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The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council [TEXPROCIL]
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IBTEX No. 223 of 2017 November 09, 2017

USD 64.88 | EUR 75.24 | GBP 85.14 | JPY 0.57

Cotton Market

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

Rs./Bale	Rs./Candy	USD Cent/lb
17808	37250	**73.06**

Domestic Futures Price (Ex. Gin), October

Rs./Bale	Rs./Candy	USD Cent/lb
18250	38175	**74.88**

International Futures Price

NY ICE USD Cents/lb (Dec 2017)	68.63
ZCE Cotton: Yuan/MT (Jan 2018)	15,205
ZCE Cotton: USD Cents/lb	**88.28**
Cotlook A Index – Physical	**79.75**

Cotton & currency guide: Yet another day Cotton futures traded sideways however there has been slight uptick in the price. The December ended the session at 68.63 up by 56 points from previous close. Nonetheless the broad range of 4 cents trade for the past over two months continues in the market.

The other months were also slightly onto positive trade. The spread between December and March maintained around 30 points with latter being at a premium. On the trading volume front there has been good rise in the participation due to hefty roll over position from December to subsequent months and spread trading is also adding more participation in the market. Volume was 73,007 contracts.

Further the buzz in the market this week is about good cash sales. Almost as quickly as cotton gets classed, it either gets applied to sales or put on recaps and offered out. Recap buying has been steady.

Besides, today USDA Weekly Export Report is expected to show sales well-exceeding 200,000 bales and the following week's report is expected to be much larger. Already US export sales have been running 2.3 million bales ahead of year ago figures and last year was nearly sold out. However, this year's US crop is projected to be up to 4 million bales larger than last year.

This morning Cotton for December is seen trading steady around 68.60 cents per pound. Market is initially expected to remain steady however as market progress through the US session the likely positive export sales figure may push the price higher. Later in the US session the monthly demand and supply number by IDEA is expected. Any rise in production above 20+ million bales may again pressure the market. So broadly cotton is expected to witness volatile trading session today. We keep a relatively larger trading band and the range should be 68.10 TO 69.70 cents per pound.

On the domestic front, spot price declined amid higher arrivals. The shankar-6 quoted at an average price of Rs. 37450 per candy ex-gin down by around Rs. 400 from previous close. Quotes for new crop Punjab J-34 were also slightly weaker at Rs. 3,845 per maund (about 71.80 cents per lb). Wednesday's seed cotton arrivals were estimated to be 143,100 lint equivalent bales (170 kgs), including 36,000 registered in Maharashtra, 33,000 in Andhra Pradesh and 28,000 in Gujarat.

However, futures price were sideways and mostly stable. The November future ended the session at Rs. 18260 per bale just down by Rs. 10 from previous close. Market is expected to remain sideways and the trading range should be Rs. 18050 to Rs. 18380 per bale. As said above the market might witness heavy volatile trading session today.

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

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

US Set to Crack Down on GSP Eligibility for Key Sourcing Countries

The United States has been combing over all of its trade deals to find anything that appears unfair, unbalanced or not in keeping with the America First maxim. Next on that agenda will be more scrutiny for the Generalized System of Preferences trade program and the sourcing countries that benefit from duty breaks under it.

The Office of the United States Trade Representative recently announced a new effort to ensure GSP beneficiary countries are actually meeting eligibility criteria—in fact, there will be an entirely new interagency process to make this assessment.

As part of the GSP program, certain products from 120 beneficiary developing countries can enter the United States duty free. Some travel goods, like luggage and handbags, benefit from these duty breaks, and trade leaders are presently pushing for certain footwear to be included when the overall GSP program gets renewed, which is expected before the end of this year.

The USTR and any other relevant agencies will now be reassessing each beneficiary country's compliance with GSP criteria every three years. If anything uncovered appears awry, the Administration could start a full review of whether that country will continue to enjoy benefits under GSP.

First up for scrutiny as part of this new effort, will be beneficiary countries in Asia, and other countries will follow for review in years two and three from the start of this process.

"Countries receiving U.S. trade benefits must meet the eligibility criteria established by Congress," U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer said in a statement. "By creating a more proactive process to assess beneficiary countries' eligibility, the United States can ensure that countries that are not playing by the rules do not receive U.S. trade preferences.

This sets the correct balance for a system that helps incentivize economic reform in developing countries and achieve a level playing field for American businesses.”

Currently, key sourcing countries like Egypt, Ethiopia, Haiti, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mauritius, Pakistan and Turkey, all benefit from GSP trade benefits, as do Indonesia, India, Cambodia, Brazil and Thailand—which all happen to rank among the top 10 sourcing countries for footwear, meaning GSP breaks could serve to save substantial costs on footwear duties U.S. brands are currently dishing out.

Source sourcingjournalonline.com- Nov 08, 2017

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Australia-Indonesia free trade talks enter tough final stage

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull is expected to meet Indonesian President Joko Widodo in coming days as the two countries hammer out the final details of the first free trade deal Indonesia has signed in almost a decade.

The 10th – and both countries hope final – round of negotiations will be held in Jakarta next week with Australia's chief trade negotiator Trudy Witbreuk stressing there was "no question about the level of commitment in trying to conclude this economic partnership agreement".

However Indonesia's chief negotiator Deddy Saleh has warned Indonesia, which is riding a wave of economic nationalism with protectionist resources policies and national targets for self sufficiency in some foods, will not be able to meet all of Australia's requests.

"Negotiations with Australia is sometimes very easy, many times very hard," Mr Deddy said. "As Indonesian chief negotiator I have to coordinate with all ministries. That is the hardest part, we are very, very tough on negotiations domestically."

Mr Deddy said Australia had requested that Indonesia reduce import duties on meat, sugar, tropical fruit, vegetables, machinery and electrical goods. "Indonesia can give some but Indonesia is having some difficulties to give all requested by Australia."

Mr Deddy also pointed out the bilateral goods trade was going backwards, shrinking from $US10.6 billions in 2014 to $US8.4 billions last year. He said Indonesia had a trade deficit with Australia of about $2 billion: "Australian exporters are more aggressive than Indonesian".

Research analyst Jarryd de Haan recently wrote the two major commodities behind the fall in Indonesian exports were crude petroleum (due to falling global prices), and unrefined gold (due to falling Australian demand).

Ms Witbreuk, Australia's chief negotiator, said there would be "quite a lot of political engagement" over the next couple of days about the free trade deal, known as the Indonesia Australia Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

"Our respective trade ministers are meeting on Thursday in Danang [Vietnam] and our leaders are likely to meet on Saturday on the margins of the EAS [East Asia Summit]," she told the Indonesia Australia Business Conference in Surabaya.

The countries have already announced, twice, that Indonesia will reduce tariffs on imported Australian raw sugar and Australia will eliminate import duties on Indonesian herbicides and pesticides under the deal.

Indonesian Industry Minister Airlangga Hartarto last month said Indonesia and Australia were also negotiating to eliminate tariffs on three products from each country.

Australia has asked Indonesia to remove import tariffs on skim milk/skim milk powder, copper cathode and hot and cold-rolled coil steel, while Indonesia has asked Australia to lift import tariffs on Indonesian textiles, clothing and footwear.

