



# Apparel

## INDIA

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**Bharat Tex 2025**  
*will be bigger & better*



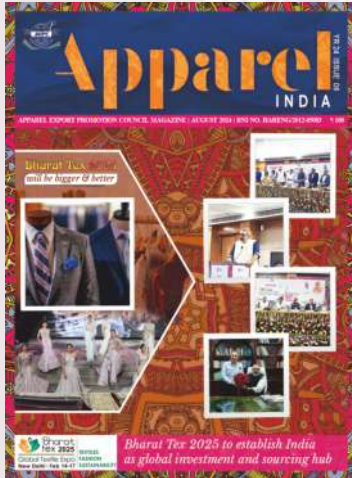
**Bharat tex 2025**  
Global Textile Expo  
New Delhi | Feb 14-17  
TEXTILES  
FASHION  
SUSTAINABILITY

*Bharat Tex 2025 to establish India as global investment and sourcing hub*

# Apparel INDIA

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# Dear Friends,

**T**he latest World Trade Organization (WTO) report has a silver lining for trade. Global goods trade continued its recovery in Q3 2024, building on gains earlier in the year after a sluggish 2023, the WTO stated in its latest Goods Trade Barometer report. Quarter-on-quarter growth averaged 0.7 per cent over the last two quarters, which translates to an annualized rate of 2.7 per cent. This closely aligns with the WTO's April 2024 forecast of a 2.6 per cent increase in global trade volume for the year. A recovery of demand for tradable goods in 2024 is already evident, with indices of new export orders pointing to improved conditions for trade.

*The RMG exports for the month of July 2024 has increased by 11.8% as compared to July 2023. We have reports of good order bookings for the New Year and Christmas. I sincerely*

hope that the momentum continues. The Indian garment industry is set for growth in 2024-25, driven by rising export demand, stable cotton prices, and conducive business ecosystem. Increased consumer spending in this sector and possibility of Free Trade Agreements with the UK and EU also contribute to this positive outlook. However, logistical challenges and high cost of capital continue to pose challenges.

AEPC has already set the ambitious target of 40 billion USD by 2030. The growth will require sustained encouragement from the government and a conducive business ecosystem, which pushes growth. We are constantly improving our compliances and certification for conformity on global standards. The global sourcing brands are also responding very positively. We have submitted our detailed list of demands to the government. PLI2, continuation of interest equalization scheme, incentive to offer a level playing field, liberalization of import policy, etc. are some of our demands.

AEPC team met the Hon'ble Minister of Textiles and the Secretary Textiles and have submitted the list of demands.

Friends, Bharat Tex 2025, the second edition, will be held simultaneously at Bharat Mandapam, and India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida. This event will be held from February 14-17, 2025 at the Bharat Mandapam and would cover the entire value chain of textiles, exhibitions pertaining to handicrafts, garment machinery, ethnic apparel would be exhibited from February 12-15, 2025 at the India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida.

Bharat Tex-2025 assures an enriching experience and great business opportunity, to those participating in 2nd Edition, with the topmost industry leaders, policy makers, global brand heads, Chairmen and Heads of Textile Export Promotion Councils/Textile Industry Associations, etc. it also offers a great business and networking opportunity, enabling you to foster business collaborations since it is one of the largest industry platforms encompassing players from the entire textile value chain from Fibre to Fashion from across the globe.

On the sidelines of Bharat Tex -2025 we shall hold CEO and CXO Round Table conference and conduct Knowledge sessions which will bring to you 50+ engaging knowledge sessions and thematic discussions on various contemporary topics in Textile and Apparel sectors on key issues such as ESG, Innovation, Productivity, Product Diversification and a host of subjects relevant to today's textile business.

Spanning 200,000 square meters, the event will host over 5,000 exhibitors, 6,000 international buyers from over 110 countries and over 1, 20,000 visitors are expected to participate in this year's event. AEPC will be organizing the roundtable meeting in various cities and organize roadshows for mobilizing the participants and global buyers for the ensuing edition of Bharat Tex.

AEPC organized a series of conferences and webinars as part of its capacity building programme in various cities and in online mode. In all these seminars/webinars, the participation was huge and exporters appreciated this initiative of AEPC to spread awareness about the evolving policy and compliance issues. Some of the notable seminars were on: Pan India Awareness programme on Environmental Social Governance, Apparel global market opportunity and risk management for the Indian exporters, Trade facilitation programme in Jaipur and Ludhiana, Importance of standards in promoting safety, trust and sustainability, etc.

AEPC successfully participated in the sourcing at Magic held at Las Vegas Convention Centre, USA organized from 19th August to 21st August, 2024. AEPC participated in this event with 41 booths and received a good response in terms of business. AEPC will be participating in Global Sourcing Expo, Australia and International Apparel and Textiles fair (IATF), Dubai, UAE in the month of November 2024. Please make use of these platforms to get the maximum mileage.

AEPC also celebrated Independence Day, National Flag Day, National Handloom Day and Nature Conservation Day as part of promoting national culture and heritage, which as an organization we are always proud of.

Friends, India's garment sector is an important contributor to the economy, accelerating its shift towards sustainability as concerns mount over the global textile industry's 10 percent share in carbon emissions. Leaders in the field are seeking a balance between economic growth and environmental responsibility, with a focus on making India a global hub for sustainable textiles. I am happy to report that the RMG industry is making significant progress on this account, which will surely pay its dividends in terms of sustained business conversion.

**Please keep sharing your valuable suggestions at [chairman@aepecindia.com](mailto:chairman@aepecindia.com)**

**Sudhir Sekhri**  
**Chairman AEPC**



# 10th Round of India-Australia CECA Negotiations held on five tracks in Sydney

**1**0th Round of India-Australia CECA Negotiations was held from 19-22 August 2024 in Sydney in the areas of Goods, Services, Digital Trade, Government Procurement, Rules of Origin and Agri tech. Intense discussions were held on each of these tracks bringing in clarity and understanding for convergence in the remaining provisions. The 10th Round was held after a gap of around 5 months from the concluded 9th Round. However intersessional meetings were held between these two rounds to bring in convergence on all these tracks as well as under other remaining tracks.



The Indian delegation was led by Shri Rajesh Agrawal, the Chief Negotiator and Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, GOI, and

the Australian delegation was led by Shri Ravi Kewalram, the Chief Negotiator and First Assistant Secretary in DFAT, Australia. The meeting saw intensive discussions and negotiations to narrow down the differences through better understanding of each other's proposals and the way to bring in convergence. Efforts were made by both the sides keeping in mind the domestic sensitivities for reaching a balanced outcome.

All the five negotiating tracks reported the outcomes of their discussions to the Joint meeting of the Chief Negotiators which provided them further guidance to steer their future work. It was decided that given the clear understanding of each other's proposals under the five tracks, track leads from both the sides would work out action plan for negotiations through virtual mode intersessionally before the next round, likely to be held in India.



In addition, the Chief Negotiators reviewed the bilateral trade and investment relations between India and Australia and underscored commitment to

strengthen and enhance the economic partnership between India and Australia through building up on the positive effects of India-Australia ECTA, which entered into force on 29 December 2022. Both the sides made efforts to ensure that the CECA negotiation delivers meaningful benefits and balanced outcome for both sides.



Exploring the feasibility of deepening the cause of economic cooperation between India and Australia through CECA negotiations and thereby promoting investments, fruitful discussions were held with AIBC National Chair, Jodi McKay, CEO Grain Trade Australia Pat O'Shannasy and others in a round table meeting organized by Australia on the sidelines of the 10th Round of India-Australia CECA negotiations. Consulate General of India in Sydney also participated in the discussions. It was also brought to light by the Australian side that they are proposing to hold the first meeting of the India-Australia Agri Tech Forum (IAATF), a newly constituted forum by Australia, in New Delhi on 23 September 2024, with the Indian agricultural stakeholders namely industry, research institutions and Government for building on mutually beneficial relationship by exploring opportunities for focused activity around technology transfer and knowledge sharing in agriculture and horticulture sectors.

The Indian delegation also visited the University of Sydney and Cicada Innovation Centre to understand the research activities being carried out by Australia in agriculture and agritech.

Australia is an important trade and strategic partner of India. Both the countries are part of the 14 country Indo Pacific Economic Forum for Prosperity (IPEF) and Trilateral Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) which is expected to strengthen the supply chain resilience in the region.

The next Round of India-Australia CECA negotiations is likely to be held in November 2024. ■

## *In India's FTA talks with EU, sustainability a key issue*



**T**he next round of talks between the two sides is scheduled for September 23-27. This will be the ninth round since talks were relaunched in 2022.

The European Union (EU)'s insistence on sustainability measures such as deforestation rules and carbon tax on imports of steel, cement and hydrogen are akin to non-tariff barriers that can impede ongoing free trade negotiations with India, people aware of the development said.

The next round of talks for the proposed India-EU free trade agreement (FTA) is scheduled for September 23-27, and New Delhi will simultaneously discuss sustainability measures such as the Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) and EU deforestation regulation (EUDR) with the 27-nation bloc, two people with direct knowledge of the matter said on condition of anonymity.

