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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Japan aims to expand CPTPP trade pact

Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga recently said his country wants to expand the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). "Japan will aspire for the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific through the early conclusion of the RCEP agreement and the steady implementation and expansion of the CPTPP as next year's chair," Suga said.

The CPTPP links 11 countries.

Suga made the statement in a pre-recorded video message delivered at the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Chief Executive Officers Dialogues.

RCEP, or the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, is the world's largest free trade deal signed this month by 15 economies, while the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific is potentially an even larger pact the 21-member APEC has been aspiring to.

A Chinese commerce ministry spokesman said China is open to the idea of joining the CPTPP, while the United Kingdom earlier this year announced its intent to pursue accession to the pact.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Nov 23, 2020

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Wool Market Looks to Improve in 2021, But Challenges Remain

Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) chairman Colette Garnsey told the organization's annual general meeting that wool still has a bright long-term future after a difficult 2020 for many growers.

AWI is owned by Australian wool growers and is the industry's research, development and marketing company. It is also the owner of the Woolmark brand.

"Following on from the devasting summer bushfires, COVID-19 and the worldwide governments responses to contain it, 2020 is like nothing the wool industry has faced before," Garnsey said. "Our key markets, from China to Northern Europe, have at various times been on the frontline of the pandemic, domestic and global supply chains have been severely disrupted and demand for our fiber has fallen heavily due to consumer demand change driven down by Covid-19."

She said all of these factors have been reflected in the wool price, which, after a significant decline this year, is seeing "something of a rebound on the back of some solid underlying support we hope will be sustained." For the week ended Nov. 20, the benchmark Eastern Market Indicator was down 24 cents to $8.45, AWI reported, after an 18 cent pop to to $8.69 a week earlier, but down from $11.11 in January.

"Substantial rainfall across south-eastern Australia in recent months has been a blessing for many woolgrowers after years of drought," Garnsey said. "[However], wool producers in the West remain in severe drought and any benefits the weather might have brought our industry have been more than offset by the impact of COVID-19."

Garsney told woolgrowers at the meeting that the effects of the drought, the lower wool prices and other factors has resulted in a 45 percent fall in AWI's revenue in 2019-20.

She said there remained a significant uncertainty in the global industry in the short term, particularly with large parts of Europe and North America heading back into lockdowns as they head into winter. However, she said "the longer-term tailwinds for our fiber are undiminished given its sustainability, traceability, wearability and durability."

AWI CEO Stuart McCullough told the meeting that demand for Australian wool overwhelmingly came from one place in 2020–China–although AWI was also pursuing other markets.

"China is Australian wool's biggest customer for many reasons, including the size of its population, climate and growing affluence," he said. "They are a unique partner from a manufacturing point of view, but also from a consumption point of view, as they are now consuming half of the Australian wool clip they buy domestically.

In terms of major economies to recover from the disruption due to Covid-19, China is the clubhouse leader, by a long way. We are making the most of that with our current marketing campaign, which is creating demand for wool and importantly leading to extra sales."

McCullough said AWI has also pursued an "Emerging Markets" strategy for eight years that has seen an increase in processing and consumption of wool in places including India, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

Source: sourcingjournal.com - Nov 23, 2020

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FreightWaves Flashback: What NAFTA means for cross-border trade

Textiles and trucking are among industries with the most at stake in the North American Free Trade Agreement.

NAFTA will lift tariffs and other barriers to commerce between the U.S., Mexico and Canada. The agreement has drawn criticism from U.S. unions and some manufacturers who fear they'll be undercut by cheap Mexican competition. NAFTA supporters, however, say it would be a boon — not only for imports from Mexico but U.S. exports.

The goal of the agreement is to create a single North American market for goods and services. NAFTA would eliminate tariffs on goods produced and traded among the three nations.

The detailed agreement covers various issues ranging from energy to financial services to environmental safeguards. In the area of cross-border trade, however, much of the attention has focused on textiles and apparel and on transportation.

Transportation

In the transportation category, NAFTA applies mainly to trucking. The agreement would end restrictions that prevent U.S. and Mexican truckers from carrying cargoes across the border.

After an initial one-to-three-year period of harmonization of safety and regulatory standards, U.S. motor carriers will get gradually greater access into Mexico and investment restrictions will ease.

At the end of a 10-year phase-in period, U.S. truckers will be able to fully own a Mexican carrier involved in international commerce. Mexican truckers involved solely in domestic movements will be protected from foreign ownership, and for the first few years, Mexican carriers will enjoy sole service to maquiladora operations along the border until access provisions take effect.

Maritime issues were not on the table in the NAFTA talks, but U.S.-flag ship lines won concessions to control of landside activities in Mexican ports. Mexico will allow U.S. ship lines to run private terminals with related stevedoring, customs brokerage and warehousing services.

Textiles, apparel

The agreement's section on textiles and apparel has drawn opposition from unions and mixed reviews from U.S. manufacturers.

Some U.S. apparel companies fear they'll be hurt by cheap labor from south of the border and that Mexico will be used as a way for producers in Asia and other regions to circumvent U.S. quotas.

But NAFTA supporters say the agreement's rules on origin of imported material will prevent Mexico from being used as a "platform" for exports to the U.S. from Asia, Central America and the Caribbean.

The agreement's section on textiles and apparels provides special rules for trade in fibers, yarns, textiles and clothing in the North American market. These provisions take precedence over the Multifiber Arrangement and other textile agreements involving NAFTA countries.

The three nations will eliminate immediately or phase out over a maximum of 10 years their customs duties on textile and apparel goods that are manufactured in North America and meet the NAFTA rules of origin.

Blue jeans, blouses and other apparel would have to be made from yarn spun in North America to qualify for tariff benefits, and fabric would have to be made from North American fibers to qualify.

Canada and Mexico will be allowed to ship a specified amount of clothing and textiles to the U.S. each year made from foreign materials. This quota will rise slightly over five years.

Other points

Textiles and transportation are but two aspects of NAFTA that would affect cross-border trade. Others include:

Elimination of tariffs. NAFTA provides for the progressive elimination of all tariffs on goods qualifying as North American under the agreement's rules of origin. For most goods, existing customs duties will be eliminated immediately or phased out in five or 10 equal stages. For certain sensitive items, the phaseout will be stretched to 15 years.