"Currently, China and Vietnam are subject to zero per cent while Indonesian textile products still have 5 to 20 per cent import duty. By exempting import duty, our industry will get stronger," Mr Airlangga said.

The Australia-Indonesia trade relationship has been described by successive government ministers as "undercooked".

Despite the physical proximity of the two neighbours, Indonesia is not even among Australia's top 10 trade partners.

In 2016 Indonesia was only Australia's 13th largest trade partner, with a paltry 2.3 per cent share of total trade.

"It makes no sense for the two largest economies in [the] region to not have a stronger commercial relationship and the business we are in is trying to change it in a material way," Ms Witbreuk said.

"As Pak (Mr) Deddy said that sounds easy, it's not. The toughest negotiations are often at home, I completely understand and sympathise with that, but I think the opportunity we have is too important and that opportunity is now."

Indonesia and Australia have traditionally relied on natural resource exports and thus have been global competitors.

As a result both countries are keen to talk up the so-called "powerhouse" concept, where Indonesia and Australia cooperate to export products to a third country, rather than see each other as a threat.

"We import flour from Australia, process here as noodles, and export to another country," Mr Deddy said by way of example.

Australia – which is seeking to have tariffs removed from skim milk powder – often gives the example of how Indonesia uses its milk powder to make sweetened condensed milk, which is then exported to a third country.

"Indonesia has duty-free access to the ASEAN market for sweetened condensed milk, but unlike its competitors, Indonesia has to pay 4 per cent tariff on that skimmed milk powder," Ms Witbreuk said.

"Malaysia doesn't have to, Vietnam doesn't have to. It doesn't make sense for Indonesia to have to pay for that input and for therefore its exports to be less competitive than the regional hub."

Indonesia this month jumped 19 places on the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business index, and is now ranked 72 out of 190 countries.

The president of the Australian-ASEAN Chamber of Commerce, Dr Fraser Thompson, said compared to 2015 most Australian businesses in Indonesia had increased their profitability, with economic conditions driving growth.

However he said the top three challenges cited by Australian businesses in Indonesia were government bureaucracy, corruption and access to skilled labour.

Source: smh.com.au- Nov 08, 2017

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4th industrial revolution challenge for Vietnam's workers

Vietnamese industry experts feel government-run enterprises and local businesses should pay necessary attention to training workers for the fourth industrial revolution (Industry 4.0), which is likely to replace people on production lines with machines to improve productivity and reduce labour and administrative costs so that they are not rendered redundant.

The textile and garment industry in Vietnam is using a lot of labour with basic skills, and therefore, it would be immensely affected by Industry 4.0, Le Tien Truong, general director of Vietnam Textile and Garment Group, said on the sidelines of a recent conference on co-operation between Vietnam and Japan for Asia-Pacific economic integration.

With Industry 4.0, workers in all countries face a daunting challenge, economist Le Dang Doanh said. Many Vietnamese companies had already started investing in automation, dismissing hundreds of workers and about 86 per cent of the country's apparel and footwear workers are expected to lose their jobs in the next 15 years, an online newspaper in Vietnam quoted Doanh as saying.

Vietnam's footwear industry also faces a similar fate, according to Nguyen Duc Thuan, chairman of Vietnam Leather and Footwear Association. Universities and institutions will also have to revise their curricula to impart updated skills and knowledge, experts feel.

Source: fibre2fashion.com- Nov 08, 2017

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Russia plans exports to Western markets

Leading Russian technical textiles and nonwovens producers are expanding their production capacities, with the aim to increase exports of finished products abroad, according to a recent report by the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade.

For example, Inmed, Russia's leading manufacturer and developer of modern functional materials, based on polymer nanofibres, has officially announced building of a new production facility, that will specialise on the manufacture of innovative materials that will be used for the needs of technical textiles, medical and chemical industries, according to the company.

The new complex will be built within the territory of Neudorf special economic zone in St. Petersburg – one of the technical textile production centres in Russia.

The new facility will have an area of more than 7,000 sqm, including production facilities of 1,500 sqm, as well as a R&D centre on the area of 520 sqm. Planned construction period is 18 months.

General Director of Inmed Alexander Vnuchkin said total production capacity of the new plant will be 1.5 million linear metres of membrane materials and 600,000 innovative functional materials, based on nanofibres, per year. There is a possibility the volume of production will be increased during the next stage of the project.

Total volume of investments in the new project is estimated at RUB 1.65 billion (US$ 40 million). The majority of funds will be allocated from the company's own sources, while the remaining will be provided by Russian banks in the form of loans.

According to the company's initial plans, the new plant should have been commissioned in summer of last year, however, implementation of the project was suspended several times. The company plans to produce new materials, based on polymer nanofibres. The majority of future production of the plant will be used in the manufacture of special clothing for the needs of Russian military, as well as medicine industry.

Inmed is not expected to be the only Russian technical textiles producer, which plans to expand the production of innovative textile materials. The same plans are considered by Vtor-Com, a leading producer of technical textiles and nonwovens in the Russian Urals region.

As a general director of the company, Mikhail Ruzbin has recently said that by 2019 the company will increase the production of nonwovens and fibres by 50%-60%, compared to the current figures.

As part of these plans, the company aims to increase the annual output of nonwoven needle-punched fabrics up to 18 million sqm. In addition, the company plans to produce 3 million running metres of nonwoven fabric every year and will expand the production of synthetic polyester fibre up to 12 million kg per year.

Analysts of the Russian Ministry of Industry and Trade predict further commissioning of new facilities for the production of innovative technical materials and nonwovens in the coming years. That will be mainly due to a high demand for them both in the domestic and foreign markets.

In the case of the domestic market, in recent years, the consumption of technical textiles in Russia has significantly increased, mainly due to the increase of the demand for them from military, medicine and pharmaceutical industries.

In the meantime, in addition to the domestic market, the demand for Russian innovative textile materials is also growing abroad, and in the EU states in particular, exports to which has significantly increased in recent years.

According to data, which was recently released by the Russian government, this year, exports of Russian-made innovative technical textile materials to foreign markets will reach about 100,000 tonnes, while the major sale markets are expected to be the EU states and former Soviet countries, including the CIS states.

At the same time, part of the supplies is expected to be carried to China and the Asia Pacific region, where the demand for Russian technical textile and functional materials has also increased in recent years.

In value terms, planned export supplies are currently not disclosed, however, according to analysts close to Russia's deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Viktor Evtukhov, these figures may vary in the range of US$ 250-300 million.

Producers hope to significantly increase these figures in the coming years, as, despite the recent strengthening of the Russian currency – ruble – exports remain still more profitable for them, than the supplies to the domestic market.

Numerous research, conducted by the Russian government, shows that currently, domestic innovative technical textile materials are in high demand in Western markets, which is also due to their good quality and affordable price, compared to the EU analogues.

Particular hopes of Russian producers are put on exports to Germany, where the demand for innovative textile materials has been steadily growing since the beginning of 2000s.