This will be the ninth round of talks on the FTA since the two sides relaunched negotiations in June 2022. Besides the FTA, negotiations were launched for an Investment Protection Agreement (IPA) and a Geographical Indicators (GIs) Agreement. The eighth round was completed in June, leading to the conclusion of two chapters so far — one on small and medium enterprises and the other on sustainable food systems.

India is committed to environment protection and sustainability, the people said, citing Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE) initiative. India, however, is against making instruments such as EUDR and CBAM part of trade commitments because these are perceived as instruments of protectionism and act as non-tariff barriers (NTBs), one of the people said.

The Indian side believes CBAM is a form of tax that can lead to tariffs of up to 35% on imports of high-carbon goods such as cement, aluminium, fertilisers, chemicals including hydrogen, iron and steel from India.

CBAM will be levied on carbon intensive products to offset "carbon leakage" by importing high-carbon goods. Carbon leakage occurs when firms in the EU move carbon-intensive production abroad to countries, where less stringent climate policies are in place, or when EU products get replaced by more carbon-intensive imports. The tax is being implemented in phases from October

2023 and will become fully effective from January 2026.

EUDR or the regulation on deforestation-free products covers production of commodities such as cattle, wood, cocoa, soy, palm oil, coffee, rubber and some of their derived products such as leather, chocolate, tyres and furniture. This demands certification from importers to prove their products didn't originate from recently deforested land or contributed to forest degradation. EUDR will start to apply from December 30, 2024.

The second person said: "The EU is India's major market and mechanisms such as CBAM and EUDR would adversely impact the bloc's exports."

Indian industry feels developed economies such as EU states are devising innovative ways to restrict imports from developing countries, and measures such as CBAM and EUDR violate World Trade Organisation (WTO) agreements.

These regulations would make Indian exports uncompetitive in Europe, the first person said.

EU ambassador Hervé Delphin recently told HT that CBAM is not an "instrument of protectionism" and described such concerns as a "misconceived fear". He said if CBAM had been conceived for protectionist purposes, "it would have had a completely different design".

Delphin added, "CBAM has been designed as part of our climate agenda, of decarbonisation and sustainability." He also said that India and the EU have a common interest in developing resilient supply chains at a time of "reconfiguration of global supply chains with an eye on the optimisation of sources".

At the same time, Delphin had acknowledged that the FTA negotiations will need a "strategic and political drive" as the talks are set to get harder.

The EU is India's second-biggest export destination with about \$76 billion of merchandise exports in 2023-24. It imported goods worth more than \$59 billion that year.

The people cited above said an FTA deal with the EU would be difficult if it insists on such "unequitable" regulations, knowing well that India is making significant efforts towards green transition, which exceed its commitments at global forums. ■



## *Commerce Minister Shri Piyush Goyal holds discussions on expanding India-Singapore Economic Collaboration through strategic investment dialogues*

**U**nion Minister for Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal discussed bilateral trade and investment issues with the global business leaders in Singapore like Temasek holdings, DBS bank, OMERS, Keppal infrastructure and TVS Motor Company in Singapore.

Shri Goyal reached Singapore on 25th August 2024 to participate in 2nd India Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR) to be held on 26th August 2024.

In the meetings, key discussions were held to explore and enhance investment opportunities between India and Singapore, focusing on mutual growth and collaboration across diverse sectors.

The focus was on exploring investment opportunities in India, leveraging the country's economic growth, and fostering collaboration across various sectors. These discussions emphasized scaling up investments, particularly in the SME sector, enhancing India's investment climate, supporting sustainable development through decarbonization, and identifying synergies for family-owned businesses in a changing global landscape. These engagements underscore the commitment to strengthening economic ties between India and Singapore for mutual growth and innovation.

Commerce and Industry Minister also visited the Institute of Technical Education (ITE) Headquarters and ITE College Central in Singapore to explore opportunities for collaboration between India and Singapore in developing cutting-edge learning environments.

These environments aim to equip young talent with future-ready skills tailored to the diverse needs of various industries. During his visit, he toured their teaching facilities, including the Aerospace and Smart Manufacturing Hubs, and gained deeper insights into the philosophy of continuing education and skill development.

These discussions and visits reinforce the strong and growing relationship between India and Singapore, highlighting the strategic importance of their economic and educational partnerships in driving future growth and development. Singapore has been a major source of FDI for India. In the year 2023-24, Singapore was the largest source of foreign direct investment (FDI) for India, with an estimated \$11.77 billion inflows. In bilateral trade, Singapore was the 6th largest global trade partner of India in 2023-24 with a total trade of \$35.61 billion. ■

# INDIA'S READY-MADE GARMENT (RMG)

## India's RMG Export to World

Month	(In US\$ Mn.)			YoY Growth (%)	
	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2023-24	2024-25
				Over 2022-23	Over 2023-24
April	1575.5	1210.9	1198.4	-23.1	-1.0
May	1415.9	1235.8	1357.4	-12.7	9.8
June	1501.7	1248.0	1293.9	-16.9	3.7
July	1381.1	1142.0	1277.2	-17.3	11.8
August	1233.9	1133.4		-8.1	
September	1066.0	946.3		-11.2	
October	988.7	908.8		-8.1	
November	1200.3	1021.2		-14.9	
December	1481.4	1295.3		-12.6	
January	1493.0	1441.3		-3.5	
February	1407.7	1476.3		4.9	
March	1448.3	1472.8		1.7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>16193.4</b>	<b>14532.0</b>	<b>5126.9</b>	<b>-10.3</b>	<b>6.0</b>

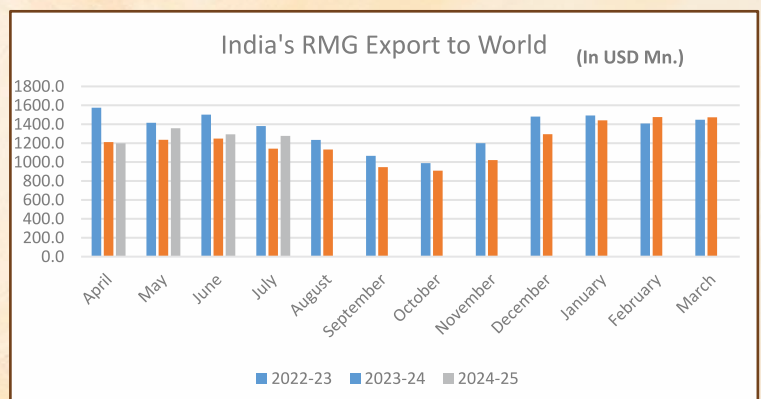
Note- 1) Data for the month of Jul 2024 is provisional data released on PIB by Ministry of Commerce on 14.08.2024

2) Sum of the value for (Apr-Jul) 2022-2023 is USD 5874.2 mn and (Apr-Jul) 2023-24 is USD 4836.6 mn. and (Apr-Jul) 2024-25 is USD 5126.9 mn.

3) Source: DGCI&S 2024; Compiled by the R&PA Department, AEPC

RMG exports for the month of July 2024 has increased by 11.8% as compared to July 2023 and declined by 7.5 % as compared to July 2022.

Similarly, cumulative RMG exports for the period April-July 2024-25 is USD 5126.9 mn. showing a growth of 6.0% over April-July 2023-24 and a decline of 12.7 % over April-Jul 2022-23.





# India's Index of Industrial Production (IIP)

**Textiles & Wearing Apparel update for India's Index of Industrial Production (IIP) for the month of June in FY 2024-25**

Month	Manufacture of Textiles		Growth Rate (In %)	Manufacture of Wearing Apparel		Growth Rate (In %)
	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25 over 2023-24	2023-24	2024-25	2024-25 over 2023-24
<b>April</b>	105.6	105.9	0.3	92.1	103.7	12.6
<b>May</b>	107.4	106.7	-0.7	112.2	123.2	9.8
<b>June</b>	107.8	106.0	-1.7	120.1	122.7	2.2
<b>July</b>	108.5		-	103.9		-
<b>August</b>	106.9		-	97.6		-
<b>September</b>	107.8		-	102.4		-
<b>October</b>	109.0		-	98.5		-
<b>November</b>	103.7		-	93.0		-
<b>December</b>	112.4		-	112.8		-
<b>January</b>	111.2		-	118.2		-
<b>February</b>	105.7		-	125.4		-
<b>March</b>	109.3		-	143.1		-
<b>Cumulative Index (Apr-Jun)</b>	<b>106.9</b>	<b>105.8</b>	<b>-1.0</b>	<b>108.1</b>	<b>117.0</b>	<b>8.2</b>

Source: CSO,2024

\* Figures for June 2024 are Quick Estimates

# The growth rates over corresponding period of previous year are to be interpreted considering the unusual circumstances on account of COVID 19 Pandemic since March 2020

Compiled by the R&PA Department, AEPC



- **Manufacturing of Textiles Index** for the month of June, 2024 is 106.0 which has declined by 1.7 % as compared to June, 2023.
- **Manufacturing of Textiles Index** for the financial year 2024-25 is 105.8 which has declined by 1.0 % as compared to the year 2023-24.
- **Manufacturing of Wearing Apparel Index** for the month of June, 2024 is 122.7 which has increased by 2.2 % as compared to June, 2023.
- **Manufacturing of Wearing Apparel Index** for the financial year 2024-25 is 117.0 which has shown a growth of 8.2 % as compared to the financial year 2023-24.