Tariffs will be phased out from the applied rates in effect July 1,1991, including the U.S. Generalized System of Preferences and the Canadian General Preferential Tariff rates. Tariff phaseouts under the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement will continue as scheduled. NAFTA permits the countries to speed up the phaseout of tariffs.

Import and Export Restrictions. All three countries will eliminate prohibitions and quantitative restrictions applied at the border, such as quotas and import licenses. However, each country will still be able to impose border restrictions in limited circumstances, such as for health or environmental reasons. Special rules apply to trade in agriculture, autos, energy and textiles.

Drawback. NAFTA establishes rules on the use of "drawback," which provides for the refund or waiver of customs duties on materials used in the production of goods subsequently exported to another NAFTA country. Existing drawback programs will terminate by Jan. 1, 2001, for Mexico-U.S. and Canada-Mexico trade.

Customs user fees. The nations have agreed not to impose new customs user fees similar to the U.S. merchandise processing fee or the Mexican customs processing fee, which the two nations have agreed to eliminate by 1999. For goods originating in Canada, the U.S. will phase out its merchandise processing fee by Jan. 1, 1994.

Waiver of customs duties. NAFTA prohibits any new performance-based customs duty waiver or duty remission programs. Existing programs in Mexico will be ended by 2001.

Export taxes. NAFTA prohibits all three countries from applying export taxes unless such taxes also are applied on goods to be consumed domestically. Limited exceptions allow Mexico to impose export taxes to relieve critical shortages of foodstuffs and basic goods.

Other export measures. If a NAFTA country restricts export of a product, it can't reduce the proportion of total supply of that product below the level of the preceding three years or other agreed period. It also cannot impose a higher price on exports to another NAFTA country than the domestic price, or require the disruption of normal supply channels. Mexico has insisted on being exempt from this provision.

Automotive goods. NAFTA will eliminate barriers to trade in North American automobiles, trucks, buses and parts within the free trade area, and eliminate investment restrictions in this sector, over a 10-year transition period.

Each NAFTA country will phase out all duties on its imports of North American automotive goods during the transition period. Most trade in automotive goods between the U.S. and Canada already is conducted on a duty-free basis.

To qualify for preferential tariff treatment, automotive goods must contain a specified percentage of North American content (rising to 62.5% for passenger automobiles and light trucks as well as engines and transmissions for such vehicles, and to 60% for other vehicles and automotive parts).

Click here for more details

Source: freightwaves.com – Nov 23, 2020

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Over 7 in 10 S. Korean exporters eye more shipments in 2021: poll

More than seven in 10 South Korean exporting companies expect their overseas shipments to increase in 2021 from this year, a poll showed Tuesday.

The survey of 801 exporters, taken by the Korea International Trade Association (KITA), showed 71.3 percent of the respondents anticipating an increase in their exports next year.

The poll did not give reasons for their expectations for a hike in overseas shipments in the coming year.

Exports of petroleum products are projected to climb 6 percent on-year in 2021, with those of chips and iron and nonferrous metals likely to gain 3.2 percent and 3.1 percent, respectively.

In contrast, overseas shipments of textiles, clothing and leather goods are forecast to decline 1.9 percent in 2021 from this year, and shipbuilders expect a 2.4 percent on-year fall.

The findings also showed nearly 43 percent of the pollees predicting the coronavirus pandemic to have the biggest impact on their management in the coming year.

Another 27 percent cited increased volatility of the won-dollar exchange rate as the biggest hurdle to their performances.

Despite an expected rise in exports, those exporting companies feared volatile foreign exchange rates could erode their profitability in the new year.

About 61 percent of small and mid-size exporting companies said that they do not manage foreign exchange risk, with the comparable figure coming to around 9 percent for large exporters.

"There is a need to raise exporters' awareness of foreign exchange risk management as the won's strength against the greenback could last for a while amid rising hopes for a U.S. stimulus package and reduced uncertainty of the global market," Kang Seong-eun, a KITA researcher, said.

Source: en.yna.co.kr– Nov 23, 2020

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Restrictions on wool exports to China would cripple industry

Restrictions to Australian wool exports to China's trade, coupled with the lack of viable alternative markets, would have a presumptively crippling effect on the Australian wool industry.

This is according to a report released last week by Rural Bank, outlining China's share of Australian agricultural exports and the potential effect if any trade sanctions were put in place.

The report, using average annual report figures from the last five financial years, showed China is Australia's largest market for wool exports and has been since the early 1990s, with two-thirds of all Australian wool production exported to China.

China accounted for 77.4 per cent of the value of Australian wool exports in 2019/20, totalling $1.9 billion.

This makes wool the most heavily reliant agricultural commodity on China.

At the recent Australian Wool Innovation (AWI) Annual General Meeting (AGM) AWI CEO Stuart McCullough told the meeting the demand for Australian wool overwhelmingly came from one place in 2020 - China.

"China remains a very important customer to us," Mr McCullough said.

"It has the right climate, size of population and growing affluence for the consumption of wool.

"They are a unique partner from a manufacturing point of view, but also from a consumption point of view, currently processing about 83pc of the Australian wool clip of which half of that they are domestically consuming."

But he told the audience AWI were very aware of the tension between China and Australia and were working on an industry to industry basis.

"We are trying to bolster our relations with our industry partners," he said.

"From an industry to industry point of view we can effect change. From a government to government point of view we cannot. We will continue to work on those relationships."

However, Mr McCullough said AWI have had an Emerging Market strategy in place for the past eight years, with good amounts of success.

"This has seen an increase in processing and consumption of wool in places including India, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka," Mr McCullough said.

"All these places show promise from certain parts of processing and the supply chain.

"Emerging Markets remain a key strategy of the company and something we will push forward with in the years to come."

Being the world's largest consumer of wool, China is heavily dependent on Australian wool to produce clothing and textiles with very few alternative suppliers to provide suitable volumes and quality.

Given the significant proportion of Australian wool that is exported to China and China's dominance as a woollen textile manufacturer, it is no surprise that there are few viable alternatives for Australian wool exports.

Italy is Australia's second largest market for wool, however only accounted for 5.8pc of export value in 2019/20.

India and the Czech Republic are similarly small export markets for Australian wool, accounting for 5.4 per cent and 2.9 per cent of export value in 2019/20, respectively.