Source: innovationintextiles.com- Nov 08, 2017

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Walmart to source more from Cambodia

Walmart is committed to buying more garment, footwear and luggage products from Cambodia. The US multinational is encouraged by the increased capacity of factories and improved labor conditions in the country. It is also happy with the quality of garment, footwear and luggage products.

Walmart with a chain of large stores with branches in most US states is a big buyer of garment products from Cambodia. Cambodia's garment and footwear exports to the United States were up 6.9 per cent in the first half of this year.

The US last year granted duty-free benefits for Cambodia for the export of travel goods such as luggage, backpacks, handbags and wallets under the Generalised System of Preferences.

The country gets 100 per cent preference from Australia, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland and 99 per cent preference from the EU under the Everything But Arms clause.

The garment industry of Cambodia earns 80 per cent of Cambodia's foreign exchange earnings and employs an estimated 3,50,000 people in more than 300 factories. Companies which buy from Cambodia include H&M, Inditex, Marks & Spencer, New Look, Adidas, Nike, Levi's and Uniqlo.

Cambodia relies heavily on garment exports to earn foreign earnings. There are now plans to shift from low-priced garment manufacturing to higher end manufacturing of automobile, machinery and electronic parts.

Source: fashionatingworld.com - Nov 08, 2017

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Sweden's machinery makers scouting Vietnam's textile sector

Swedish machinery manufacturers are exploring the Vietnamese market. These companies have leading edge production equipment and technology and are all well-established leaders in various areas of textile manufacturing process.

The companies offer a unique combination of production expertise, textile manufacturing knowledge, and superior products and services.

They are the perfect match for the Vietnamese textile industry. They are a relatively small, tight knit group of companies, each specializing in a different key areas along the manufacturing process. Their size gives them flexibility and they work closely with customers, listen and adapt quickly to their changing needs.

Vietnam is emerging as the new global production center of textile products. Vietnam has been identified as a hub for the Asian textile industry in the next decade.

The main reason for this is the increasing cost levels in China, causing many textile and garment brands to relocate in Vietnam.

Sweden is bringing world-leading innovative expertise of smart industries into Vietnam, which will make Vietnam highly competitive globally.

Production in the Vietnamese textile and clothing industry is expected to increase by an average of 12 per cent to 14 per cent between 2016 and 2020. Exports are expected to reach 50 billion dollars by 2020.

Source: fashionatingworld.com - Nov 08, 2017

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World Bank, Bangladesh sign 2 agreements

Bangladesh will receive $457 million from the World Bank to help develop its private sector infrastructure projects and diversify exports in labour-intensive industries, such as leather goods, footwear, plastics, and light engineering.

Both sides signed agreements in Dhaka recently to implement two projects that will help the country create more jobs.

The $357-million Investment Promotion and Financing Facility Project II (IPFF II) will enhance local financial institutions' capacity to offer long-term financing to private firms to undertake infrastructure projects in power and energy, information and communication technology, waste management, water treatment, energy saving equipment, container terminals, land ports, roads, and bridges.

Instead of the usual loan term of five to seven years, local financial institutions can now lend to private sector infrastructure ventures through the Bangladesh Bank for eight to 20 years, Bangladesh media reports quoted a World Bank press release as saying.

The second one, the $100-million Export Competitiveness for Jobs Project, will help create 90,000 more jobs by focusing beyond the ready-made garments sector.

It will help firms access international markets, overcome technology, infrastructure and skills shortfalls, and enable them to comply with international quality standards.

Source: fibre2fashion.com- Nov 08, 2017

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Is Fast Fashion a Dirty Word?

Fast fashion has been blamed for the demise of retail, for the glut of disposed-of garments in landfills and likely for depriving executives at traditional retailers of sleep. But whether it's deemed a dirty word or not, it's here.

The notion was one a panel of experts mulled at the Decoded Fashion New York Summit 2017 last week. One major problem with fast fashion, they found, apart from what's generally considered the obvious, is that it can neglect the art portion of fashion—and that's where smaller brands stand to realize opportunity.

"Inherently fast fashion does not believe in creation," said Lawrence Lenihan, co-founder and co-CEO of Resonance, a platform that helps creator brands build a business that's scalable. "We build an infrastructure that enables every creator to run like Zara."

With Resonance, creators are left to do what they do best while Resonance supplies the company providing experience, the industry insight, the manufacturing capabilities, the technology and the capital.

Resonance fully believes there will never be another start-up fashion brand to make $1 billion in revenue. The company even goes so far as to say it's possible no fashion brand started in the last five years will ever generate that kind of money. It's the end of the $1 billion brand, so to speak.

"All of the money invested in fashion start-ups to maintain their early growth rates will not drive the returns venture capitalists had hoped for when they invested huge sums of money at sky-high valuations," Resonance writes in its company manifesto.

"Much of this capital will be lost, leaving in its wake a general malaise and depression that will affect the fashion start-up ecosystem for years to come. But, ironically, this impending reality will also mark the beginning of the most incredible time in the history of fashion for entrepreneurs to build great brands."

Most brands—big or small—are doomed to make too much or too little in their efforts to surmise what consumers will want before they want it, and get it to them before they don't want it anymore.

Brands, no matter the size, have to be ever more nimble if they are to compete for consumers' selective attention—and spend. And it's going to take supply chains equipped to handle less than million-unit orders.

"You've got to be able to make one, not dozens or hundreds," Lenihan said.
What's more, many brands are putting out product that garners no excitement, and ultimately provides little value to the consumer. Startups have often been able to skirt that scenario by creating product that resonates with a niche. With that, plus their innate nimbleness and the resources companies like Resonance provide, these small but relevant brands will continue to steal share from those that have been holding it for perhaps too long.

"I think you're going to see more and more of this approach to how small designers can compete," Lenihan said. "You're never going to out-manufacture Zara, you're never going to out-manufacture H&M. But you can out create."

That, however, begs the question: are customers willing to pay for that creativity?

According to Lenihan, yes.

"There's this golden age of creativity coming…I don't think people are just going to be buying sh*t forever," he said. "First of all, we can't sustain it."
Rag & Bone global CMO Johanna Murphy agrees.

"Obviously fast fashion is making fashion very disposable," she said. "But there's also a counter influence going…in sustainability and the demand for us to create product that actually lasts longer," she said. The proliferation of product is the thing that's impacting the apparel industry more than anything else, she added.

At Rag & Bone, both quality and collection quantity have increased, with designs being done by month rather than designing for fall and spring collections, because today's consumer doesn't do status quo if it doesn't work.

"We're an industry that likes to navel gaze…but things outside of our industry are changing consumer expectation and what consumers want," Murphy said.

Pointing again to Starbucks as a beacon for what apparel brands should really be aspiring to, as other forward thinkers in the space have, Murphy said the coffee company and its ever-convenient app have changed the way service works.

With Starbucks, consumers can order a $5 Starbucks coffee from the company's app while they're sitting in an Uber, pay for it via the card and simply walk in and collect it.

"I'm selling premium priced products—why can't I figure out how to create that same experience in the retail environment?" Murphy posed.

