabled the feature yet. M&S and Topshop were two of the first retailers to enable the feature out of the top 50.

Of the retailers that don't have the Instagram Shopping feature enabled, 7 per cent encourage the consumer to go in-store, 19 per cent encourage consumers to click the link in the retailer's Instagram bio, 19 per cent encourage the consumer to search for product code on the website, and the rest don't actively promote 'buy' calls to action from Instagram

Source: fibre2fashion.com- Apr 08, 2018

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NATIONAL NEWS

Commerce Ministry looking for alternatives to export subsidies

US moving WTO prompts India to set up panel under DGFT, look at production sops

With the US questioning India's export subsidies at the World Trade Organisation (WTO), New Delhi has got cracking on identifying alternative ways to support exporters without facing challenges at the multilateral forum.

"An informal committee has been set up under the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to look into the existing export promotion schemes. The idea is to identify the non-compatible provisions and to look for alternatives assuming that India's eight-year phase-out period argument is not accepted," a government official told BusinessLine.

Industry bodies invited

In a recent meeting, the informal committee invited views from industry bodies FICCI and CII, exporters' body FIEO and the Commerce Ministry's think-tank, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), on the matter.

"Issues, including problems with the existing export subsidy schemes vis-à-vis the WTO rules, and how other countries were supporting their exporters were discussed," the official said.

The informal committee is likely to be given a formal shape soon through an official notification, and more industry bodies and export bodies could be part of it.

Options being explored

The committee, headed by the DGFT, will look at ways in which a production-based subsidy can be used to replace export subsidies, as these are allowed under the WTO. "We could look at the cluster-based approach, where export-centric clusters could be selected and subsidies given to units based on what they produce rather than what they export," the official said.

US complaint

The US dragged India to the WTO's dispute settlement body last month complaining that India's export subsidies were harming American companies.

It identified five popular export promotion schemes, including the merchandise export from India scheme (MEIS) and the export promotion capital goods scheme, as violating the WTO's Agreement on Subsidies and Countervailing Measures.

The US complaint is based on the fact that since India's per capita Gross National Income (GNI) exceeded the threshold of $1,000 for three years in a row in 2015, as per WTO rules, it is no longer eligible to extend export subsidies.

"Although India will argue its case and demand an eight-year phase-out period, which is the same as what was given to developing countries at the time of entry into force of the WTO Agreement in 1995, there is no guarantee that this will go down well either with the US or the WTO," the official said
India has been trying since 2011 to get the WTO to agree to an eight-year phase-out period, but has not succeeded.

Technology upgradation schemes, like the existing one for the textiles sector, which provides a subsidy to the entire sector instead of just exporters, are permissible under WTO rules.

Source: hindustantimes.com- Apr 08, 2018

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BMC to start work on Mumbai's first textile museum in 15 days

The museum will have an amphitheatre with decks facing a pond, a garden landscape and a play area for children

Within the next 15 days, the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) will start work on the city's first textile museum at India United Mills compound, Kalachowki. The civic body's highest statutory standing committee on Saturday passed a proposal to begin work on phase one of the Rs300-crore project.

The museum, planned in a 10-acre heritage precinct of Mumbai's textile mills, will have an open area of about 7,000 sqm, with an amphitheatre with decks facing a pond, a garden landscape and a play area for children. Officials of the heritage department said a cafeteria will also be built for visitors. "The phase 1 includes Mumbai's only musical fountain in the 2,300-sqm pond. However, we will get a special contractor with an artistic skill. Installation of the musical fountain, which will be done by next year, will cost Rs25 crore," said an official, who did not wish to be named.

The civic body also plans to install metallic murals depicting the textile mill workers' lives at the entrance of the museum. BMC has roped in students of JJ School of Arts to help with the mural designs.
According to the official, the 1,000-sqm garden will have a colourful landscape of Solapur shawls, with sitting areas. The phase 1 will cost Rs6.4 crore.

While phase 1 is expected to be completed in the next six months, it will take 3-4 months more to finalise plans for phase 2. Under phase 2, the mills will be restored as Indian textile galleries and exhibition spaces showcasing generations of mill workers, different machines and other historical aspects.

Source: hindustantimes.com- Apr 09, 2018

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New yarn for old weaves

BENGALURU: The power of bringing back forgotten weaves, like the Kunbi or gomi teni saris, goes beyond the draping. It is like reviving a piece of history.