According the Rural Bank's report, given the scale of woollen textile manufacturing in these countries, there would be a very low possibility of being able to purchase the volume of Australian wool that currently is shipped to China.

However, the report stated the outlook for wool prices are already unfavourable as the impacts of COVID-19 already reduced demand for high value woollen clothing.

Reduced demand is set to be met by increased supply on the back of improved seasonal conditions and carry-over stocks from last season.

This has already seen wool prices drop to the lowest level in over five years in recent months.

But Mr McCullough believes there is opportunity for a level of stability surrounding the prices the market is currently experiencing.

"April to June was an overreaction and certainly the last couple of weeks indicates the prices are stabilising," Mr McCullough said.

"We (AWI) believe that the 1200c/kg level or a bit above that, we could stabilise this production around the 275-295 million kilograms level."

Given China's mutual reliance on the trade of Australian wool it would be unlikely that China would impose significant trade access restrictions on Australian wool.

But any reduction in access would likely lead to a further decline in prices given the current subdued demand and increased supply environment.

Source: northqueenslandregister.com.au– Nov 23, 2020

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Bangladesh's Textile, RMG Sectors Get $256.5M in Energy-Efficiency Funding

The United Nations-backed Green Climate Fund (GCF) has approved $256.5 million in funding to help Bangladesh promote the large-scale adoption of energy-saving technologies and equipment in its textile and ready-made garment (RMG) sectors.

The disbursement, announced last week, will mark the first concessional GCF credit line for the South Asian nation, whose pandemic-battered garment industry generates more than 80 percent of its export earnings and nearly 16 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP).

It's also to date the largest approved funding proposal for any Direct Access Entity (DAE) of GCF, accredited globally, according to the Infrastructure

Development Company, a government-owned non-bank financial institution that finances infrastructure and renewable energy projects in Bangladesh.

Established under UN climate talks in 2010, the GCF is the world's largest dedicated fund to support developing countries seeking to reduce their greenhouse-gas emissions and tackle the impacts of climate change.

Bangladesh's textile and RMG production currently accounts for 38 percent of the total energy consumption in the industrial sector, which in turn makes up 47.8 percent of the country's commercial energy consumption, according to the Sustainable And Renewable Energy Development Authority.

The country's 2015 Energy Efficiency and Conservation Master Plan noted that manufacturing industries in Bangladesh tend to practice poor energy management or utilize old and ill-maintained machines. Chief barriers to the adoption of energy-efficient technology include inadequate financial incentives and a dearth of technical expertise, it added.

Under the scheme, IDCOL will receive $250 million in concessional funds from the GCF for a tenure of 20 years, including a grace period of five years for financing energy-efficient equipment. Of this, $100 million will go toward energy-efficiency projects in the textile sector. IDCOL will funnel another $150 million to four local financial institutions for financing energy efficiency projects in the RMG sector.

The organization will receive an additional $6.5 million technical-assistance grant to cover areas such as capacity building, support in loan disbursal and monitoring and evaluation of program parameters.

With co-financing from IDCOL, local financiers and the project's sponsors, the total program size will exceed $423 million, it said.

"This program is a remarkable success for IDCOL in terms of accessing climate change fund to pave the path for our country to achieve its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," IDCOL said in a statement, singling out SDG 7 (affordable clean energy), SDG 9 (industry, infrastructure and innovation) and SDG 13 (climate change).

The scheme will also help the Bangladesh government achieve its goals of reducing the country's greenhouse-gas emissions by 15 percent below business-as-usual levels by 2030 and its primary energy consumption by 20 percent per GDP by 2030, it added.

Rubana Huq, president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, the nation's largest union of garment factory owners, said she hoped the concessional financing will facilitate the adoption of energy efficient equipment and "further strengthen the competitive advantage of [the] Bangladesh RMG sector."

Source: sourcingjournal.com– Nov 23, 2020

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Sign FTAs with ASEAN nations to boosts exports, urge Bangladesh's experts

At a recent webinar organized by the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs experts, including economists and business leaders, have urged the government to sign free trade agreements with ASEAN countries to boost exports to the bloc.

Experts and industry insiders recommended rigorous efforts to diversify the export basket and focus on marketing those overseas as the country will face stiff competition after graduating to a developing country by 2027, when the European market will withdraw its tariff concession.

In a presentation, Economics Professor DrSelimRaihan said in 2019, against an import bill of roughly $9 billion, Bangladesh had export earnings as low as $846 million from ASEAN.

Prof Raihan said signing of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) -- made up of 10 Southeast Asian countries, as well as South Korea, China, Japan, Australia and New Zealand -- means that intra-regional trade and investment will be boosted significantly in the region.

DrRubanaHuq, President, BGMEA also urged the signing of an FTA with a Rules of Origin clause favorable to ASEAN. She said that by 2030 ASEAN as a bloc would be the fourth largest economy in the world.

NihadKabir, President, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industryadvocated for a pro-active and comprehensive trade policy, taking lessons from competing countries that are doing better in terms of drawing foreign investments and boosting exports.

She said that Bangladesh should appoint trade representatives overseas to promote trade and woo foreign investments.

SaminaNiaz, Bangladesh Ambassador to Vietnam, said high-skilled labour and government's policy support are the major factors why Vietnam is going ahead of Bangladesh in terms of export as well as wooing foreign investments.

However, Vietnam could be a good market for Bangladesh's pharmaceutical products, she said.

Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen, who chaired the webinar, asked all the high commissioners and ambassadors to find ways and means of boosting export to ASEAN and send reports to the ministry.

Source: fashionatingworld.com– Nov 23, 2020

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Pakistan: Readymade Garments Worth 947.419 Mln Exported In Four Months

The exports of ready made garments from the country during first four months of current financial year witnessed about 4.6% growth as compared the exports of the corresponding period of last year.

About 11,378 thousand dozens of ready made garments valuing $947.419 million exported during the period from July-October, 2020-21 as against the exports of 20,850 thousand dozens valuing $905.243 million of same period of last year, according the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

During the period under review, exports of knitwerar grew by 12.30% and about 24,425 thousand dozens of knitwear worth $1.183 billion exported as against the exports of 40,837 thousand dozen valuing $1.053 billion of same period last year, it added.

Meanwhile, about 149,937 metric tons of bed wear costing $899.558 million exported during first four months of current financial year as compared to exports of 166,268 metric tons valuing $818.129 million of same period last year, it added.