The focus in rectifying what retail still doesn't realize shouldn't be squarely aimed at fast fashion, the favorite culprit.

"It's really the world that's going on outside of our industry that's making us a little less relevant," Murphy said.

Source: sourcingjournalonline.com- Nov 07, 2017

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Morocco jostling to become sourcing hub for European fast fashion industry

Morocco, the north African country having clothing and textiles sector that prides itself on speed, and has expertise in denim, wovens and knitwear. It is also jostling to become a sourcing hub for Europe's fast fashion industry, taking advantage of its geographical location and the rising costs and concerns over compliance that begin to bite in China and Bangladesh, newer markets, such as Myanmar and Vietnam, are vying to become the next big sourcing heavyweights.

However, the need for an increasingly fast, flexible and reactive supply chain is leading many retailers to investigate markets considerably closer to UK shores and Morocco is poised to take advantage of this shift.

Accessible from the UK and much of Europe in the relatively short flight time of three and a half hours, Morocco is already a key sourcing market, along with Portugal and Turkey, for Spanish giant Inditex, which is renowned for its ability to get trend-led product into stores quickly.

Morocco's focus on fast fashion was evident at the latest edition of sourcing show Maroc in Mode, which took place in Marrakech on 27-28 October and showcased the nation's manufacturers. Many of the show's 128 exhibitors specialise in fast fashion and supply brands in the Inditex Group, including Pull & Bear, Zara and Bershka.

The textile and clothing industry is an important one for Morocco, employing over 183,000 people, representing 26% of the country's industrial jobs, and produces 1.1 billion garments every year.

The Moroccan government and the Association Morocaine des Industries du Textile et de l'Habillement (AMITH), which represents the nation's fashion manufacturers and hosts the trade show, plan to enlarge the sector still further. As part of an ambitious strategy to build the industry up €500m (£440m) by 2020, leading Moroccan manufacturers have been chosen to act as what AMITH refers to as "locomotives", guiding and advising smaller companies on how to modernise and improve production capabilities.

The sector has also been divided into a series of specialist areas known as “eco-systems”, which include fast fashion, knitwear and denim. Each area has a different focus – denim, for example, has been set the task of creating 14,800 new jobs by 2020.

Mohamed Laghmouchi is the managing director of Tangier-based woven and knitwear specialist Nova Moda II, which works with Zara and its premium counterpart, Massimo Dutti. Exhibiting at Maroc in Mode, argues that Morocco’s proximity to Europe makes it particularly well suited to the fast fashion market. Morocco is the solution for producing fast fashion.

Mohamed Tazi, director general of AMITH, also believes geography will help to promote Morocco in the eyes of European retailers: The Moroccan clothing export sector will continue to benefit in 2018 and 2019 because of deep changes facing clothing retailers.

However, local manufacturers emphasise that there is more to Moroccan sourcing than speed. As Jalil Rais, director of Marisa, which supplies Sandro and Paul Smith, said that proximity is an advantage, but it’s not the only one: lots of countries are near Europe and most of the world can be reached easily by plane now. Instead, he points to technical expertise, there’s a lot of know-how in Morocco. The quality of the product is good, as is the level of social compliance, which is very important for UK retailers.

President Michèle Duperrin said that in the past couple of years, they have seen more European retailers expressing an interest in sourcing from Morocco, particularly as prices in Asia have increased.

Also there’s a lot of know-how and experience in the Moroccan market, so it’s easier to find qualified people who can do the job you want than it might be in other countries. They can also produce at a competitive price, which is another advantage.

Morocco also has ambitious plans to become a global sourcing hub specializing in fast fashion and denim.

Source: yarnsandfibers.com- Nov 08, 2017

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Pakistan: FBR examines impact of import tax incentives on exports

The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) is scrutinising tax exemptions granted on textile machinery import and their subsequent impact on exports and industrial expansion to spot any misuse of facility, sources said on Tuesday.

The sources said the government granted massive concessions and tax exemptions on textile machinery and raw material imports for the past several years, but preliminary studies revealed that such facilities didn't reflect in local manufacturing or exports.

The data released by Pakistan Bureau of Statistics showed that machinery import grew 20.6 percent to $556.83 million in the fiscal 2016/17. However, textile exports remained stagnant year-on-year at $12.45 billion in the last fiscal year.

The exemptions and concessions granted to textile sector for balancing, modernisation and replacement and under statutory regulatory authority 1125(I)/2011 amounted to Rs50.5 billion in 2016/17 as against Rs45 billion in the fiscal 2015/16, the Economic Survey of Pakistan document said.

Interestingly, the FBR allowed Rs55.5 billion exemptions and concession in the fiscal 2014/15 when imports of textile machinery fell 25.06 percent to $449.3 million.

Sources said FBR is compiling machinery import data of the past five years. They said tax offices detected few cases in which registered taxpayers imported machinery but they didn't install it at manufacturing facility and despite that they claimed benefits. "There are chances of machinery imports on mere invoices and no physical transactions have been done," a FBR official said on condition of anonymity.

The official said FBR team also observed that imports of finished textile products substantially increased despite tax incentives.

Imports of worn cloth and other textile products increased 10 percent to $1.42 billion in 2016/17. Industry officials said high production and exports depend on cost of doing business, and since cost is high, production is low.

All Pakistan Textile Mills Association (Aptma), in a letter to the government, said high cost of gas and electricity is making Pakistan's exports uncompetitive in the global market.

Aptma said gas and electricity tariffs are around 30 percent higher in Pakistan than regional competitors, like Bangladesh, India and Vietnam.

The association advised the government to take immediate steps to expeditiously settle payment of outstanding sales tax and other refunds to address the liquidity issue and check large-scale influx of imported yarn and fabrics in the country to save the domestic industry.

The textile body said the country has already entered in an era of de-industrialisation as industries are closing. "In 2005, the share of manufacturing sector in GDP was 19 percent, which has now fallen to 13 percent."

Aptma said around 140 textile mills shut down their operation and resultantly one million workers have lost their jobs. Another 75 to 80 mills are on the verge of closure, which would add to the unemployment by another 0.5 million in the textile industry, it added.

Source: geo.tv- Nov 08, 2017

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NATIONAL NEWS

India, Colombia discuss expanding bilateral ties

As part of New Delhi reaching out to Latin America, India and Colombia on Wednesday discussed ways to strengthen bilateral ties during a meeting between External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Colombian counterpart Maria Angela Holguin.

According to a statement issued by the External Affairs Ministry, Sushma Swaraj and Holguin "held discussions on a wide-range of issues of shared common interest to further expand and strengthen bilateral relations".

"India has extended assistance to Colombia in capacity building under its ITEC (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation) programme and expressed readiness to extend cooperation in the post peace process reconstruction and rehabilitation," the statement said.

The Colombian government and the Left wing Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) guerilla group last year signed a peace deal ending decades of conflict.

The statement said that with both countries enjoying "close and cordial bilateral relations", economic cooperation is also deepening.

Holguin, accompanied by Colombian Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism Maria Lorena Gutierrez and other delegates, arrived here on Monday on a four-day visit to India.