Last June, Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting and Textiles, Smriti Irani, announced in Goa that “the central government would go all out to revive the Kunbi sari”. She made the announcement wearing the sari. The handwoven sari, recognized by its red colour and thick checkered pattern, was traditionally worn by the Kunbi tribes who inhabited the coastal region hundreds of years ago, long before the Portuguese colonised it. While the sari may have languished from the ’70s to the noughties, it is certainly enjoying a revival thanks to initiatives by the government, designers like Wendell Rodricks – who showcased a line in 2011 and wrote about it in his 2015 book, Moda Goa, and revivalists like Rohit Phalgaonkar and Vinayak Khedekar.

For Phalgaonkar, a historian, reviving the Kunbi and the Gauda sari, was a fortuitous accident. “We were looking to revive a forgotten dance form and realized that it wasn’t being performed anymore because the traditional attire –the Gauda sari – worn by performers was not woven anymore!” says Phalgaonkar. That crucial missing link led him to focus on reviving the sari that is as much a part of Goa’s identity as are its beaches. It was a journey that saw him visiting tribal pockets through the length and breadth of Goa, collecting sari samples that were over 150-years-old, and sitting and interacting with weavers in Coimbatore and Hubli to get the sari woven exactly as it was done all those hundred of years ago.

The revival of the Kunbi and Gauda saris is a happy story but at a time when words like ‘textile revival’, ‘textile revivalist’ are the new cool in the business of fashion, it is efforts by people like Phalgaonkar and ilk that need to be highlighted to understand what the job of infusing life to a forgotten weave entails.

BRINGING BACK 12TH CENTURY SARI TO 21ST CENTURY

For textile designer and revivalist Hemalatha Jain, the job is as unglamorous as it comes. For the NIFT alumna who has researched and revived north Karnataka’s Patteda Anchu and the Gomi Teni saris, being a textile revivalist is about pursuing what you love while fighting copycat designers who are quick to make replicas, struggling for funding and most importantly, convincing weavers to work with her.

“Within a few weeks after I had launched the Patteda Anchu sari in 2016, I saw replicas being sold online. What took me by surprise was that people who called themselves ‘revivalists’ and ‘handloom experts’ had picked up information from us and went ahead and made their own versions. For people like me who work at the grassroots level, there is huge competition, all in the name of textile revival,” Jain confides.

REVIVE TEXTILES TO MAKE THEM RELEVANT

This is where designer Pradeep Pillai pitches in to makes a contentious statement. A designer who is known for his efforts in contemporizing traditional sari weaves, Pillai could very well fit the ‘revivalist’ tag but he quickly refutes it. “Please do not call me a textile revivalist,” he insists before sitting you down to explain things in a measured manner.

“If you were to go by the technical definition of a ‘revivalist’, it would mean recreating something the exact same way it was done. And doing that in today’s times would be impractical. Can you, for instance, imagine weaving a Kodali Karuppu sari using pure gold zari and hand painting motifs – the way it was done for the royal family of Tanjore? It would cost over a lakh today and it would be consigned to a museum,” he says. For Pillai, the whole point of revisiting an old and dying textile is about making it accessible to the buyer. “I want my saris to be worn by common people,” he says. Pillai's experiments to achieve that vision include transposing the Chanderi, Venkatagiri, and Kodali Karuppu designs on to linen. His label also makes desi Tussar saris. “We weave the Tussars using yarn made in India, unlike others who use Chinese-made yarn.”

Sanjay Garg, the creator of the decade-old label Raw Mango echoes Pillai when he says that ‘revivalist’ is a word that is being encashed by people today. “In fact, I say that it is the textile that is reviving you because while it has stood the test of time it is we who’ve lost the context,” he quips. For Garg, who has done yeoman work in reinventing the Chanderi and Mashru textiles, the point to keep in mind while reviving textiles is to ensure that it is relevant to the times you live in. “The Indian textile tradition is hundreds of years old. But if I stuck to the traditional format of doing things, where is the value that

I bring in as a designer? Tradition only has value when it moves with the times. It should flow like a river else there's the danger of it staying stagnant," says Garg whose creations are not only worn by India's who's who, they have also been displayed at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and London's Victoria and Albert Museum.

Indian textiles have got a fillip today and as Garg, Pillai and their ilk will attest, a lot of designers are getting back to their roots to make a statement. While the attempts, including getting weavers to walk the ramp, get them the headlines, the real job of sustaining traditional handlooms is a long-drawn process.

"Most designers just do it as a one-year project before they move on to the next thing that catches their fancy. That does nothing to the weavers. If you are talking about reviving a textile, then you've got to make sure that it's a 365-day project," says Pillai who started his eponymous label in 2011 and has been nurturing a network of weavers.