*Bharat Tex 2025 will be bigger, better... to position India as a favored investment and sourcing hub of textiles globally*



## India's textile industry to grow to \$350 bn by 2030, add 3.5 cr jobs: Union Minister

**I**ndia's textile industry is expected to grow to \$350 billion by 2030 and add 3.5 crore jobs, textiles minister Giriraj Singh said during the curtain raiser event of Bharat Tex 2025.



Shri Singh urged the Indians companies to ask their foreign buyers to participate in the event which is scheduled to be held from February 14-17, 2025. "We have scope to add more exhibitors, looking at the global market size. Last time it was 3,500 exhibitors and now it is 5,000," the textiles minister said.



Shri Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for Textiles, Smt. Rachana Shah, Secretary; Shri Rohit Kansal, Additional Secretary, MoT; Shri Sudhir Sekhri,

Chairman AEPC, Shri Naren Goenka, Chairman Bharat Tex; Shri Bhadrash Dodhia, Co-chairman and Shri Rakesh Kumar, General Secretary, Bharat Tex; and many other stalwarts from textile industry were present at the curtain raiser.

At the Curtain Raiser event of 'Bharat Tex 2025', Shri Piyush Goyal said that the Indian demographic dividend will aid India's growth ahead of China.

The Bharat Tex 2025 will be held simultaneously at Bharat Mandapam, and India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida. This event will be held from February 14-17, 2025 at the Bharat Mandapam and would cover the entire value chain of textiles, exhibitions pertaining to handicrafts, garment machinery, ethnic apparel would be exhibited from February 12-15, 2025 at the India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida.

"We also need to bring FDI. We must ensure that India is recognised by its 'Bharat' brand and green sustainable textile products at the world stage," Shri Singh said.

Spanning 200,000 square meters, the event will host over 5,000 exhibitors, 6,000 international buyers from over 110 countries and over 1, 20,000 visitors are expected to participate in this year's event. Around 100 international speakers are also going to participate in the event. The event, organised by a consortium of Textile Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) and supported by the Ministry of Textiles.

Shri Pabitra Margherita, Minister of State for Textiles said that "the recent survey on Bharat Tex shows that 92% of buyers are willing to come back for

*the next edition and 47% of exhibitors want to take a bigger space...all this shows that Bharat Tex 2024 was a resounding success and I congratulate everyone for this.”*

*“The aim of Bharat Tex is to make India a global sourcing and position it as an investment destination so as to attract FDI and domestic investment and that international brands source from here,” said Textiles Secretary Smt. Rachna Shah.*



*The Bharat Tex exhibition will feature Apparel, Home Furnishings, Floor Coverings, Fibres, Yarns, Threads, Fabrics, Carpets, Silk, Textiles based Handicrafts, Technical Textiles and many more. It will also have a retail High Street focusing on India’s fashion retail market opportunities.*

*Shri Sudhir Sekhri, Chairman AEPC who is also the member of Bharat Tex Core Committee, said, “The second edition of Bharat Tex will be an opportunity for the large number of India’s garment exporters to explore its full potential and consolidate the leads generated during the first edition.” India is uniquely placed to harness the geo-politically shift owing to the disturbance in the neighborhood and the China Plus One Strategy. Of late, the global brand sourcing strategy is seeing a definitive shift, owing to its realignment of its value chain. As the global buyers are looking for alternative sourcing destinations; India is ready to meet their sourcing demand. I am sure this transformative platform will foster collaboration paving the way for significant business growth for the entire textiles value chain, he added.*

*Bharat Tex 2nd edition will surely be a great platform wherein global brands can see the entire*

*textiles value chain and India’s prowess in terms of entire fiber, fabrics and finished products. Additionally, the entire textile industry will showcase cutting edge technology & innovations, sustainable practices and evolving textiles trends, Chairman AEPC observed.*

*The coming together of all the Export Promotion Councils and other textiles bodies with one goal, under one roof for leveraging the textiles exports from India is historic which was not imagined a year earlier, Chairman AEPC stated.*

*Besides, exhibitions on handicrafts and apparel machinery, displays of ethnic wear shall be hosted at the sister venue of India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida.*

*The textile extravaganza will offer a range of activities, a global sized trade fair and expo, a global scale textiles conference, seminars, CEO roundtables, and B2B and G2G meetings. It will also feature strategic investment announcements, product launches, and collaborations poised to reshape the global textile industry. Attendees can look forward to live demonstrations, cultural events, and fashion presentations, designer and brand exhibitions and sustainability workshops, and expert talks. Around 100 international speakers will contribute to discussions on the future of the textile industry.*



*The Textiles Minister also released a booklet and website of Bharat Tex 2025 during the event. ■*



## *Centre takes multiple initiatives to boost exports, production & employment generation in Textiles Sector*

**T**he Government has taken a number of initiatives/ measures since 2019 to boost exports, production and employment generation in textiles sector. Some of the major initiatives include:

Government has approved setting up of Seven Pradhan Mantri Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel (PM MITRA) Parks in Greenfield/Brownfield sites with an outlay of Rs. 4,445 crore for a period of seven years upto 2027-28. PM MITRA Parks are being set up in Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh & Maharashtra.

Government is implementing the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Textiles, with an approved outlay of Rs. 10,683 crore, to promote production of MMF Apparel, MMF Fabrics and Products of Technical Textiles in the country to enable Textile sector to achieve size and scale and to become competitive. 73 companies have been selected under PLI scheme.

The scheme of Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) is under implementation for Exports of Apparel / Garments and made-ups in order to make the textile sector competitive in international market.

Government has allocated an outlay of Rs.1,480 Crore for advance research and innovation in Technical Textiles sector. 137 research and development projects have been sanctioned so far, out of which 49 have been sanctioned in the year 2023-24.

Under Samarth Scheme so far 3.27 lakh beneficiaries have been imparted skill development, out of which 1.33 lakhs beneficiaries received skill training in 2023-24.

Silk Samagra-2 is being implemented since 19.01.2022 for holistic development of the sericulture industry. The Silk Samagra-2 scheme consists of various components and sub-components under Mulberry, Vanya and Post-cocoon Sectors. The programme synergises the efforts of State Governments and other implementing agencies to improve the quality, productivity and production of

raw silk, besides generating employment opportunities, particularly in the rural areas.

Under National Handloom Development Programme, financial assistance is provided to eligible handloom agencies/weavers for raw materials, procurement of upgraded looms & accessories, solar lighting units, construction of workshed, skilling, product & design development, technical and common infrastructure, marketing of handloom products in domestic/overseas markets, concessional loans under weavers' MUDRA scheme, scholarships and social security etc.

Under Raw Material Supply Scheme (RMSS), quality yarn & their blends are provided to the eligible Handloom weavers at subsidized rates. Total 340 lakh kg of yarn has been supplied during financial year 2023-2024 under the Scheme.

Under National Handicraft Development Programme and Comprehensive Handicrafts Cluster Development Scheme, support to artisans is provided through marketing support, skill development by means of Design programme, training programs, cluster development, direct benefit to artisans, infrastructure and technology support and assistance through Ambedkar Hastshilp Vikas Yojana.

This information was given by the Union Minister of State for Textiles, Shri Pabitra Margherita in a written reply in the Rajya Sabha. ■



## *Boilers Bill, 2024 introduced in Rajya Sabha*



- *New Bill to replace a century old law*
- *Boilers Bill to improve trust by decriminalising offences 3 out of 7 offences decriminalised,*
- *speedy redressal for all non-criminal offences*
- *Obsolete provisions removed to enhance Ease of Doing Business*
- *New Act to prioritise safety of workers*

**T**he Boilers Bill, 2024 was introduced in Rajya Sabha by Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal. It repeals the Boilers Act, 1923 (5 of 1923).

Earlier, the Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi on 2nd August, 2024 had approved repealing of the existing Boilers Act, 1923 and introduction of “Boilers Bill, 2024” in the Parliament.



### ***The salient features of the Bill are as under:***

It has been drafted as per modern drafting practices to give more clarity to the provisions of the Bill. The similar provisions which are at different places in the Boilers Act, 1923 have been grouped together in six chapters for easier reading and understanding of the Act. All the functions/powers of the Central Government, State Governments and Central Boilers Board have been enumerated in detail to avoid any confusion.