The exports of bed wear during last four months witnessed about 9.95% growth as compared the exports of corresponding period of last year, the data reveled.

Meanwhile, country also earned $195.662 million by exporting other textile material as compared the exports of $126.810 million of same period of last year, it added.

The data reveled that exports of other textile material witnessed bout 54.30% growth in last four months of current financial year as against the exports of the same period last year.

It may be recalled here that textile group exports from the country during first four months of current financial year grew by 3.78% as compared the exports of the same period of last year.

During the period under review, textile products worth $4.795 billion exported as compared the exports of $4.586 billion of same period of last year, it added.

However, exports of raw cotton, cotton yarn and cotton carded remained on down track during first four months of current financial year as compared the same period of last year.

On month on month basis, textile group exports posted 6.18% growth in October, 2020 as compared the same months of last year, it added.

Source: urdupoint.com– Nov 24, 2020

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Pakistan: Weekly Cotton Report: Cautious buying observed, rates increased

The rate of cotton increased by Rs 200 to Rs 300 per maund under the influence of bullish trend in the international market as well as due to drastic decrease in the production of cotton. There is a dire need of increasing the production of cotton on policy of "Now or Never". It is estimated that 7 million bales of worth 4 billion dollars will have to be imported from abroad due to the low cotton production in the country.

In the local cotton market during the last week textile and spinning mills were involved in cautious buying while ginners were also involved in buying. The business to some extent was satisfactorily however in first three days of the week the business remained low. Due to threat of second wave of COVID 19 textile mills were involved in limited buying.

The statistics released by Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association till November 15 shows an alarming decline of 2.8 million bales which is 41.47 % less as compared to more than 6.8 million bales produced till November 15 last year.

Due to the decline in cotton production textile mills increased their buying due to which the rate of cotton after stabling increased by Rs 200 to Rs 300 per maund. In the same way the spot rate of Karachi Cotton Association which was decreasing, also started increasing. The ginners increased the buying of Phutti keeping in mind the low production of cotton. The stocks of Phutti in the markets were sold.

The millers were indecisive and they were hesitant to buy cotton in large quantity due to the looming threat of COVID 19. On the other hand big textile groups had a little bit decreased the import of cotton because of the increasing rate of dollar. However, textile mills up till now had signed agreements for the import of three million bales.

According to the sources this year local mills will import six to seven million bales of worth 4 billion dollars to fulfil the demands of local industry. This will be a huge jolt for the already week economy of the country.

The rate of cotton in Sindh is in between Rs 8450 to Rs 9400 per maund. The rate of Phutti is in between Rs 3000 to Rs 4200 per 40 Kg. The rate of Banola is between Rs 1600 to Rs 1850. The rate of cotton in Punjab is in between Rs 8800 to Rs 9600 per maund. The rate of Phutti is in between RS 3500 to Rs 4600 per 40 Kg. The rate of cotton in Balochistan is in between Rs 8500 Rs 9200 per maund while the rate of Phutti is in between RS 4000 to Rs 5000 per 40 Kg. The Spot Rate Committee of the Karachi Cotton Association has decreased the spot rate by Rs 50 per maund and closed it at Rs 9350 per maund.

Chairman Karachi Cotton Brokers Forum Naseem Usman told that mixed trend was seen in international cotton market. The fluctuation was seen in the market after coming of the successful testing of COVID19 vaccine. The Rate of Promise (Waday Ka Bhao) of New York Cotton after reaching 71 US cent per pound reached at 68.50 cents and after that it again touched 71.50 cent. During the week fluctuation was seen in the prices. As per weekly export report of New York Cotton decline of 45% was witnessed in exports as compared to last week.

This week Pakistan was the biggest buyer after Vietnam. On the other hand the markets of Brazil, Argentina and Central Asian states remained stable while bullish trend was witnessed in Indian cotton market. The reason behind bullish trend in Indian cotton market is buying by Indian textile mills.

On the other hand Cotton Cooperation of India is continuously involved in buying. According to the sources the new cotton crop has started arriving in India. Up till now around 4 million bales of cotton has arrived out of which CCI has bought 15 to 16 lac bales. The CCI had already the stock of 5 million bales.

The farmers and ginners of India were of the view that that a lot of support was provided them from the government which increases the motivation of farmers and ginners. On the other hand government of India also gave incentives to the farmers. While in Pakistan no one wants to support farmers of cotton and ginners as a result of which production of cotton is decreasing drastically every year. Due to the continuous loss Pakistani farmers are not interested in growing cotton. It is hinted that this year around 5 million to six million bales were produced in the country this year.

Chairman Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association Dr Jaso Mal soon after taking the charge of chairman is continuously trying to increase the cotton production. He is continuously holding meetings with the heads of the institutes related to cotton.

Due to his efforts a cotton seminar was organized in Islamabad which was attended by Minister for National Food Security Syed Fakhar Imam and Advisor to Prime Minister on trade Razzak Dawood. More over he met Federal Industries Minister Hammad Azhar and other heads and briefed them regarding the issues faced by PCGA and gave them suggestions regarding increasing the production of cotton.

Dr Jaso Mal told Naseem Usman that cotton cultivation land is continuously decreasing. According to Jaso Mal cotton cultivation area is a little bit more than 4 million acres out of which 3 million acres of Punjab and a little bit more than 1 million acres of Balochistan and Sindh.

On the other hand at the start of cotton season the then agriculture minister Punjab Malik Noman Ahmad Langrial claimed that cotton will be cultivated on more than 4 million acres and cotton production will be around 8 million bales while the reality is that cotton was cultivated on 3 million acres of land in Punjab and according to PCGA report 2.5 million bales were produced which will be around 3 million bales at the end of the season.

It is clear that former Minster doesn't have any idea of cotton production but the fact is that concerned departments had given him wrong figures. Dr Jaso Mal said modern technology should be used as well as good quality seeds and medicines should be provided to the farmers for increasing the production of cotton. The incentives should be given to the farmers as well as support price of wheat should be fixed like other crops.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Imran Khan has constituted a Cotton Crop Task Force under the chair of group leader of All Pakistan Textile Mills Association Gohar Ejaz. Gohar said that he had included five big textile groups who used cotton in the group. He said that they visit foreign countries as well as invite foreign experts and evolve a strategy for increasing the production of cotton. The people related to cotton were of the view that this is the high time that we should think now and evolve a strategy for increasing the cotton production in the next season. Other wise, they showed their apprehension that farmers will not grow cotton and started taking interest in other crops then it will be difficult rather impossible to convince that they should grow cotton.