The visiting delegation also met with Minister of Commerce and Industry Suresh Prabhu and undertook a comprehensive review of trade and investment issues discussed during the meetings of Joint Committee on Business Development Cooperation and Joint Working Group on Trade and Investment held in Colombia's capital Bogota in May this year.

India-Colombia commercial and economic relations have burgeoned in recent years and the last two years have also seen the export and import baskets getting more varied.

Indian imports include mineral fuel, minerals, oils, natural or cultivated pearls, wood and steel, and articles of wood and cocoa and exports include motorcycles in CKD form, vehicles other than railways, cotton yarn and woven fabrics of cotton, organic chemicals and iron and steel.

Bilateral trade between India and Colombia amounted to $941.86 million in the period January-September 2016.

Source: business-standard.com- Nov 09, 2017

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India's textile market to touch USD 250 bn in 2 years: Study

India's textiles sector is likely to touch USD 250 billion in the next two years from the current level of USD 150 billion, a study said today.

The joint study by Assocham and Resurgent pointed out that the textile sector in India accounts for 10 per cent of the country's manufacturing production, 5 per cent of its GDP, and 13 per cent of exports earnings.

The study observed that textile and apparel sector is the second largest employment provider in the country and employed nearly 51 million people directly and 68 million people indirectly in 2015-16.

However, it said that demonetisation and the transition to GST have hit smaller players hard.

"The number of workers affected due to closure of cotton and man-made fibre textile units (bigger units that comprise the non-SSI segment of the industry) during 2016-17 was 4,356 on account of the closure of 18 units, according to official Textile Ministry data on non-SSI units," said the study.

"During the previous two years, the numbers were 7,938 workers affected by the closure of 27 units in 2015-16 and 5,384 workers affected from the closure of 21 units in 2014- 15, taking the cumulative figure to over 17,600 workers impacted by the closure of 67 units in the last three years" it said.

It found that the rollout of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has further hit small and medium players in textile hubs such as Surat, Bhiwadi and Ichalkaranji.

Moreover, capital goods firms are struggling as most of the downstream sectors are saddled with excess capacity and low demand.

Releasing the study, Minister of State for Textiles Ajay Tamta said the textile and handicrafts sector is economically important from the point of low capital investment, high ratio of value addition, and high potential for export and foreign exchange earnings for the country.

Source: timesofindia.com- Nov 08, 2017

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Indian textile & Handicrafts industry is the largest employment generator after agri: Ajay Tamta

The minister of state for textiles Ajay Tamta categorically stated the textile & handicrafts sector is economically important from the point of low capital investment, high ratio of value addition, and high potential for export and foreign exchange earnings for the country said at an ASSOCHAM event.

Indian textile & Handicrafts industry constitutes an important segment of the Indian economy as it is one of the largest employment generators after agriculture.

The sector employs about 7 million people directly and indirectly, which include a large number of women and people belonging to the weaker sections of the society, said Mr Tamta, Minister of State for Textiles.

Handlooms & Handicraft and women, both the terms have their individual identity and the fruitful amalgamation of both gives them a more meaningful identity. These industries are a major source of income for rural communities in general and for rural women in particular.

Though a large number of female workforce, both urban and tribal, from all sections of the society are involved in appropriate returns for their efforts, said Mr. Tamta.

The joint study released by ASSOCHAM-Resurgent on 'Women in Textiles & Handicrafts Industry' reveals that the market size of India's textile market is expected to touch $250 billion in the next two years from the current level of $150 billion.

The textile sector in India accounts for 10% of the country's manufacturing production, 5% of India's GDP, and 13% of India's exports earnings. Textile and apparel sector is the second largest employment provider in the country employing nearly 51 million people directly and 68 million people indirectly in 2015-16, adds the study.

Demonetisation and the transition to GST have hit smaller players hard. The number of workers affected due to closure of cotton and man-made fibre textile units (the bigger units that comprise the non-SSI segment of the industry) during 2016-17 was 4,356 on account of the closure of 18 units, according to official Textile Ministry data on non-SSI units.

During the previous two years, the numbers were 7,938 workers affected by the closure of 27 units in 2015-16 and 5,384 workers affected from the closure of 21 units in 2014-15, taking the cumulative figure to over 17,600 workers impacted by the closure of 67 units in the last three years.

The GST rollout has further hit SME players in textile hubs such as Surat, Bhiwadi and Ichalkaranji. Capital goods firms are struggling as most of the downstream sectors are saddled with excess capacity and low demand.

It is estimated that out of the total number of persons employed in Handlooms, Handicrafts, and Sericulture, about 50% are women. There are more women in the household industry than in the registered small scale or cottage units. However, in the organised sector the percentage of women workers is extremely low, with the exception being garmenting.

Efforts are being made to restore glory of cottage based traditional sectors like handlooms, handicrafts, jute and wool through an integrated approach covering entire value chain. To provide encouragement to textile manufactures and farmers of raw materials, the government has been providing incentives like minimum support price to cotton farmers, upgrading the technology for handloom weavers and providing centres for trade facilitation.

The textiles and garments sector is one of the largest employment generators in the country. India has around 2 million power looms manufacturing around 20 billion meters of cloth, highlighted the study.

The power looms sector accounts for around 60 percent of the total textiles sector. The sector is largely unorganized with many players having hardly 10-20 looms and weaving on an average around 1,000 meters of cloth per loom per month, depending on quality of cloth and loom used to manufacture.

Many run their looms on job-work basis and many buy yarn and manufacture cloth. These units are spread across Bhiwandi, Surat, Ichalkaranji, Erode, Bhilwara, to name a few large centres where power looms industry is operating.

They are often victims of gender inequality as it is embedded deep in our society and also represents our social-political structure. Women have embarked on a new journey to discover and unravel their talents through their dedication and hard work despite being bound with family obstacles and social drawbacks.

There are many institutions who have pledged to support the basic needs and empower indigenous women to expand their opportunities. The sole intention of these organizations is to provide the women access to necessary education, health care, employment and a social standing.

These vulnerable and dependent women are trained mostly in the textile and weaving industry to make them independent and economically empowered.

Source: business-standard.com- Nov 09, 2017

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India, EU to meet on Nov 14-15 to push FTA talks

India and the European Union (EU) will be making another attempt to set in motion the stalled negotiations for a Free Trade Agreement on November 14-15 during a stock-taking meet on state-of-play in the discussions even as a formal round of talks remains elusive.

The meeting will take place here and it will be held between India's Chief Trade Negotiator Anup Wadhawan from the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Helena König from EU, who will be "identifying the difficult areas that require hard bargain as well as the low hanging fruits that can be achieved easily", diplomatic sources told *BusinessLine*.

A meeting of the negotiators was decided during the 14th India-EU Summit that was held here last month.

During the summit-level meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, and Jean Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission, it was decided that before finalising a date for a formal round of talks, the chief negotiators should take stock of where things are at present, sources said.

The last round of talks was held in 2013. However, since then a series of informal talks have taken place but all of them failed to kick-start the talks from where they were left.

'India flexible'

According to sources, while India seems to be ready to pick up talks, it is insistent on obtaining the coveted status of a 'data-secure' country that will enable free flow of data between India and EU.