Jain too started the Punarjani Trust to ensure sustained employment for weavers. "I started the trust because I realised that while a lot of our traditional arts and crafts were languishing, the craftsmen were impoverished too." Today, she has a set weavers who work for her and are excited by her vision.

"The reason I do what I do is because I think India has so much to offer. Why do we have to look to the west?" For Phalgaonkar, the joy of reviving the Gauda sari comes from the fact that, "I am helping keep a small piece of Goan history alive."

Source: timesofindia.indiatimes.com- Apr 07, 2018

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Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry eyes tie-ups with Japanese companies

A high-level delegation of Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) will, on Saturday, begin its week-long visit to the island country. Activities of Japan External Trade Organisation and Japanese companies in Gujarat has created a favourable ecosystem to take the partnership at a new level," he said. Companies from Gujarat are eyeing business opportunities with there Japanese counterparts. A delegation of businesspersons from GCCI, led by senior vice president Jaimin Vasa will be visiting Japanese companies and government officials during the visit. "Japan is emerging as a credible business partner for India and Indian companies.

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The delegates represent sectors like chemicals, pharmaceuticals, textiles, engineering, iron and steel, automobiles and electronics. "Japan is emerging as a credible business partner for India and Indian companies.

Setting up of industrial clusters by companies like Suzuki Motor Corporation and Honda created a strong foundati-on for the growth of bilateral partnerships," said Shapil-esh Patwari, GCCI president. He said that Japan is emerging strongly as a counterweight to China for Indian companies and there is a symbiotic relationship between the two countries.
"Japan has technology and know-how, while we have a young population and huge land mass.

Source: dnaindia.com- Apr 07, 2018

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India-Iran-Russia resume talks on activating key trade corridor

India, Iran and Russia have resumed talks on activating the International North South Transport Corridor which will cut freight time to Europe by half and bring down the cost for the benefit of east and southeast Asian exporters. India, Iran and Russia are leading in activating the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) route since 2000, through existing road-route and with the development of some railway gaps in between the 7,200-km long multi-mode network of ship, rail and road.

The INSTC was discussed during Iranian President Hassan Rouhani's visit to India in February while Russia maintains a strong interest in the trade route, said Ambassador P S Raghavan, Convener of National Security Advisory Board in the Indian government. "It is not only to make Indian-Russian trade or Indian-European trade profitable, actually it will make it very lucrative for east Asia and southeast Asia exporters. There is nothing to stop the INSTC from being activated in a matter of months," said Raghavan. He said that capacity building can be carried out as trade volume increases and progress is made on related issues. The potential is enormous and well known, Raghavan said.

With no trade sanctions against Iran, the INSTC becomes "very competitive", he said. Raghavan said the INSTC cuts transportation time and cost by half as compared to the Suez Canal route. The current shipment through Suez Canal route involves a longer distance, and is expensive as well as congested. The INSTC could transport exports from India's west coast, through Iran's Bandar Abbas and Chabahar ports, Central Asian states, Russia and onwards to Europe.
Indian-Iranian-Russian customs have discussed trans-shipment processes while logistics such as containerisation needs to be sorted out, Raghavan said after addressing the 12th Institute of South Asian Studies International Conference on South Asia.

The conference was organised by the Institute of South Asian Studies, a think tank of the National University of Singapore.

It needs a special purpose vehicle of multi-national capacity to manage the transportation network from end-to-end, he said.

In 2014, the Federation of Freight Forwarders Association of India had a dry run on the INSTC.

The INSTC member states recognise the potential for efficient and seamless North-South transport caused by economic globalisation and by ever-increasing trade within the Eurasia region, the forwarders had said in a report at that time.

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Reclassify biosludge as non-hazardous waste, urges textile dyeing cluster

TIRUPUR: Textile dyeing cluster in the district has demanded the central government to reclassify biological sludge (microbes) generated in effluent treatment plants (ETPs) as non-hazardous waste.

Even since zero liquid discharge (ZLD) system was implemented, the ETPs were looking for ways to dispose of 30 tonnes of biosludge generated daily as it was classified under hazardous category.

Last year, the cluster found out a way to convert the biosludge into fuel but is awaiting central government's approval for the process.

It has submitted a memorandum to the Central Pollution Control Board (Cpcb) through the Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board (Tnpcb) seeking to reclassify biosludge as non-hazardous.

As a part of the effluent treatment process, ETPs would grow microbes including bacteria, which consume effluents. The microbes would involve in rapid multiplication. Excess quantity of live microbes would be removed periodically, apart from removal of dead microbes. It results in formation of

30 tonnes of biosludge in a day in all the Common ETPs (CETPs) and Individual ETPs (IETPs).