Source: brecorder.com– Nov 23, 2020

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NATIONAL NEWS

India must realise its export potential

For increasing exports, India needs to focus on multiple areas. These include aligning with global standards/global quality, stability and dependability of our policies towards exports, appropriate linkage to technology, among others.

Aligning with global standards: The government had set up the Quality Council of India (QCI) in 1997, wherein the Indian Industry is represented by three premier associations—ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI. The nodal body for the same is the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).

The objectives of the QCI include capturing in detail every aspect of quality standards, accreditation rules and activities, for improving quality of life and wellbeing of citizens of India, and develop accreditation standards to support accreditation programmes; the European standards are taken as a measure to aspire for.

The website of the DPIIT also mentions GLP (good laboratory practices), and the National GLP Compliance Monitoring Authority (NGCMA) has been established by the Department of Science & Technology (DST). The DST has entered into a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the QCI for effective implementation of the GLP certification programme.

Here it must also be mentioned that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has laid down principles of GLP and its certified test facilities. On March 3, 2011, India became a full member of the Mutual Acceptance of Data (MAD) in the OECD's working group on GLP.

Because of this, non-clinical health and safety studies/data of such studies generated by Indian GLP laboratories is acceptable in 36 OECD member countries and six non-member MAD adherence countries.

This facilitates export of chemicals, drugs, pesticides, etc, to these countries, including the developed markets of the US, the UK, Australia, Japan, and the EU. The NGCMA functions as an apex body represented by secretaries of stakeholder ministries, with the secretary of the DST as the chairman.

The NGCMA also functions as per OECD principles of GLP, and is supported by technical committee on GLP. According to the DST, there are 17 trained GLP inspectors from various government laboratories, universities and institutions who evaluate technical competence of an applicant's test facility and adherence to the OECD principles of GLP.

However, GLP compliance certification in India is voluntary in nature. This implies that it's not compulsory for an exporter to seek this certificate before exporting. This, in a way, explains the poor competitiveness of Indian exports as the law of the land allows exporters to export even if they are not GLP-certified.

Stability and dependability of our policies towards exports and FDI-related policies independent of political leadership: Importing countries expect dependability and stability in India's export commitments and FDI policies. For instance, India's exports—particularly of items such as onions and sugar—have been erratic through the years, subject to domestic shortages dictated by vagaries of weather.

This pattern has continued for years and, as a result, India has not been able to meet the twin objectives of catering to domestic demand as well as keeping its international commitments (the country has not been able to properly utilise, and grow, its warehouse facilities and cold storages).

Low adaptive efficiency of our manufacturing exporters to fast-changing global dynamics, tastes and needs: What this implies is that if there is a sudden spurt in demand of any particular commodity in the international market, our manufactured goods exporters are not always able to quickly seize the opportunity to maybe increase production in a limited time and export the same to the destination country. In contrast, China is capable of seizing such opportunities quickly and export the product in a limited timeframe.

Appropriate linkages to technology: This is specifically in the context of agricultural and food processing industry, and even Ayurveda and wellness-linked food items, where India has a comparative advantage. This area has not been adequately explored by India to allow high-value exports and thus higher earnings for our farmers.

The recent article 'Connecting farms to folk: Linking agri-tech to FPOs can create value' (bit.ly/35SXmFx) by T Nanda Kumar elaborates upon the issue of linking agriculture-technology to farmer producer organisations to create value. This idea can be extended to increasing earnings of farmers through exports and the use of technology.

Access to market using digital technologies has brought a great many changes in the way food markets operate. Also, food markets are witnessing interesting changes within India and globally where tastes are shifting from high-sugar and salt and processed foods to wellness safe foods. This is an opportunity for Indian farmers to capture high-value export markets. The best way would be to start post-harvest aggregation for FPOs through agri-tech start-ups. Also, the government can facilitate by connecting them with input companies and helping them with tailor-made solutions.

This would, of course, require careful understanding of different layers of domestic market and linking the same to exports. The ministries of commerce & industry, food processing and agriculture can join hands to explore the possibility of increasing farmers' income through high-value exports. Since the process will need to be digitally-encrypted end-to-end, it will ultimately eliminate leakages through middle men and generate higher earnings for farmers through exports.

Source: financialexpress.com– Nov 24, 2020

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Fostering India-UK ties

There's huge potential in the financial sector

This week I embark on a virtual visit to India as part of my role as an ambassador for the UK's world-leading financial services sector.

The visit will focus on three aspects of huge potential growth and closer collaboration in the coming years: Supporting gender diversity in the financial service sector, fintech and sustainable finance. These will be key drivers for the acceleration of the post-pandemic global economy in the years ahead, and with that comes massive opportunity for UK and Indian investors and businesses.

Firstly, closing the gender gap and realising the full potential of women in the workforce is vital for businesses if we are to unlock the full potential of the post-pandemic global economic recovery. On November 5, the 'UK in

India' network and over 100 partners, including a number of British and Indian businesses, launched the 'Pledge for Progress' campaign, a joint commitment to promote gender equality and take practical steps to tackle gender challenges.

Pledge for Progress

The 'Pledge for Progress' initiative aims to empower organisations and individuals to break down gender norms and together build a gender-equal society. I will be supporting this important agenda through a webinar during my visit on creating supportive workplace environments for gender diversity with leaders from the banking and insurance sectors.

When it comes to fintech and sustainable finance, the joint statement made by UK Chancellor Rishi Sunak and Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman at the 10th UK-India Economic and Financial Dialogue outlines a significant commitment towards continued work together in both areas.

In fintech, our countries are both global leaders. The commitment towards closer cooperation on payments is especially promising, while throughout my visit I'll be meeting some of the most exciting start-ups across India — such as Kaleidofin, Niyo and Signzy — to understand how the UK can be a core part of their development and I am also particularly delighted to be supporting the FinTech Awards programme for Indian and UK Fintech entrepreneurs.