Apparently, India is now ready to pick up the negotiations from where they were left in 2013 contrary to what it said initially that the talks will have to start afresh, according to another official, who is involved in the talks.

In fact, the official added, India is even ready to show "flexibility" in some of the old demands of the EU on lowering tariffs in automobiles and wines and spirits. But in return, it would bargain for the data adequacy issue.

“The ‘data secure’ status will not only allow us to ring-fence some of the issues the country is facing in terms of domestic cyber security laws, it will also augment the government’s entire ‘Digital India’ campaign. But this can become a very difficult bargain. It has become a big issue for India,” said Biswajit Dhar, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

The Modi government is now keen to launch the talks in an effort to attract investments from Germany and France and also get more market access in services trade for Indian professionals. Besides, this will also boost the government’s flagship campaign ‘Make in India.’

India can find more innovative ways like pushing for services embedded in manufacturing, said Bipul Chatterjee, Executive Director, CUTS International.

“This is a new issue that is currently under discussion among various countries. India can try pushing for it if it wants gains out of the EU FTA,” he said.

Source: thehindubusinessline.com- Nov 09, 2017

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Arunachal drafting investor-friendly industrial policy: CM

Arunachal Pradesh is committed to promoting industries, including the textile sector, and is in the process of formulating an investor-friendly industrial policy, chief minister (CM) Pema Khandu said last week inaugurating an apparel and garment unit of Elam Industries in Pasighat.

The unit is the state's first and the largest mechanized textile factory.

On a memorandum submitted by Elam industries proprietor Group Captain (Retd) Mohanto Panging, Khandu said the NITI Aayog will soon revisit the North East Industrial Investment Policy, which has been suspended, and bottlenecks like irregular and insufficient power supply will be addressed.

He said he would discuss with the education department for procurement of school uniform produced by the Elam industries and appealed all private school owners to procure locally-produced school uniforms.

He promised to purchase uniforms from the new unit for Tawang Public School, which he runs

Source: fibre2fashion.com – Nov 08, 2017

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How eShakti makes possible made in India custom-made clothes for women in US

EShakti is a fashion clothing e-commerce company that offers women the option of customisable sizes, as also standard sizes. Buyers can get the kind of neckline, sleeve and length they require. At present, the company primarily serves the American market. It is one of the few international consumer brands to originate from India.

"Looking her best is what the customer expects each time she shops for clothes anywhere. But styling preference is often not met and finding the right size is very difficult with ready-made clothes.

It is a very strongly felt need that we meet. We do customisation on scale. Nobody else does it," says BG Krishnan, founder CEO of eShakti, who hails from Chennai. The fashion design team sits in New York, with back-up designers in India. The chief design officer has 20 years of experience and has worked previously with Liz Claiborne—the American fashion designer and businesswoman, who founded the famous Liz Claiborne Inc, which later became Fifth & Pacific, and is now called Kate Spade & Company.

After the preproduction template is created, the dresses are made at six factories in Gurugram in Haryana. The technology part, the catalogue design, and the back-office work is done from Chennai. A large database is being built, with almost 200,000 neckline, sleeve design changes.

The exercise is completely automated, with the system itself learning to make changes. eShakti started off selling lifestyle fashion clothing to women in the US. Krishnan realised that there is a lot of variation in size and shape, and not all American women are able to get the exact fit. In fact, more than 50% do not conform to the hourglass figure, which is the industry standard.

Further, 65% of American women take plus sizes, but account for only 20% of the market, and 40% women are outside the height range of clothes available. The huge $116 billion apparel market, therefore, has significant untapped potential due to lack of availability of customised clothes.

Online retail accounts for about 20% of the apparel sold—hence, custom-made clothing is an opportunity worth over $15 billion.

Krishnan says that customised clothing is not a niche market, as it impacts over 80% of women customers, regular or plus. What made this Chennai-based brand marketing professional-turned-entrepreneur sell high fashion to the US? "The internet changed the way we do business. It has allowed small people to reach out to small group of customers at a low cost.

Today, customers start talking about us to each other on social media and spread the word around. Marketing budgets are coming down. Many things have become possible that weren't so earlier." In 2008, Krishnan decided to concentrate on custom clothing.

He gave up the factory outsourced preproduction template. “There can be body sizes like 45-38-49. A size 8 is shaped differently for a woman who is 5 feet 8 inches in height, compared to a woman who is, say, 5 feet 2 inches.

The garment has to be made to fit this customer who is far from standard size. The site allows women to send their measurements and make alterations. The dress is virtually created on the computer, with necessary changes made in bits and pieces, and draped on virtual models. Using these models, the pattern is adjusted and gets printed out in the factories in Gurugram. The company has filed for patent for its pattern-making process for customisation.

The demand has been picking up, and eShakti has grown 60% over the previous year. The company has opted for moderate pricing, avoiding premium and budget. Margins stand at 33%. Krishnan is confident of making profits by early next year.

He explains why. “We launch 25 new products every day in line with the trend. We are faster in introducing newer products than a brand like Zara—the Spanish clothing and accessories retailer. We can bring new products to the market in three days, while others launch products at the start of the season, make them six months ahead, and bear the risk of not being able to stay in tune with emerging trends.”

The current average number of SKUs (stock keeping units) on the site is 1,000. It culls out 25 SKUs every day for low performance. It does not have an inventory of finished goods and has only fabrics inventory, which is also for 11 days. Delivery is done in 10-14 days.

The site offers a no-questions-money-back guarantee. Products carry a label providing the names of those who made the garment. The internet era has helped eShakti market itself at comparably lower costs. “We advertise on digital media.

Search engine market has come into its own, which has helped us a lot. Customers act as our ambassadors, even on Facebook ads. We have built a network of bloggers, affiliate platforms and social media. eShakti only promotes products that are doing well, never products that are not. Others are compelled to do the opposite due to their inventory-based system. This makes our messages more credible.”

eShakti has been written about widely in American media in magazines such as Glamour, O, The Oprah Magazine, Essence, Seventeen, Woman's Day, Woman's World, First for Women, among others. In fact, Glamour featured eShakti among a handful of brands including Gap, Ann Taylor, BCBG and Lands' End in its section on style tips. The Wall Street Journal called eShakti as a 'harbinger of mass customisation' in an article called 'Liberation from the Size Tag'.

Krishnan does not face serious competition, yet. The company has shown a lot of growth over the last three years and expects to maintain the momentum in the coming years too. He is confident competition cannot catch up fast. "We are working on ideas that are all based on customer experience.

Technology is driving customer expectations. Our unit production system software, self-measurement systems, just-in-time printing, scalability are exciting concepts. They are difficult to replicate. We have hired specialists in robotics. We keep investing in technology. A David can take on a Goliath with customers promoting us constantly and with technology on our side."

Source: financialexpress.com- Nov 09, 2017

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India's largest denim manufacturer Arvind Ltd to demerge apparel and engineering business

India's largest denim maker Arvind Ltd is demerging its branded apparel and engineering businesses into separate listed firms to pursue independent strategies. The move unlocks value from its fastest-growing lifestyle division, which contributes over a third of its revenue.