For Ease of Doing Business (EoDB), the Bill will benefit boiler users including those in MSME sector as provisions related to the decriminalisation have been



incorporated in the Bill. Out of the seven offences, to ensure safety of boilers and personnel dealing with boilers, in four major offences which may result in loss of life and property, criminal penalties are retained. For other offences, provision is being made for fiscal penalty. Moreover, for all non-criminal offences 'fine' has been converted into 'penalty' to be levied through executive mechanism instead of courts as existed earlier.

The proposed bill will enhance safety as specific provisions have been made in the Bill to ensure the safety of persons working inside a boiler and that repair of boiler is undertaken by qualified and competent persons.

### **Background**

The Government of India is examining all the pre-constitution Acts from the point of view of their suitability and relevance in the current times.

The Boilers Act, 1923, a pre-constitution Act, deals with the safety of life and property. Hence, it is important to continue with the enactment by reviewing the provisions of the existing Act and introduction of a new Boilers Bill, 2024 in Parliament.

The Boilers Act, 1923 was comprehensively amended in the year 2007 by the Indian Boilers (Amendment) Act, 2007 wherein inspection and certification by independent third party inspecting authorities was introduced. However, on further examination of the existing Act, a need has been felt for review of the Act and also to incorporate the decriminalised provisions in consonance with the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023.

The existing Act has, accordingly, been reviewed wherein redundant /obsolete provisions have been omitted and certain substantive enabling provisions have been made for the rules and regulations which were not earlier provided. Certain new definitions have also been incorporated and few existing definitions have been amended so as to give more clarity to the provisions of the Bill.

Act has been divided into six chapters and provisions have been rearranged chapter wise. (In existing Act there are no chapters and similar provisions are at different places).

**Following redundant/obsolete provisions in the Boilers Act, 1923 have been omitted;**

**Section 1(2):** Applicability of Act to the whole of India,

**Section 2A:** Applicability of Act to feed-pipes, and

**Section 2B:** Applicability of Act to Economiser.

**Following new definitions have been incorporated in the Clause -2 of the Boilers Bill, 2024: 2(k):** notification, **2(p):** regulations, **2(q):** State Government.

**Following definitions have been amended in the Clause -2 of the Boilers Bill, 2024 in line with provisions in the Act: 2(d):** Boiler component, **2(f):** Competent Authority, **2(j):** Inspecting Authority.

Decriminalization provisions for the Boilers Act, 1923 as contained in the Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Bill, have been incorporated in clauses 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 39 & 42 and two new clauses namely, 35 (Adjudication) & 36 (Appeal) have been incorporated in the Boilers Bill, 2024. Accordingly, for non-criminal offences 'fine' has been converted into 'penalty' (Clauses: 27, 28, 30(1) and 31).

Following provisions have been incorporated in the Bill for making substantive enabling provisions for the rules and regulations existing in the Act: Clauses, 3(7), 5(8), 10(1)(f), 10(2), 11(2), 12(9), 23(4) & 32(2).

Power of Central Government to make rules (clause 39); Power of Board to make regulations (clause 40) and Power of State Government to make rules (clause 42) in the Bill have been enumerated in detail, in line with different provisions in the Bill.

**Following new provisions have been incorporated in the Bill:**

**(i)** Clause 43 (Power to remove difficulties): For removal of any difficulty in giving effect to the provisions of the Boilers Act, 2024 within a period of three years

**(ii)** Clause 44 (Repeal and Saving): For saving different rules, regulations, orders etc. under the Boilers Act, 1923 till new rules, regulations, orders etc. are notified under the re-enacted Boilers Act, 2024.

Redrafting of different clauses done as per current drafting practices and referencing of different provisions incorporated. ■

## Quality Council of India introduces QCI Surajya Recognition & Ranking Framework to Drive Excellence in Key Sectors



- Framework categorized under four pillars for building a quality-driven Viksit Bharat
- Uttar Pradesh leads in Shiksha, Gujarat in Samridhhi category

The Quality Council of India (QCI) is introducing the QCI Surajya Recognition & Ranking Framework, an empowering initiative designed to drive excellence among states to improve quality of life of citizens for a Viksit Bharat. This framework is categorized under four pillars: Shiksha (Education), Swasthya (Health), Samridhhi (Prosperity), and Sushasan (Governance). The Surajya Recognition acknowledges the outstanding performance and commitment to quality by states and organisations in these vital areas.

Enhancing the quality of education (Shiksha) through robust accreditation and certification processes. Guaranteeing superior healthcare (Swasthya) services throughout the nation and upholding the highest standards of medical care in every region. Driving economic prosperity (Samridhhi) through quality assurance in manufacturing and industrial practices. Ensuring transparent, accountable, and responsive governance (Sushasan) that upholds the highest standards of quality.

The August rankings focuses upon Shiksha, Swasthya, and Samridhhi, with Sushasan to feature in future editions.

In the Shiksha Rankings, Uttar Pradesh leads with the highest number of accreditations, assessments, and ratings. Delhi, as a union territory, also ranks prominently.

In the Swasthya category, Chhattisgarh, Karnataka, Kerala, Rajasthan, Mizoram and Manipur stand out with complete certification in the Ayushman Arogya Yojana (NABH), while Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra lead in the Medical Entry Level Testing Labs (MELT) rankings (NABL). Among the union territories, Chandigarh excels with 100% certification in Ayushman Arogya Yojana, and Jammu & Kashmir shows commendable performance with a 71.43% certification rate. Delhi, followed by Jammu & Kashmir, excels in MELT.

In the Samridhhi category, Gujarat, Karnataka, and Rajasthan lead with the highest number of ZED certifications, particularly in the Micro category. Jammu & Kashmir and Delhi also achieved significant certifications in ZED. For the MSME Competitive LEAN Scheme, Maharashtra and Bihar are the top performers.

Introducing the Surajya Recognition and Ranking Framework, Shri Jaxay Shah, Chairperson, QCI, stated, "Our states are our strengths, and their collective synergy is the driving force behind creating a Viksit Bharat. Through Surajya, we aim to promote high standards and best practices in key sectors of India, paving the way for states to achieve and maintain the highest standards of excellence. This initiative celebrates their commitment to quality and continuous improvement."

The QCI Surajya Recognition & Ranking Framework, beginning with the August 2024 rankings, sets a new benchmark for excellence across the nation. The rankings have been compiled, incorporating both monthly and cumulative figures across various initiatives to ensure a comprehensive and balanced evaluation. It aims to create a developed India by recognizing and rewarding states and organizations that excel in quality and innovation. With a strong emphasis on enhancing collaborative governance and fostering sustainable development, this framework is a significant step towards building a prosperous and quality-driven Viksit Bharat. ■





## Govt policies boosting foreign investments in India

**T**he Government has taken several steps to boost investments and attract more industrial activities in the country. The Government of India, through Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and other Central Ministries/ Departments, provides an enabling eco-system for the overall industrial development of the country through appropriate policy interventions.

In addition to on-going schemes of other Ministries/ Departments, this Department has taken various steps for promotion and facilitation of industries across States/UTs, which includes Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, such as Make in India, Start-up India, PM GatiShakti, National Industrial Corridor Programme, Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, promoting Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) and reducing compliance burden, National Single Window System (NSWS), India Industrial Land Bank, Project Monitoring Group (PMG), liberalization of FDI policy, Indian Footwear and Leather Development Programme (IFLDP) Scheme, etc. An institutional mechanism to fast-track investments has been put in place, in the form of Project Development Cells (PDCs), in all concerned Ministries/ Departments of Government of India.

Further, the Government has implemented various measures to stimulate Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows. The Government has put in place an investor friendly policy, wherein most sectors except certain strategically important sectors, are open for 100% FDI under the automatic route. Almost 90% of the FDI inflow is received under the automatic route. India continues to open up its economy to global investors by raising FDI limits, removing regulatory barriers, developing infrastructure and improving business environment.

The Government has taken initiatives to simplify, rationalize, digitize and decriminalize Government to Business (G2B) and Citizen Interface across all the States/UTs with the objective to improve Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living. So far, more than 42,000 compliances have been reduced and more than 3,800 provisions have been decriminalized. Jan Vishwas (Amendment of Provisions) Act, 2023 was introduced to further the trust-based governance and enable de-criminalization of minor offences and compliance-based laws and requirements. The Act

decriminalized 183 provisions under 42 Acts administered by 19 Ministries/Departments. India ranks 63rd in the World Bank's Doing Business Report (DBR), 2020 published in October, 2019. India's rank in the DBR improved from 142nd in 2014 to 63rd in 2019, registering a jump of 79 ranks in a span of 5 years.

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has developed the National Single Window System (NSWS) portal as a one-stop for taking all the regulatory approvals and services in the country. NSWS platform aims to streamline the G2B ecosystems and further promote ease of doing business in India. The platform promotes Accountability, Information Symmetry and Transparency within the G2B ecosystem by providing a national portal, PAN based verification and registration and access to more than 270+ G2B services at the central level. Thus, it also eliminates the need for multiple interfaces and registrations for businesses to avail requisite G2B services. The national portal integrates the existing clearance systems of the various Ministries/ Departments of Govt. of India and State Governments. Currently, approvals of 32 Central Ministries/ Departments and 28 States/UTs Single Window Systems have been integrated with the NSWS Portal. A total of 277 Central approvals and 2,977 state approvals can be applied through NSWS. Information pertaining to 653 central approvals and 6,198 state approvals are available to businesses via the Know Your Approval (KYA) module of NSWS.