As for sustainable finance, the joint statement demonstrates that the UK and India are both close allies in the fight to green the global financial system and committed to creating the joint prosperity that a green post-pandemic recovery can provide. This will be vital with COP26 — the United Nations' climate change conference — now less than a year away.

In particular, it sets out the aim of bringing India's $1.4 trillion National Infrastructure Pipeline and the City of London — as the global home of green finance and long-term institutional capital — closer together.

The potential benefits of this work are huge; by leaning on the UK's expertise as a means of mobilising capital, we can support a prosperous net zero transition for communities across India and transform lives — by providing cleaner and cheaper energy or better transport links, for example.

Together we are emerging from the pandemic and entering an ambitious new chapter in the UK-India trading relationship. We now have the opportunity to build a new and more resilient economic partnership for the future — one that harnesses the benefits of technology, works in harmony with the environment and empowers all to make the most of their talents and expertise. I hope and expect my visit to be the next step towards making that exciting vision a reality.

Source: thehindubusinessline.com– Nov 23, 2020

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Indo-Vietnam trade expected to cross $20 billion by 2025

From a meagre $200 million in the year 2000, bilateral trade between India and Vietnam has seen steady growth over the years.

India & Vietnam have healthy trade relations of around $13 billion and it is expected to cross $ 20 billion by 2025.

These remarks were made by Dr. Madan Mohan Sethi, Consul General of India in Ho Chi Minh City, during a Webinar organised by FICCI FLO under its W7 (Women of 7 Global Regions) initiative in partnership with Consulate General of India, Ho Chi Minh City & HAWEE(Ho Chi Minh City Association for Women Executives & Entrepreneurs).

The topic of the discussion was India & Vietnam: Opportunities & Potential for Business Collaborations between Women Entrepreneurs

Dr. Sethi said, “India has had a strong, long-standing and deep-rooted relationship and we continue to be one of the most trusted allies for Vietnam. We continue to explore opportunities for future collaboration between India and Vietnam across sectors such as Pharmaceuticals, Textile, Iron & Steel Industry, rubber & Infrastructure.

Ho Chi Minh city which is the heart of Vietnam & the main driving force behind Vietnam’s economy is attracting a lot of investment from other parts of the world. More than 50 % of the Vietnamese population is below 25 years of age, high skill workforce & their work ethics has made Vietnam an attractive destination for investment.”

Jahnabi Phookan, President FICCI FLO said, "Studies suggest that countries which have a higher percentage of women entrepreneurs have had a better growth rate. We look forward to contributing towards enhancing synergy between the two countries & intend to launch our partnership to explore areas of mutual interest. We will be working towards accelerating women participation in the process of economic development by promoting entrepreneurship & professional excellence. Deepening synergy & enhancing the collaboration between India & Vietnam is the most crucial need of the hour"

Cao Thi Ngoc Dung, President, HAWEE said "We will explore opportunities for interaction between the women entrepreneurs of both the countries which would help in strengthening our ever-growing bilateral trade"

Nguyen Thi Bich Ha, Vice President, HAWEE added "I strongly believe that India has a huge potential specially in travel & its associated sectors, cuisines & various aspects of its diverse culture which help in attracting travellers from all parts of the world"

From a meagre $200 million in the year 2000, bilateral trade between India and Vietnam has seen steady growth over the years. In 2019-20, bilateral trade reached $12.34 billion. This marked a decrease of 9.9 percent year-on-year, largely on account of COVID-19 related trade disruptions.

Source: economictimes.com– Nov 22, 2020

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Let us abandon protectionism and embrace free trade

India is not a part of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) trade agreement. This not surprising. Since 2014, the Narendra Modi government has pursued a protectionist agenda. His administration has repeatedly increased tariffs, licence requirements and other restrictions on imports. The Atmanirbhar Bharat agenda entails import substitution. Union minister Nitin Gadkari even suggested that India "end imports" entirely. Such protectionism, however, is self-defeating.

Consider the Digital India mission. This seeks to transform India into a knowledge economy and "digitally empower" citizens. Counter-productively, the Centre has made smartphones and laptops more expensive with tariffs. In a country where 800 million people could not afford such devices even before the price hikes, how will they be digitally empowered? Similarly, Indian youth are constantly urged to acquire new skills to be competitive in the global economy. A lot of skills these days involve the use of computers, which many can't afford, thanks to tariffs. Consequently, many good jobs would be unavailable to them.

The government wants India to be a major export hub. To this end, it has re-introduced Licence Raj-era rules to protect domestic manufacturers. In February, the government gave itself the authority to ban the import of any commodity. Additionally, importing TV sets, tyres, air-conditioners, toys and leather footwear, among other things, now requires a licence from the government. This may be extended to cover at least 350 more products.

Far from helping exports, such rules are likely to render Indian firms uncompetitive in the international market. Why would they bother improving manufacturing processes and investing in better technology if they are shielded from foreign competition? This has been observed in the past. Before 1991, the Indian economy was virtually closed off from the rest of the world. Importing goods was an arduous task, requiring licences and steep tariff payments. As a result, Indian firms couldn't compete internationally.

Only after India's economy was opened up in 1991 did some Indian companies become globally competitive. Consider the case of Tata Steel. Former group chairman Ratan Tata himself admitted that this company was inefficient during the Licence Raj. It did not invest in new technology or try to reduce production costs. That changed once India opened up and it was forced to compete. By 2007, Tata Steel was among the world's lowest cost steel-makers. A similar transformation was observed across various Indian firms and industries.

Today, India seems to be repeating its past mistakes. Protectionism also punishes Indians by making goods more expensive, thus reducing people's purchasing power. For instance, the new iPhone 12 Pro is so expensive in India that it would be cheaper to fly to Dubai, buy it there, and return. This is an extreme example, but it illustrates how much more Indians must pay for the same products than people living elsewhere.

Adding insult to injury, the government provides subsidies to export many of those products. For example, imported cars are taxed heavily in India. Yet, until recently, huge subsidies were doled out for cars exports. Export subsidies have been reduced only because the World Trade Organization ruled against them, but the government has ways to exploit loopholes for their reintroduction. One alternative method employed frequently is to devalue the rupee against other currencies. This makes imports more expensive for Indians, while making Indian products cheaper for foreigners. Another ambition of the administration is to make India the world's third largest economy by 2030. But the Indian economy had been sluggish even before the pandemic, thanks partly to a protectionist turn. Shielding domestic firms from competition and letting domestic costs rise is unlikely to deliver economic growth.