The branded apparel business — which includes inhouse brands like Flying Machine, Newport and Excalibur and global brands like US Polo, Tommy Hilfiger, GAP and Nautica - will be spun off into Arvind Fashions.

Its revenue stood at Rs 2,900 crore in FY17. The demerger will also free up Arvind Limited's free cash flow, which was otherwise allocated to other internal businesses. They will now be ploughed back into textiles business, besides lining up around Rs 1,500 crore investment over the next three-four years.

The engineering business, which manufactures critical process equipment for the oil and gas, petrochemicals and pharma industries, will demerge into Anup Engineering. Its revenue stood at Rs 179 crore during the last financial year.

“Arvind Fashions and Anup Engineering will now also pursue independent courses. Financial independence will help unlock the full potential of these businesses,” said Sanjay Lalbhai, chairman and managing director, Arvind Limited.

Existing investors will receive one equity share of Arvind Fashion for every five shares of Arvind Limited they hold. Similarly, they will receive one equity share of Anup Engineering for 27 shares of the parent held by them.

Two years ago, Arvind had demerged its real estate business into Arvind Smart Spaces, whose market cap grew four-fold to Rs 519 crore now. Meanwhile, Arvind’s revenue stood at Rs 2,628 crore for the quarter ended September 2017, up 13 per cent over the corresponding quarter of the previous year, while net profit fell by 15 per cent to Rs 66 crore.

The increase in revenue was driven by a 34.07 per cent jump in apparel business to Rs 1,032.4 crore, while engineering unit’s contribution was insignificant at Rs 47 crore.

Source: newindianexpress.com- Nov 09, 2017

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City textile traders meet Irani in Delhi

A group of textile traders along with some legal experts held a meeting with union Textile minister Smriti Irani on Wednesday at her residence to make presentation on Goods and Service Tax (GST) issues faced by them.

Hemant Desai, a VAT consultant and member of the group that met Irani for two hours, said that issues like tax credit, which traders got till 2017, was discussed at length. Similarly, issue of GST on interest of delayed payment was also discussed. "On both these issues, minister was convinced and she has promised that she would send a note to GST Council," said Desai.

The third issue discussed was that of keeping widows and women involve in textile job work out of GST net. Another issue was that of providing accumulated credit to textile industry. However, the most important issue discussed was that of amnesty scheme.

Delegation demanded amnesty scheme and asked traders to register now and count its effect from July 1. "That way majority of the traders who have not been able to register would be able to do so," Desai said.

Source: timesofindia.com- Nov 09, 2017

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Smriti Irani hints at relief to textiles sector in GST Council meet

Amid the teething troubles experienced by the domestic textiles sector over the Goods and Services Tax (GST), Union Textiles Minister Smriti Irani today said these aspects would be discussed at the next GST Council meeting.

She said tax compliance had clocked significant growth post GST and the various textiles associations had also expressed their willingness to comply with norms under the new tax regime.

"The myth that the Indian textile companies were unwilling for tax compliance under GST has now been dispelled," she told the media at the Uttar Pradesh BJP headquarters here this evening.

She said the Centre had been holding discussions with the textile companies and associations to take their feedback over irritants associated with GST.

"We are committed to proactively engaging with the textiles sector and their problems would be put before the next GST Council meeting for redress, she stressed adding a few recent steps had provided succour to the sector. Irani underlined the textiles sector generated most employment opportunities in the country after agriculture and the Centre was fully aware of the importance of the domestic handloom and handicraft industry, as well as the interest of small weavers.

However, she sought to corner the opposition parties over their criticism of GST saying the GST Council had the representation of all the state governments and all the decisions were collective and taken through coordination.

Referring to demonetisation, Irani said it was a historic and definite step towards transparency, economic strength and raising India's global standing.

She narrated various fiscal and economic data to buttress her argument regarding the purported benefits of demonetisation, including higher tax returns, lower cash holdings, detection of dubious transactions, closure of shell companies etc.

Irani maintained the popular perception of Prime Minister Narendra Modi standing up against corruption and black money was still strong and that the counter-narrative of the opposition to berate demonetisation had failed to convince people.

Meanwhile, she exuded confidence BJP was on course to winning elections in the poll bound states of Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh.

Taking swipe at Congress vice president Rahul Gandhi, Irani observed the party had deferred its much publicised decision to crown him Congress president after realising that it was going to lose the coming state elections as well.

Irani and Rahul had fought the 2014 Lok Sabha poll from Amethi parliamentary constituency. Although, Rahul went on to win, but his victory margin fell significantly.

Source: business-standard.com- Nov 09, 2017

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India forms committees for technical textiles standards

The Indian textiles ministry has formed eight committees to identify specific sectors in technical textiles that warrant formulation of standards, textiles secretary Anant Kumar Singh has said.

A new mission for technical textiles will also be launched, Singh said inaugurating the third edition of the national conclave on standards on technical textiles.

Standards are a must to accelerate the sector's growth, Singh said. The tenure of the earlier mission on technical textiles is over.

The eight committees will also include industry representatives, according to a report in a top business daily.

The conclave was recently organised by the ministry of textiles, the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

The share of Indian technical textiles in the domestic and international textile market is quite low compared to those from developed countries, he added.

Source: in.fashionnetwork.com- Nov 09, 2017

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CCI procures 62k bales at MSP; aims to buy 100 lakh bales this season

With the cotton arrivals beginning in full swing, the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) has already purchased some 62,000 bales of cotton at Minimum Support Price (MSP) so far in this season. The target is to buy some 100 lakh bales this season, top officials of the corporation said.

According to CCI chief MM Chokalingam, the Corporation is prepared to procure some 100 lakh bales of cotton either at Minimum Support Price (MSP) or market prices. MSP purchase has already begun in Telangana and some parts of Gujarat, he said, adding that prices are ranging between Rs

37,000 and Rs 38,500 per candy. Cotton prices are going down below MSP in a couple of states. Prices are expected to decline in Maharashtra as well after November 15, he said.

Last week, urging the government to direct the CCI to procure 100 lakh bales, the India Cotton Federation had written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi estimating a record 400-lakh-bale output for the cotton season 2017-18 due to a 20 % increase in the acreage.

In Gujarat, daily arrivals of raw cotton (kapas) have touched about 28,000 bales and are expected to rise significantly in the next fortnight. Daily arrivals at key cotton growing regions across the country are currently 1.30 lakh bales on a daily basis. CCI has entered the market in Gujarat to procure cotton from 17 out of 22 centres in the state.Normally, the CCI establishes at least 340 purchase centres across the country.

Procurement has started in some parts of Gujarat because of low prices. CCI is paying MSP plus the Rs 500 per quintal bonus announced by the state, thereby effectively putting the procurement prices at Rs 4,750. Procurement in other states, including Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, will begin once the arrivals pick up.

As per the Centre’s first advance estimate, cotton production is likely to reach 3.22 crore bales, while the trade estimates the output to cross 4 crore bales. Gujarat is likely to produce about 25% of the country’s overall production. Cotton acreage in the state has increased to 26.4 lakh hectares against 24 lakh hectares last year.