This information has been provided by the Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Shri Jitin Prasada in a written reply in the Lok Sabha. ■





## *Cabinet approves 12 Industrial nodes/cities under National Industrial Corridor Development Programme*

- ◆ *India will soon wear a grand necklace of Industrial Smart Cities on the backbone of Golden Quadrilateral*
- ◆ *Government greenlights 12 projects worth Rs. 28,602 crore to revolutionize India's industrial landscape*
- ◆ *World-class greenfield industrial smart cities to be built ahead of demand with 'plug-n-play' and 'walk-to-work' concepts*



**I**ndia will soon wear a grand necklace of Industrial Smart Cities as in a landmark decision. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved 12 new project proposals under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme (NICDP) with an estimated investment of Rs. 28,602 crore. This move is set to transform the industrial landscape of the country creating a robust network of industrial nodes and cities that will significantly boost economic growth and global competitiveness.



Spanning across 10 states and strategically planned along 6 major corridors, these projects represent a significant leap forward in India's quest to enhance its manufacturing capabilities and economic growth. These industrial areas will be located in Khurpia in Uttarakhand, Rajpura-Patiala in Punjab, Dighi in Maharashtra, Palakkad in Kerala, Agra and Prayagraj in UP, Gaya in Bihar, Zaheerabad in Telangana, Orvakal and Koppurthy in AP and Jodhpur-Pali in Rajasthan.

### **Key Highlights:**

**Strategic Investments:** NICDP is designed to foster a vibrant industrial ecosystem by facilitating investments from both large anchor industries and Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). These industrial nodes will act as catalysts for achieving \$2 trillion in exports by 2030, reflecting the government's vision of a self-reliant and globally competitive India.

**Smart Cities and Modern Infrastructure:** The new industrial cities will be developed as greenfield smart cities of global standards, built "ahead of demand" on the 'plug-n-play' and 'walk-to-work' concepts. This approach ensures that the cities are equipped with advanced infrastructure that supports sustainable and efficient industrial operations.

**Area Approach on PM GatiShakti:** Aligned with the PM GatiShakti National Master Plan, the projects will feature multi-modal connectivity infrastructure, ensuring seamless movement of people, goods, and services. The industrial cities are envisioned to be growth centers for transformation of whole region.

**Vision for a 'Viksit Bharat':** The approval of these projects is a step forward in realizing the vision of 'Viksit Bharat' - a developed India. By positioning India as a strong player in the Global Value Chains (GVC), the NICDP will provide developed land parcels ready for immediate allotment, making it easier for domestic and international investors to set up manufacturing units in India. This aligns with the broader objective of creating an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' or a self-reliant India, fostering economic growth through enhanced industrial output and employment.

### **Economic Impact and Employment Generation:**

NICDP is expected to generate significant employment opportunities, with an estimated 1 million direct jobs and upto 3 million indirect jobs being created through planned industrialization. This will not only provide livelihood opportunities but also contribute to the socio-economic upliftment of the regions where these projects are being implemented.

**Commitment to Sustainable Development:** The projects under the NICDP are designed with a focus on sustainability, incorporating ICT-enabled utilities and green technologies to minimize environmental impact. By providing quality, reliable, and sustainable infrastructure, the government aims to create industrial cities that are not just hubs of economic activity but also models of environmental stewardship.

The approval of 12 new industrial nodes under the NICDP marks a significant milestone in India's journey towards becoming a global manufacturing powerhouse. With a strategic focus on integrated development, sustainable infrastructure, and seamless connectivity, these projects are set to redefine India's industrial landscape and drive the nation's economic growth for years to come.

In addition to these new sanctions, the NICDP has already seen the completion of four projects, with another four currently under implementation. This continued progress highlights the government's commitment to transforming India's industrial sector and fostering a vibrant, sustainable, and inclusive economic environment. ■



## Government undertakes various efforts to promote and support startups

-More than 1.4 lakh startups recognized by DPIIT as on 30th June 2024



The Government has undertaken various efforts to promote and support startups in the country. The Government, with the objective of building a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation, startups and encouraging investments in the startup ecosystem of the country, launched the Startup India initiative on 16th January 2016.

As per eligibility conditions prescribed under G.S.R. notification 127 (E) dated 19th February 2019, entities are recognized as 'startups' under the Startup India initiative by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). DPIIT has recognized 1,40,803 entities as startups as on 30th June 2024.

**The details of various programs undertaken by the Government to promote startups across the country are as under:**

**1. Startup India Action Plan:** An Action Plan for Startup India was unveiled on 16th January 2016. The Action Plan comprises of 19 action items spanning across areas such as "Simplification and handholding", "Funding support and incentives" and "Industry-academia partnership and incubation". The Action Plan laid the foundation of Government support, schemes and incentives envisaged to create a vibrant startup ecosystem in the country.

**2. Startup India:** The Way Ahead at 5 years celebration of Startup India was unveiled on 16th January 2021 which includes actionable plans for promotion of ease of doing business for startups, greater role of technology in executing various reforms, building capacities of stakeholders and enabling a digital Aatmanirbhar Bharat.



**3. Startup India Seed Fund Scheme (SISFS):** Easy availability of capital is essential for entrepreneurs at the early stages of growth of an enterprise. The capital required at this stage often presents a make-or-break situation for startups with good business ideas. The Scheme aims to provide financial assistance to startups for proof of concept, prototype development, product trials, market entry and commercialization. Rs. 945 crore has been sanctioned under the SISFS Scheme for period of 4 years starting from 2021- 22.

**4. Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:** The Government has established FFS with corpus of Rs. 10,000 crore, to meet the funding needs of startups. DPIIT is the monitoring agency and Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) is the operating agency for FFS. The total corpus of Rs. 10,000 crore is envisaged to be provided over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycles based on progress of the scheme and availability of funds. It has not only made capital available for startups at early stage, seed stage and growth stage but also played a catalytic role in terms of facilitating raising of domestic capital, reducing dependence on foreign capital and encouraging home grown and new venture capital funds.



**5. Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups (CGSS):** The Government has established the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Startups for providing credit guarantees to loans extended to DPIIT recognized startups by Scheduled Commercial Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and Venture Debt Funds (VDFs) under SEBI registered Alternative Investment Funds. CGSS is aimed at providing credit guarantee up to a specified limit against loans extended by Member Institutions (MIs) to finance eligible borrowers viz. DPIIT recognised startups.

**6. Regulatory Reforms:** Over 55 regulatory reforms have been undertaken by the Government since 2016 to enhance ease of doing business, ease of raising capital and reduce compliance burden for the startup ecosystem.

**7. Ease of Procurement:** To enable ease of procurement, Central Ministries/ Departments are directed to relax conditions of prior turnover and prior experience in public procurement for all DPIIT recognised startups subject to meeting quality and technical specifications. Further, Government e- Marketplace (GeM) also facilitates and promotes procurement of products and services by the Government from startups.

**8. Self-Certification under Labour and Environmental laws:** Startups are allowed to self-certify their compliance under 9 Labour and 3 Environment laws for a period of 3 to 5 years from the date of incorporation.

**9. Income Tax Exemption for 3 years:** Startups incorporated on or after 1st April 2016 can apply for income tax exemption. The recognized startups that are granted an Inter-Ministerial Board Certificate are exempted from income- tax for a period of 3 consecutive years out of 10 years since incorporation.

**10. Faster Exit for Startups:** The Government has notified Startups as 'fast track firms' enabling them to wind up operations within 90 days vis-a-vis 180 days for other companies.

**11. Exemption for the Purpose Of Clause (VII)(b) of Sub-section (2) of Section 56 of the Act (2019):** A DPIIT recognized startup is eligible for exemption from the provisions of section 56(2)(viib) of the Income Tax Act.

**12. Support for Intellectual Property Protection:**

Startups are eligible for fast- tracked patent application examination and disposal. The Government launched Start-ups Intellectual Property Protection (SIPP) which facilitates the startups to file applications for patents, designs and trademarks through registered facilitators in appropriate IP offices by paying only the statutory fees. Facilitators under this Scheme are responsible for providing general advisory on different IPRs, and information on protecting and promoting IPRs in other countries. The Government bears the entire fees of the facilitators for any number of patents, trademark or designs, and startups only bear the cost of the statutory fees payable. Startups are provided with an 80% rebate in filing of patents and 50% rebate in filling of trademark vis-a-vis other companies.



**13. Startup India Hub:** The Government launched a Startup India Online Hub on 19th June 2017 which is one of its kind online platform for all stakeholders of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in India to discover, connect and engage with each other. The Online Hub hosts Startups, Investors, Funds, Mentors, Academic Institutions, Incubators, Accelerators, Corporates, Government Bodies and more.