Protectionism does not have any strong economic justification, and so national self-sufficiency and security form the argument for it. Earlier this year, there was a clash along the border with China, which left 20 Indian soldiers dead and may even have resulted in a loss of territory. The government responded by arbitrarily holding up shipments from China at Indian ports.

“China must be taught a lesson" goes the argument. But China does not bear the brunt of these measures. India accounts for only 3% of China's exports and less than 1% of its imports. On the other hand, China supplies many essential commodities to India: goods such as electronics, but also intermediate goods like active ingredients for pharmaceuticals, or parts and machinery used by Indian manufacturers.

Thus, Indian businesses and consumers bear the brunt of any “lesson" supposedly being taught to China.

To stand up to an increasingly belligerent and expansionist Chinese regime, free trade is India's best policy option. If Indian citizens prosper and Indian firms become more competitive, the economy will grow faster. This in turn would mean more tax revenues for the government, some of which can be invested in strengthening the armed forces.

The Modi administration's stated goals are indisputably worthy. India should be a thriving knowledge economy. It should be a globally competitive economic powerhouse. And it should be well defended against hostile neighbours. To achieve these goals, India must abandon its protectionist folly and embrace free trade.

Source: livemint.com– Nov 23, 2020

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Textile sector in Gujarat witnessing heavy buying

Diwali festivities have brought lots of cheers in Gujarat's textile sector as most of the wholesale markets in the state witnessed heavy buying from across the country. Due to nationwide lockdown earlier this year, textile markets in Ahmedabad and Surat remained completely closed for almost three months.

As a result of it, textile traders in Gujarat were facing acute shortage of liquidity amid piles of unsold stock. They witnessed almost zero demand till August end, but from September the market started improving gradually. Despite the fact, traders struggled a lot as their money was stuck and couldn't recover money for their selling in January and February.

"During Diwali festivities came as blessings. Most of the traders emptied their stocks following heavy demands. Many traders could recover stuck payments ahead of Diwali. Items like rayon fabric are being sold in cash, which is an encouraging sign for the textile sector in Gujarat," says Gaurag Bhagat, president of Ahmedabad based New Cloth Market. Bhagat who is also an executive committee member of Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI) says that everyone across the textile value chain is getting work including spinners, weavers, textile processing units and readymade garment makers in wake of healthy demand from across the country.

Almost 90% of the over 300 wholesale textile markets in Surat have started fully functioning from Monday onwards, says Dev Kishan Mangani, chairman, the textile committee of South Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SGCCI) adding, "Generally textile markets in Surat observe prolong Diwali vacation of at least a fortnight. This year, people have hardly 3-4 days of holiday. Everyone in the sector wants to capitalise on overall demand to recover losses incurred due to coronavirus led lockdown."

After Diwali, buying is likely to continue in the wake of marriage season as well as Pongal and Christmas festivities, opines Mangani. He, however, says that everything depends upon Covid-19 situation in Gujarat as well as other parts of the country.

Due to increasing cases of coronavirus, the Gujarat government has decided to impose night curfew in all the four major cities including Ahmedabad, Surat, Vadodara and Rajkot. Representatives of textile traders had a meeting with Surat police commissioner Ajay Tomar on finding a solution to continue textile markets amid increasing Covid-19 cases in the city. According to Mangani, office bearers of various textile associations in the city have given assurance to strict implementation of government guidelines on Covid-19.

Gujarat is considered as the textile hub of India. The state is producing nearly 30% of cotton and 56% Denim of the country's total production. Besides, the state is having a lion's share of 38% in the manufacturing of manmade filament fabric and 30% in woven fabric. Gujarat has also emerged as a leader in technical textile with a 25% share in the total production of India.

Source: financialexpress.com– Nov 24, 2020

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Surat diamond, textile industries told to strictly follow Covid SOPs

With rising Covid-19 cases, the Surat Municipal Corporation, in a bid to prevent the spread of the infection in the textile and diamond industries, have asked them to strictly follow the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), even as night curfew has been enforced in the city.

On Sunday and Monday, 29 positive cases were reported among textile traders and workers, and Surat Municipal Commissioner BN Pani paid a surprise visit to the textile trading markets.

Later, Pani, alongwith Mayor Dr Jagdish Patel, held a meeting with representatives from the textile and diamond industries and instructed them to strictly follow the Standard Operating Procedure.

Talking to The Indian Express, Pani said, "We have instructed the industry representatives to follow Covid SOPs strictly. We have also increased testing in the city so that positive cases can be detected at an early stage and the spread be prevented. The textile market areas are super-spreaders, so we are putting in extra efforts there. We don't want the situation to worsen."

Southern Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SGCCI) president and chairman of Gems and Jewellery Export Promotion council Gujarat Region, Dinesh Navadia, Surat Diamond Association president Nanubhai

Vekariya, Federation of Surat Textile Traders Association president Manoj Agrawal, Southern Gujarat Textile Processing Association president Jitubhai Vakhariya and Federation of Gujarat Weavers Association (FOGWA) representative Mahendra Ramoliya were among those attended the meeting.

Manoj Agrawal said, “We have seen a rise in the number of positive cases among textile traders and workers. We have instructed all the markets to follow SOPs, failing which strict action will be taken. Photos of those violating the SOPs will be sent to SMC authorities for further action… Due to the night curfew, textile traders are facing problems in dispatching parcels, so we have told them to open the shop one hour early in the day and close it early in the evening.”

Mahendra Ramolia said, “We have been taking extra care… Dhanvantri raths had been deployed at various industrial estates. To meet the Pongal festival demand, the industry is also running in full capacity.”

According to Dinesh Navadia all diamond factories in Surat are operational at present, with sufficient work force. “Industry people are following the guidelines… Three time slots are given to workers for lunch to avoid crowding. Social distancing, wearing mask, and regular use of santisers are compulsory at diamond factories.”

As many as 1,400 people were penalised in the city on Monday for violating Covid-19 guidelines, 650 are from the textile trading markets. Seven rapid antigen test (RAT) centres were added to the five existing centres in the textile market areas on Monday.

SMC deputy health commissioner Dr Ashish Naik said, “On Monday, 2,076 RAT tests were done in textile market areas, out of which 14 turned positive, while on Sunday 15 positive cases were recorded.”