Nationally, the acreage is estimated to be higher by 10% at about 111.55 lakh hectares (92.33 lakh hectares). Internationally, prices may remain under pressure as higher crop is expected. A latest estimate put out by the International Cotton Advisory Committee projected 2017-18 global cotton production at 255.7 lakh tonnes against 230 lakh tonnes in 2016-17.

Maharashtra cooperation minister Subhash Deshmukh had directed Agriculture Produce Market Committees (APMC) to commence online registrations of farmers for the purchase of cotton from October 18 for the cotton season of 2017-18. Cotton MSP has been raised by Rs 160 per quintal to Rs 4,020 per quintal for medium staple cotton and Rs 4,320 per quintal for long staple cotton.

CCI and Nafed are the two agencies appointed by the government to extend the necessary marketing support to the cotton growers in selling their cotton produce at most competitive prices in the various market yards in all cotton-growing states.

Source financialexpress.com- Nov 09, 2017

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Why Tirupur's Rs 42,000 crore textile hub fears a wipeout

Before November 8, 2016, says K S Ramdas, 48, the small stitching unit he has run next to the Old Bus Stand near Tirupur town for 20 years employed around 15 women workers and made an average of Rs 20,000-25,000 every week.

Now, he and his wife, the only remaining workers at the unit, struggle to make Rs 2,000 in two weeks. He is not afraid to tell the authorities he can't pay the Goods and Services Tax (GST) on the raw material he uses, Ramdas says. "There is nothing left after stitching, transportation, buying other materials and paying our loans."

Ramdas's story is an illustrative snapshot of the Rs 42,000-crore Tirupur textile industry, sustained by 8,500 smallscale, medium and large firms, after the note ban, says Raja Shanmugham, president of the Tirupur Exporters' Association.

"I strongly believed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a serious plan (on demonetisation). We were ready to bear the pain. But at this moment, the industry here is literally being wiped out. Once you kill it, reviving it would be impossible," says Shanmugham, adding that competitors in markets in the United States and the European Union had gained by 10%-11% in the past year.

There were 1,500-odd units such as Ramdas's near the Tirupur Old Bus Stand, working as ancillary units for larger merchants and traders, before the note ban. M Thangavel, an activist who has been working for weavers and garment workers for a decade, says fewer than 500 are still doing regular business; others are either shut or have been waiting for an order for several months now.

Among the women workers Ramdas has laid off are his neighbours with children, who can't travel too far for work. "Now big players badly affected by the demonetisation have stopped outsourcing (cloth) bundles for stitching works," he says.

Senthil Kumar says he has a mechanical engineering degree, but decided to try his hand at running a similar unit, in Avinashi near Tirupur, with his father's retirement benefits. Then came demonetisation. Unable to pay wages, he shut his unit for three months. "Orders were delayed. Then workers refused to work without wages, but there was no currency to pay them," Kumar says. Still, Kumar says, he thought that the pain would be brief, "that it was suffering for my country".

But in April 2017, when he tried to open the unit again, he realised that larger factories that outsourced to him had been affected, too. "Bundles stopped coming for stitching. Earlier I had 10 workers. Now I have only four workers. I try to pay them from my pocket even if there is no work, as their condition is worse than mine, and they were with me all along," he says.

"I lost around Rs 6 lakh. Now it's almost certain that I am not going to get that cash back," Kumar says.

Thangavel says changed rules in banks too, have impacted workers and entrepreneurs. "I helped 15 workers apply for a loan of Rs 5 lakh each with government subsidies to start businesses. Ten of them got approval from Tamil Nadu Adi Dravidar Housing and Development Corporation Limited, but none got their loan amount. We can't even meet bank managers unless we have a politician's recommendation, or are a rich person seeking huge loans."

Shanmugham says 70% of Tirupur industries belong to the micro- and small-scale category, and have not been able to bear the double blow of demonetisation and GST.

No fewer than six lakh workers and their families are affected, he says. "I supported demonetisation. But the time has come to raise an alarm about the serious crisis here," he says, adding, "We are businessmen, we have no other agenda or motives."

Source: indianexpress.com- Nov 09, 2017

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Game to learn hand spinning?

A session this weekend, in Hyderabad, will teach participants to spin yarn using the 'takli'

In this age of increasing focus on wellness, how far can one go to lead a holistic way of life? As much as is feasible in our daily routine. For some of us, this could mean turning away from greasy fast food or following a fitness routine. We could extend it a little more and cut down on plastic and also work towards segregated waste disposal.

Different people engaged in the path of wellness have found themselves pushing the boundaries a little more over a period of time. Clothing choices can swing towards handlooms and natural dyes. But, how many of us would make an effort to learn spinning yarn in the process of getting a step closer to making our own clothes?

It sounds idealistic when Shiva Kumar Bharati talks about his approach to wellness and how he and his team have travelled to different cities to teach focussed groups of audience to spin yarn using the 'takli', an indigenous spindle. He has conducted workshops in Bangalore and Chennai among other cities and is now visiting Hyderabad for an 'open talk'.

32km yarn

His wife Aishwarya and friend Ganeshram will demonstrate how to operate the 'takli' and those interested can pursue it for a longer duration. Following a similar session in Chennai held in August this year, a small group of people engaged with the 'takli' for three months and were collectively able to spin 32km of yarn.

"Once people attend the initial session and understand the spinning process, some of them show interest in pursuing it further. We look for those interested in spinning at least six hours a day for three months. Once we get a substantial amount of yarn, we hand it over to weavers to make garments," says Shiva Kumar.

The group uses indigenous natural fibres for each region. They used the 'naatu paruthi' variety in Tamil Nadu and will use cotton procured from Pondhuru for Hyderabad.

Teaching people hand-spinning is among the several aspects of wellness Shiva Kumar deals with. A wellness coach for the last four years, before which he was a personality coach, he focuses on different aspects of holistic living — including health and nutrition that incorporates native wisdom of eating according to lunar cycle.

Following the inaugural open talk, Shiva Kumar will also be participating in the International Permaculture Convergence (IPC) to be held in Hyderabad and Zaheerabad later this month. At the IPC, his group will demonstrate the use of takli and conduct a three-day spinning workshop.

"Spinning yarn and then getting clothes made by weavers is a slow process, but I feel it's important to engage in these activities. We teach these methods in a game-like process," says Shiva Kumar.

In the course of conversation, Shiva Kumar discloses that he did B.SC Visual Communication at Madras Christian College and some of his friends have gone on to be cinematographers. He mentions George Williams who shot A R Murugadoss' Kaththi starring Vijay and Prasanna who was the editor for Dhanush-starrer Maari directed by Balaji Mohan.

Shiva Kumar got interested in personality and wellness coaching while still in college when he attended a workshop. He hails from Tirupur and his parents are agriculturists. They wanted him to take up a lucrative line of work and were disappointed when he moved in a different direction.

"I got shouted at a lot," he laughs. "Later they told me that my grandfather was originally a weaver. So somewhere, this interest came to me."

Source: thehindu.com- Nov 08, 2017

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