**14. International Market Access to Indian Startups:** One of the key objectives under the Startup India initiative is to help connect Indian startup ecosystem to global startup ecosystems through various engagement models. This has been done through international Government to Government partnerships, participation in international forums and hosting of global events. Startup India has launched bridges with around 20 countries that provides a soft- landing platform for startups from the partner nations and aid in promoting cross collaboration.

**15. Startup India Showcase:** Startup India Showcase is an online discovery platform for the most promising

startups of the country chosen through various programs for startups exhibited in a form of virtual profiles. The startups showcased on the platform have distinctly emerged as the best in their fields. These innovations span across various cutting-edge sectors such as Fintech, Enterprise Tech, Social Impact, Health Tech, EdTech, among others. These startups are solving critical problems and have shown exceptional innovation in their respective sectors. Ecosystem stakeholders have nurtured and supported these startups, thereby validating their presence on this platform.

**16. National Startup Advisory Council:** The Government in January 2020 notified constitution of the National Startup Advisory Council to advise the Government on measures needed to build a strong ecosystem for nurturing innovation and startups in the country to drive sustainable economic growth and generate large scale employment opportunities. Besides the ex-officio members, the council has a number of non-official members, representing various stakeholders from the startup ecosystem.

**17. National Startup Awards (NSA):** National Startup Awards is an initiative to recognize and reward outstanding startups and ecosystem enablers that are building innovative products or solutions and scalable enterprises, with high potential of employment generation or wealth creation, demonstrating measurable social impact. Handholding support is provided to all the finalists across various tracks viz. Investor Connect, Mentorship, Corporate Connect, Government Connect, International Market Access, Regulatory Support, Startup Champions on Doordarshan and Startup India Showcase, etc.

**18. States' Startup Ranking Framework (SRF):** States' Startup Ranking Framework is a unique initiative to harness strength of competitive federalism and create a flourishing startup ecosystem in the country. The major objectives of the ranking exercise are facilitating states to identify, learn and replace good practices, highlighting the policy intervention by states for promoting startup ecosystem and fostering competitiveness among states.

**19. Startup Champions on Doordarshan:** Startup Champions program on Doordarshan is a one-hour weekly program covering stories of award winning/nationally recognised startups. It is telecasted in both Hindi and English across Doordarshan network

channels.

**20. Startup India Innovation Week:** The Government organises Startup India Innovation week around the National Startup Day i.e., 16th January, with the primary goal was to bring together the country's key startups, entrepreneurs, investors, incubators, funding entities, banks, policymakers, and other national/international stakeholders to celebrate entrepreneurship and promote innovation.

**21. ASCEND:** Under ASCEND (Accelerating Startup Caliber & Entrepreneurial Drive), sensitization workshops on startups and entrepreneurship were conducted for all eight North Eastern States with the objective to capacitate and augment knowledge on key aspects of entrepreneurship and continue efforts towards creating a robust startup ecosystem in these States.

**22. The Startup India Investor Connect Portal:** This has been co-developed under the Startup India Initiative with SIDBI, serving as an intermediary platform that links startups and investors in order to help entrepreneurs from various industries, functions, stages, regions, and backgrounds in mobilizing capital. The portal has been built with the aim to enable in particular; early-stage startups located anywhere in the country to showcase themselves to leading investors/venture capital funds.

**23. National Mentorship Portal (MAARG):** In order to facilitate accessibility to mentorship for startups in every part of the country, the Mentorship, Advisory, Assistance, Resilience, and Growth (MAARG) program has been developed and launched under the Startup India Initiative.

**24. MeitY Start-up Hub (MSH):** A nodal entity to interconnect deep tech startup infrastructure pan India, the 'MeitY Start-up Hub' (MSH) has been set up under Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY). MSH is assisting incubators and startups improving their scalability, market outreach, etc. and has also established partnerships with various stakeholders paving the way for an economy built on innovation and technological advancement.

**25. TIDE 2.0 Scheme:** Technology Incubation and Development of Entrepreneurs (TIDE 2.0) Scheme was initiated in the year 2019 to promote tech entrepreneurship through financial and technical



support to incubators engaged in supporting ICT startups using emerging technologies such as IoT, AI, Block-chain, Robotics etc. The Scheme is being implemented through incubators through a three-tiered structure with an overarching objective to promote incubation activities at institutes of higher learning and premier Research & Development (R&D) organisations.

**26. Domain specific Centres of Excellence:** MeitY has operationalised Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in diverse areas of national interest for driving self-sufficiency and creating capabilities to capture new and emerging technology areas. These domain specific CoEs act as enablers and aid in making India an innovation hub in emerging through democratisation of innovation and realisation of prototypes.

**27. Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC):** An Industry - academia interface agency of Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology is supporting biotech startups in all biotech sectors including clean energy and emerging technologies. Project based funding is provided to startups and companies for product/technology development under its key Schemes including Biotech Ignition Grant (BIG), Small Business Innovation Research Initiative (SBIRI) and Biotechnology Industry Partnership Programme (BIPP). Incubation support to the startups and companies is also provided through Bioincubators Nurturing Entrepreneurship for Scaling Technologies (BioNEST) Scheme.

**28. SAMRIDH Scheme:** MeitY has launched the 'Startup Accelerator Programme of MeitY for Product Innovation, Development and Growth (SAMRIDH)' with an aim to support existing and upcoming Accelerators to further select and accelerate potential software product-based startups to scale.

**29. Next Generation Incubation Scheme (NGIS):** NGIS has been approved to support software product ecosystem and to address a significant portion of National Policy on Software Product (NPSP) 2019.

**30. Support for International Patent Protection in E&IT (SIP-EIT) Scheme:** MeitY had initiated a scheme titled "Support for International Patent Protection in E&IT (SIP-EIT) that encourages international patent filing by Indian Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and startups so as to encourage innovation and recognize the value and capabilities of global IP.

**31. North-East Region Entrepreneurship & Startup Summit (NERES):** Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship organised NERES, an entrepreneurship and startup summit aimed at offering a platform to promising startups and aspiring entrepreneurs across North-East Region (NER). The objective of NERES was aimed at stirring up entrepreneurial minds across the NER states and promotes startup entrepreneurs by offering them a platform to pitch their business ideas and also addressing various challenges faced by the startups. The programme provided a platform for aspiring and existing entrepreneurs/startups to participate and showcase their business ideas and plan. It also helped them to learn more about the good practices and network with fellow startups. The programme has paved the way for startups and entrepreneur to seek support from mentors and an ecosystem that support their business growth.

**32. Atal Innovation Mission:** The Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) is a flagship initiative of the Government, set up by NITI Aayog to promote innovation and entrepreneurship across the length and breadth of the country. AIM has established Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) with the objective of fostering curiosity, creativity and imagination in young minds and inculcate skills such as design mind-set, computational thinking, adaptive learning, physical computing, rapid calculations, measurements etc.

**33. National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI):** Department of Science and Technology (DST) had launched an umbrella programme called National Initiative for Developing and Harnessing Innovations (NIDHI) in 2016 for nurturing ideas and innovations (knowledge-based and technology-driven) into successful startups.

**34. Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX):** iDEX



was launched by the Department of Defense Production, Ministry of Defense, to achieve self-reliance and foster innovation and technology development in Defense and Aerospace by engaging industries such as MSMEs

and startups, R&D institutes and academia and providing grants to carry out R&D. ■

## *How Will Bangladesh Crisis Impact Indian Textile and FMCG Industry?*



**B**angladesh's tumultuous internal conflict has left the country's economic activities in a lurch, with a leading rating agency saying that Bangladesh crisis will have moderate impact on Indian industry.

The political crisis in Bangladesh has raised serious concerns regarding trade relationship between India and the neighboring state. While Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has resigned and is in the process of seeking political asylum, the country is waiting for an interim government to take over.

A report by Acuité Ratings & Research Limited said that the impact of trade between both the countries might take a hit in the short term, however the overall impact on India's trade and economy is not likely to be significant since the trade with Bangladesh (merchandise exports and imports) comprise only 1.2% of India's aggregate trade volumes.

"Bangladesh is a major market for Indian yarn, accounting for 25-30% of the total yarn exports. If the crisis persists for a longer period, such exports which stood at USD 1.3 bn in FY24, may be negatively impacted. This may translate to lower realizations and margins in the export markets," said the report.

However, on the positive side, there could be opportunities for Indian fabric and garment manufacturers to increase their export market share amidst the ongoing stir in Bangladesh.

"The textile industry has become a major sector of Bangladesh's economy, representing 80% of its exports and 15% of its GDP. The primary markets for Bangladesh textiles goods are the European Union, United States, Canada, Australia, and Japan. There can be a potential 15-20% decline in RMG exports for the next summer season (January-March 2025) due to recent disruptions and factory shutdowns. This can be both a short and a longer-term opportunity for Indian garment exporters if the crisis does not dissipate in a short period of period," said the report.