President of the Dyers Association of Tirupur (DAT) S Nagarajan said, “The association approached Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) to conduct a study on disposal of the biosludge. A five-member team from department of environmental science and engineering of the premier institution conducted a research and found that the sludge can be converted into biobriquette, which can be utilized as fuel.” The team conducted the research at Arulpuram CETP in 2017.

General manager of Arulpuram CETP M Gajendran told TOI: “The report submitted by IIT-M team confirmed that while utilizing the biosludge as fuel, there was no hazardous emission or atmosphere created. It was safe for the environment.”

More than 10,000 tonnes of biosludge get accumulated every year in Tirupur cluster. They should be stored safely without causing any damage to the environment, for which the dyeing units should spend more capital. One-fourth of the running cost of ETPs would go into storing biosludge.

“So, if we will be allowed to utilize the converted form of the biosludge as fuel, the cost could be controlled. DAT invested Rs 30-40 lakh for the research but it is in the hands of the central government to reclassify the sludge as non-hazardous and allow it to be used as fuel,” said Gajendran.

“A pilot study conducted by a private laboratory in Erode concluded that the same sludge can be converted into vermi compost and utilized as manure,” said BM Boopathy, chief executive officer of the association.

“Developing countries like Italy have classified biosludge as non-hazardous and utilize the same as manure. So, with available modern technologies, our researchers found that the same can be used either as fuel or manure,” Boopathy added.

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From farm to fashion

It's the age of sustainable fashion. Needless to say, India's first organic farm to sustainable fashion brand—Ethicus—is making all the right noises. After a successful debut at the Lakme Fashion Week last year, the Pollachi-based brand returned to woo Delhiites with its spring exhibition last month. The brand's second outing comprises three new collections of saris and ready-made blouses showcasing weaves made from organic cotton—All-Day Elegance, Ratan, and Made by Hand.

All-Day Elegance's contemporary designs symbolise smart dressing for all-day needs and give the wearer the comfort of the finest of organic cotton but the drape of a crepe or georgette. Ratan is a classic and timeless collection with gold and silver threads and elaborate borders, buttis and jaals all over. Available in festive and pastel shades, these are perfect for summer weddings and party wear—with each piece painstakingly woven by an artisan over the period of a month. Made by Hand are handwoven on looms in Pollachi, and further fine-crafted by artisans from Kutch. This limited edition collection of Ajrakh and Bandhani saris are printed with natural dyes.

What's more, each sari carries a tag mentioning where the cotton was grown, who the artisan is, how many days it took them to complete it. "It's all about recognising the effort that people have put into the making of a product. The textile value chain is so huge that the cotton goes through the hands of hundreds of people before the final product is made. When a consumer knows who has made their product, it's not nameless and faceless anymore. It then has a soul," explains Vijayalakshmi Nachiar, who, along with her husband, Mani Chinnaswamy, established the label in 2009.

Ethicus, which actually stands for 'Ethics and Us', is aimed at reviving the rich local hand-weaving traditions of the area through product development and design intervention. Explaining the farm-to-fashion concept, Nachiar says, "It's all about forming a sustainable value chain and bringing in traceability to it. It's also about 'inclusive growth' and giving an identity to the people involved in its manufacture. The main objective has been to grow the finest of organic cotton and produce textiles using the tradition of handloom weaving to make our heritage fashionable."

Nachiar's idea translated into six yards of wonder in cotton to make women rediscover the joy of wearing saris as a part of daily routine. "Through Ethicus, we are trying to bring in the humble 'cotton' into the forefront of sustainable fashion by taking it to boardrooms, parties, to social events and even to weddings," she says.

Hailing from a family rooted in the cotton business, and armed with a master's in textiles and clothing, she calls Ethicus a 'Made in India brand' that has its ethos firmly based in creating the best of Indian textiles and reviving the pride in the traditional textile heritage of India. Its parent company, Appachi Eco-Logic Cotton (P) Ltd, pioneered India's first cotton contract farming model and today grows the finest organic cotton in the country. Taking immense pride in the fact that they had got into the business when sustainable fashion was not the rage, she says, "My fascination with textiles is inherent. We are not just another label. We are keenly aware of the resources we use and our carbon footprint. Our process is slow. Our products are of the highest quality, and our designs are timeless."

Nachiar ensures that a minimum of two collections is made every year, one for the summer and the other for winter. These are available through exhibitions in India and abroad, and retailed from select stores across the country as well as online. "We would like to foray into ready-made garments in the future and are also looking at expanding our business online," Nachiar adds.

Source: newindianexpress.com- Apr 07, 2018

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