On Monday, the city reported 217 Covid cases, taking the tally to 30,586, while one person succumbed to the virus, taking the death toll to 761. As many as 185 people were discharged on Monday, taking the recovery rate to 94 per cent, which is the highest in the state.

Source: indianexpress.com– Nov 24, 2020

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Textiles could be our saviour amid the pandemic: Welspun's Dipali Goenka

Clothing is considered to be one's second skin. It is not surprising that during the pandemic, demand of antimicrobial products has surged for the home textiles brand.

Can textiles lead the way during the pandemic?

Home textiles major Welspun India saw an increasing thrust on antiviral and antimicrobial products when the Covid scare gripped the country. In a freewheeling chat with ET Digital, Dipali Goenka, CEO and joint Managing Director, Welspun India talks about how the pandemic ushered in significant changes for the textile industry and why antiviral is more than just a buzzword. Edited excerpts:

The Economic Times Digital (ET): How have the last seven months panned out for Welspun India?

Dipali Goenka (DG): When the lockdown happened, our immediate problem and concern was that since our factories were shut, there was not a drop of revenue. What came to mind were our people, several of whom are directly or indirectly dependent on us. Around 20,000 people and hundred thousand people, directly or indirectly, depend on us.

However, we saw to it that communities interdependent on Welspun are flourishing and safe. We started manufacturing masks because we have a technical textile vertical and started distributing it in our communities. One month was completely a lockdown for us. But as we moved ahead, the markets opened up.

We took care of our people's safety. We created protocols with safety, social distancing, and got our protocols audited by one of the big fours. And that's the time our journey began and has been very interesting so far.

ET: You forayed into the health and hygiene segment in June to counter the pandemic threat. How has the run been for you as a textile major to enter a segment that hasn't been a part of your core portfolio?

DG: It wasn't a part of our core portfolio, but we have a vertical - technical textiles - which came into complete forefront of what we were doing. So we gradually looked at the relevance of the mask coveralls, medical coveralls, disposable linen like towels and sheets, and that's where we started.

And then we forayed into creating it as a vertical for health and hygiene. Our labs today are BI certified. We have a clean environment to make our health and hygiene goods. Even the vendors are quality checked for the kind of raw material used.

We created antimicrobial towels, sheets and also carpets. When we talk about antimicrobials, we have this woven into our products. Like if you talk about charcoal, bamboo, zinc, copper, silver, they were woven into our textile products and we created antiviral home linen.

Apart from the antiviral products, masks and other goods from technical textile, we also looked at innovations related to sleep. Sleep is becoming a very important aspect.

ET: You have ventured into several antiviral technologies during this period, including antiviral fabrics and flooring. Do such changes mark the beginning of the next generation of textiles?

DG: When we talk about the next generation of textiles, interestingly, health and wellness is going to be the prime. There will be a shift to value and extensions. So many people are going to find value in essential goods, whether it is the food, what they sleep in, and even the clothes they wear.

Apart from that, the health and care economy will become the key, whether it's product, food, FMCG and the home space. 70% of the world population will not go back to work, even when the vaccine comes in.

Apart from health and hygiene, an interesting thing will be sustainability. One out of every six individuals globally is connected directly or indirectly to home textiles or apparel. And it is the second biggest polluter in the. Textile corporates have an enormous responsibility towards sustainability.

ET: Antiviral has become like a buzzword. But do such antiviral technologies, antiviral fabrics, and flooring actually work?

DG: They definitely work in inhibiting the micro-organisms. And we took a little time to launch these things, because we wanted it to be tested. And they definitely are relevant. Also, importantly, I think it's not just about these finishes, I think it also has to go inherently into the products. Whatever we have done - that has been tested and tried.

ET: Are brands increasingly feeling the need to be antiviral in nature now- is safety suddenly the major selling point for a brand?
DG: I would take safety as something which will become important for all of us. So when you talk about safety, it is directly related to health, hygiene and wellness.

Even sleep will become very important because we all know how much time one is online and it definitely plays with our mind. Looking at the schools working online, everyone working online, we need that kind of mental space now. So what is that all about? It is all about sleep. So textiles which are very comfortable and sleep conducive also become important.

ET: How significant a change has COVID-19 ushered in for the textile industry? How much of it do you feel is temporary and how much is permanent?

DG: Very interesting question. Seven months back, when the factories were completely shut down, we were worried. Today, as the world opened up, the countries globally opened up, I think suddenly there is a surge for home textiles. Our factories are chugging along and working at full throttle. So we see that happening in terms of demand. The peak today could be a temporary blip, but the demand is here to stay because people will work from home. So needs for home will improve.

ET: Welspun has been trying to incorporate sustainability and circularity as part of its value ethos. Do you feel sustainability, innovation, and 'vocal for local' can be the answer for a stronger bounce back as far as textile firms are concerned?

DG: As far as 'vocal for local' and the textile industry is concerned, we are dependent and interdependent on MSMEs because that forms the entire supply chain. MSMEs form the bedrock and definitely so for textiles.

We have to look at them [MSMEs] growing because it is going to be the ecosystem that you create. So definitely this is one important part of what we see as textile manufacturers.

India is becoming a very important centre for manufacturing. And you will see in the next couple of years, 90 million non-farming jobs will be created and they need to be created for India to reach the $5 trillion economy status. Manufacturing is the biggest employer and textile, after agriculture, is the biggest employer. So creating that ecosystem and that entire system where India will become a very important strength to reckon with will be important.

Vocal for local will be important, not only for consumers and the population but also for the world. India is going to be that bright spot for the world to see.

ET: As you said, there are reusable masks, breathable coveralls, sleep friendly products, antiviral technologies. So, in all of this, and with the pandemic still out there-can textiles be our saviour?

DG: I would say that textile will become a very important space for India as a whole, because I think we are talking about moving towards non-farming jobs. I think textiles will play a very important role because it's the highest employer. And definitely the demand that we see coming in for the next two years and more, home will be an important place for a consumer. So, definitely, I think textiles will be the focus.

I think India is in the right space where, after China, the largest producer of cotton is India and we have vertical integrated facilities here. And we have the manpower, the knowledge, because textiles have been something which is inherent in our country. So, definitely, I think textiles could be a saviour.

Source: economictimes.com– Nov 23, 2020

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