The report highlighted that there could be challenges for the FMCG industry tough. "Many Indian FMCG companies have exposure to the Bangladesh market. The sector may experience some challenges, such as disruptions in supply chains, changes in

consumer demand, and potential increases in costs due to the crisis. However, the overall effect will vary based on each company's exposure, diversification, and ability to adapt to changing conditions," it added.

Suman Chowdhury, Chief Economist and Head-Research, Acuité Ratings & Research said, "While Bangladesh is an important trade partner for India, the impact of the severe political crisis there will have a very limited impact on India's overall trade volumes. The exports to Bangladesh account for only 2.5% of India's total merchandise exports. However, specific industry segments where exports to that country constitute a large share such as cotton yarn, may witness a material impact in the near term; on the other hand, this can also be an opportunity for Indian RMG players who had lost export markets earlier to Bangladesh."

Chowdhury added, Indian manufacturing and infrastructure companies having business or project operations or supply linkages therein are likely to witness some disruption and uncertainty in the near term.

"Importantly, the current scenario may lead to deferment or slowdown of fresh investments by Indian companies in the neighbouring country pending the establishment of a stable government. The proposed FTA with Bangladesh will also be put on the backburner under the current circumstances," he said. ■







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# Union Budget, 2024-25 and the Indian Textile Sector: Upsides and Scope for Improvement

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**P**rior to gauging the appositeness of this year's Union Budget for India's textile sector, it is pertinent to note the following details regarding the same.



## **Upsides:**

In the Union Budget for 2024-25, the allocation for the textile sector has been augmented by ₹974 Crore, bringing the total to ₹4,417.09 Crore. There is also an increase in funding for research and capacity building in the sector, which has risen from ₹380 Crore to ₹686 Crore. Furthermore, the budget proposes a decrease in the Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on real down-filling materials obtained from ducks or geese, with the intention of bolstering the competitiveness of Indian leather and textile exports.

Funds for the National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) jumped 120.59 per cent from ₹175 Crore to ₹375 Crore under the new Budget. Technical Textiles are valued for their functionality and performance



and used in sectors like aerospace, agriculture, automotive, construction, healthcare, home care and protective gear. This would give the much-needed boost to the Technical Textile sector and its exports. Currently, India's exports of Technical Textiles stand at USD 2.5 Billion. With the help of increased fund allocation to the NTTM, the same are expected to reach USD 10 Billion mark over the next five years.

The Basic Customs Duty (BCD) on Methylene Diphenyl Diisocyanate (MDI) utilized in the production of spandex yarn will be decreased from 7.5 per cent to 5 per cent. This adjustment aims to rectify duty inversion and lower input expenses for textile and apparels manufacturers. The BCD on authentic down filling sourced from ducks or geese will be reduced from 30 per cent to 10 per cent, thereby making high-quality filling materials more accessible to garment manufacturers. This would raise the export competitiveness of India's textile and apparels sector. The range of goods exempted from duties for the manufacturing of textile garments, leather products, footwear and other leather items intended for export will be broadened, contributing to a decrease in production costs. The structure of export duties on raw hides, skins and leather will be streamlined and rationalized to facilitate more efficient export operations.

A new centrally sponsored scheme has been introduced to promote skilling, which will be the 4th scheme under the Prime Minister's package. This scheme will focus on skilling in collaboration with state governments and Industry, aiming to skill 20 lakh youth over a 5-year period. Additionally, 1000 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) will be upgraded in hub and spoke arrangements with outcome orientation. The course content and design will be aligned to the skill needs of the industry and new courses will be introduced for emergent needs. The budget has allocated special attention to Micro, Small Scale and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and manufacturing, particularly labour-intensive manufacturing. It is widely known that the Indian textile sector is composed primarily of MSMEs and hence, the latest thrust on the same is expected to give a boost to the country's textile landscape. A package covering financing, regulatory changes and technology support for MSMEs has been formulated to help them grow and compete globally. The same had

already been announced in the interim budget earlier this year. A Credit Guarantee Scheme will be introduced to facilitate term loans to MSMEs for the purchase of machinery and equipment without collateral or third-party guarantee. The scheme will operate on pooling of credit risks of such MSMEs, with a separately constituted self-financing guarantee fund providing guarantee cover up to 100 Crore to each applicant. Additionally, public sector banks will build their in-house capabilities to revise the assessment model for MSME credit, based on the scoring of digital footprints of MSMEs in the economy.

So, the Union Budget, 2024-25 is an attempt at improving the allocation of funds towards India's textiles sector. The same objective has been attained to an extent but is amiss for categories of the likes of Amended Technology Upgradation Funds Scheme (ATUFS), Development of Jute Industries, and Textile Infrastructure. Keeping aside the other two classifications, it would have been better if 'Textile Infrastructure' received enhanced fund allocations under the latest Budget. The increased fund allocations for National Handloom Development Programme, National Handicraft Development Programme, Development of Silk Textiles, Research and Capacity Building, and North East Textiles Promotion Scheme are expected to enhance artisans' skills, improve their market access and foster innovations in the sector.

In addition, the Budget 2024-25 has some other provisions for the country's textile sector, albeit indirectly. MSMEs and traditional artisans will have the opportunity to sell their products in international markets through the establishment of E-Commerce Export Hubs in public-private-partnership (PPP) mode. These hubs will provide trade and export related services under one roof, within a seamless regulatory and logistics framework. The government plans to support the creation of investment-ready Industrial Parks in or near 100 cities, in collaboration with states and the private sector, by optimizing town planning schemes. Additionally, twelve industrial parks will be approved under the National Industrial Corridor Development Programme. Credit Guarantee Scheme will be implemented to assist MSMEs in obtaining term loans for the acquisition of machinery and equipment without requiring collateral or a third-

party guarantee. This scheme will function by pooling the credit risks of these MSMEs. A self-financing guarantee fund, established separately, will offer guarantee coverage of up to ₹100 Crore to each applicant, even though the loan amount may exceed this limit. The borrower will be responsible for paying an upfront guarantee fee and an annual guarantee fee based on the decreasing loan balance. Public sector banks will enhance their internal capabilities to reassess MSME credit, rather than depending on external evaluations. They will take the initiative in creating or commissioning a new credit assessment model that evaluates the digital footprint of MSMEs in the economy. This approach is anticipated to be a significant advancement from the conventional credit assessment methods that rely solely on asset or turnover criteria, and will also cater to MSMEs lacking a formal accounting system. Furthermore, a new mechanism will be introduced to ensure the continuity of bank credit to MSMEs during challenging times. MSMEs facing difficulties beyond their control and classified under the 'special mention account' (SMA) category will receive credit support to sustain their operations and prevent them from falling into the NPA stage. This credit availability will be backed by a guarantee from a fund promoted by the government.

### Scope for Improvement:



MSMEs account for about 80 per cent of India's textile industry. Credit schemes would provide the much-needed impetus to growth of a large number of textile and garment MSMEs and enable them to expand their operations. As such it is vital to accord importance to the MSME sector, and by that very extension, to the textile industry. The said goal has been accomplished somewhat in this year's Budget. However, there is

possibility for further improvement. Also, despite the announcement of skilling initiatives, the quality of industrial training institutes remains a concern. This directly impacts employability of the country's semi-skilled youth in labour-intensive sectors such as textiles. In addition, there should be an emphasis on sustainability of the Indian textile industry. Financial support for clean and green transition in the textile sector is the need of the hour. The Government, along with other stakeholders in the industry, should ensure generous funding for circular textile economy. For the purpose, it can channel funds towards digitization in this sector. Precisely, towards technologies of the likes of 3-D Printing, Internet of Things (IoT) and Robotics to confront pervasive challenges of the likes of imprecise printing patterns, environmental degradation due to pollution induced by the use of coloured dyes, lack of space optimization in the textile manufacturing units leading to inefficient usage of energy.

Additionally, the new income tax regime can be tweaked further to raise the purchasing power of the masses. The same could increase the consumer demand for textiles domestically. Moreover, the competitiveness of the sector is still a big concern as the downstream textile industry is suffering from non-availability of critical raw materials, both cotton and man-made fibres at internationally competitive prices. This often impedes India's full-fledged participation in the Global Value Chains (GVCs) of the textile and apparels segment.

Furthermore, following the conclusion of the TUFSS scheme in March 2022, the industry lacks any investment incentive programmes for expansion or modernization. Its survival will depend on its ability to scale up, as it has been steadily losing ground to competitors based in countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam and China due to its lack of scale. Aside from the increased Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme allocation of INR 45 Crores from the previous INR 5 Crores, there has been no significant Budgetary provision to address the declining competitiveness in the sector. The PLI scheme has not been effective in meeting the investment needs of the majority. The revival of capital subsidy schemes is necessary to encourage large-scale investments. 'Viksit Bharat' would require more decisive actions to revive the sector, which generates employment.



To sum up, the Union Budget, 2024-25 is a step in the right direction as far as paying due attention to India's textile sector is concerned. However, there is scope for significant improvement when it comes to funding for the sector's infrastructural upgradation and enhancing its export competitiveness within a circular framework. Future Union and state-level Budgets must focus on the following. First, making the Indian textile sector more ecologically friendly. More than 5 per cent of the total volume of landfills worldwide consists of textile wastes. As per some latest surveys, textile manufacturing is the second largest source of pollution, after the oil industry. The increasing demand for 'fast fashion' products is only worsening this issue. Specifically, the Indian textile industry must be cautious about the significant amount of regular wastage of water. Unless this wastage is minimized through carefully planned strategies, there could be long term consequences. A variety of ionic chemicals, acids, industrial enzymes, and alkaline solutions are utilized in the day-to-day operations of the textile industry. During the singeing process (to remove floating fibres), various types of gases are released into ambient air. Many of these chemicals can pose serious health hazards, such as cancer risks, besides causing pollution. Given that the industry employs 45 million people, their health cannot be imperilled. Second, massive fragmentation and skill shortage in the sector needs an immediate correction. The textile units in India are smaller compared to the US and China, but the real challenge lies in their fragmentation. Only a small percentage of the apparels industry is considered 'organised', impacting the profitability of fabric manufacturers and stakeholders. The shortage of skilled workers in the country's textile manufacturing sector is also a significant concern. A large portion of workers lack basic education, hindering their ability to advance

their skills and contribute to sectoral growth. Encouraging education and knowledge transfer through vocational training programmes and workshops is crucial for the industry's expansion, both domestically and globally. By 2030, the Indian textile industry is projected to double its productivity and create over 34 million new job opportunities. It is essential for all stakeholders in the textile value chain, including the government, mill owners, and machinery manufacturers, to collaborate and address these challenges to ensure sustained growth of the industry. Third, the textile industry, both domestically and internationally, has historically been characterized as a labour-intensive sector. Nevertheless, the domestic textile manufacturers have yet to fully embrace advancements in technology, particularly regarding process automation and tracking systems. This reliance on manual labour has led to errors, oversights and instances of negligence, which in turn result in inefficient machine utilization, frequent downtimes and significant productivity losses. The same needs to be addressed by the Government. Fourth, there is a need to bring down prices of raw materials for ramping up textile production and exports. There is an excessive dependence on cotton imports from various countries, including Kenya, Egypt, the USA and Peru. Additionally, a surge in pollution levels in numerous facilities across Europe, China and other regions, coupled with supply chain disruptions, has led to a significant increase in raw material costs for the textile sector. This escalation is consequently driving up the overall production expenses and the same needs to be checked with proper handholding by the Government. ■



## Vice President of India inaugurates the 10th National Handloom Day celebrations

Handloom industry focused around sustainability and energy efficiency: Shri Giriraj Singh



The 10th National Handloom was celebrated in New Delhi with Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar as the chief guest. Union Minister of Textiles Shri Giriraj Singh and Minister of State Shri Pabitra Margherita also attended the event.



Shri Dhankhar during his address emphasised that handloom products are the core component of Prime Minister's "Be Vocal for Local" campaign. Promoting handlooms is the need of the hour, need of the country, and need of the planet due to the threat of climate change, he said. The Vice President said economic nationalism is fundamental to our economic growth and economic independence.



Shri Singh during his speech said that India has the largest handloom community in the world focused

around sustainability and energy efficiency. The world is moving towards usage of sustainable products and handloom industry produces zero-carbon footprint and does not consume any energy, he said adding that Handloom industry is also a zero-water footprint sector.

The Union Minister noted that guided by PM Shri Narendra Modi, the Government started celebrating National Handloom Day from August 7, 2015. He mentioned that the date was chosen to commemorate the Swadeshi Movement launched on the same day in 1905 to encourage weavers and indigenous industries. Shri Singh highlighted PM Shri Narendra Modi's efforts to bring technology, marketing, design and fashion under the Cluster Development Programme (CDP) and said that his government is working towards providing fair remuneration to the weavers. The Government is trying to improve the textile value chain for better income opportunities for the weavers and their families, he added.



70% of handloom weavers in the country are women as Handloom sector is women-led, the Minister said. The Union Minister also highlighted the importance of traditional weaving and urged the weavers to impart the same tradition to their children. He urged them to fully utilize the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT) to raise their skills.

Emphasising the need for faster adoption of handloom



products, the Union Minister expressed hope that handloom products will soon be widely used by the citizens. He asked the officials to work hard help India

expand the handlooms market worldwide and boost employment opportunities for weavers and their families. ■

## *Textiles Minister Shri Giriraj Singh visits NIFT Gandhinagar for Handloom Pakhwada Celebrations*

**U**nion Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh, visited the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), Gandhinagar, where he actively participated in the Handloom Pakhwada celebrations. During the visit, the Minister inaugurated a vibrant and meticulously curated handloom exhibition showcasing the unparalleled legacy of Indian textiles.

The exhibition was a visual feast featuring an array of handwoven masterpieces reflecting the creativity, craftsmanship, and dedication integral to India's textile traditions for centuries. Each piece on display was a testament to the skill and artistry of the weavers and their commitment to preserving and promoting this rich cultural heritage.

textile heritage.

Shri Giriraj Singh was optimistic about the future of Indian textiles, confident that with continued innovation, commitment and design, management and technological interventions of NIFT, the rich traditions of handloom sector will continue to thrive and evolve in the years to come.



The major highlight of the day's events was a spectacular handloom fashion walk, celebrating the artistry and craftsmanship of India's skilled artisans. The fashion show served as a powerful platform to promote Indian handlooms, showcasing the intricate and diverse designs that are a hallmark of the country's textile industry.

The fashion show was a visual delight and a strong reminder of the cultural significance embedded in every weave and thread of Indian textiles. It underscored the importance of supporting and promoting the handloom sector, which is a vital part of India's cultural identity and economic landscape.

The entire Handloom Pakhwada celebration at NIFT Gandhinagar was a resounding success, serving as a testament to the institute's unwavering dedication to promoting Indian textiles. The event highlighted the incredible potential of the textile industry and the pivotal role that institutions like NIFT play in nurturing and promoting this sector. ■



Following the exhibition, Shri Giriraj Singh engaged in insightful and meaningful discussions with the students and faculty members of NIFT Gandhinagar. These interactions provided a deep dive into the innovative activities and forward-thinking curriculum offered by the institute.

Shri Singh explored how NIFT is integrating modern design concepts with traditional textile techniques, ensuring that the cultural legacy of Indian textiles is not only preserved but also reimagined for the future. The Minister expressed his admiration for the institute's efforts to foster a new generation of designers who are passionate about sustaining and advancing India's

## *Shri Giriraj Singh and Shri Pabitra Margherita visit VIRAASAT exhibition at Handloom Haat, New Delhi*

**U**nion Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh and Minister of State for Textiles, Shri Pabitra Margherita visited “VIRAASAT”, a fortnight long exhibition dedicated to celebrate 10th National Handloom Day at Handloom Haat, Janpath, New Delhi from 3rd Aug to 16th Aug 2024.



Shri Giriraj Singh interacted with Handloom weavers and artisans and emphasized that the Government is trying to improve the textile value chain for better income opportunities for the weavers and their families. He also said that India has the largest handloom community in the world focused around sustainability and energy efficiency. The world is moving towards usage of sustainable products and handloom industry produces zero-carbon footprint and does not consume any energy and Handloom industry is also a zero-water footprint sector.

Shri Pabitra Margherita highlighted while visiting live display of application of natural dyes in Handloom sector, that in present days the market for Natural Dyes Handloom fabrics in fashion industry started experiencing a high demand. The use of Natural Dyes by Handloom weavers imparts not only the value addition but also increase their earnings.



The Ministers encouraged the campaign “Ek Ped Maa ke Naam” by making plantation at Handloom Haat. They also distributed TIRANGA flags to Handloom weavers and artisans under the “Har Ghar Tiranga” campaign.

Handloom products drawn from different regions of India are on display and sale at the exhibition. These includes Kosa, Chanderi, Madhubani, Mangalgiri, Mekhla Chador, Moirang Phee, Ikat etc.

Several activities were organised at the Handloom Haat like 75 stalls for handloom weavers and artisan to directly retail the products and 07 Stalls by Apex Societies, Boards etc., Curated theme display of exquisite handlooms of India and Workshops on natural dyes, Kasturi cotton, design and exports at Handloom Haat, Special Health Camp for weavers and artisans on 12th Aug 2024, Live loom demonstration of Loin loom and Frame Loom, Folk dances of India and Delicious regional cuisines etc.

The handloom sector of India employs 35 lakh persons directly or indirectly which is next only to the agricultural sector in the country. Government of India has launched the various schemes for Handloom for branding of high-quality products with zero defects and zero effect on the environment to encourage and to give a distinct identity to the products, apart from highlighting the uniqueness of the products. It also serves a guarantee for the buyer that the product being purchased is genuinely handcrafted.

All the exhibitors at the exhibition have been encouraged to display their exquisite products and thus aim to improve the market for Handloom products and earnings of the handloom community.

The series “VIRAASAT”- the “Exclusive Handloom Expo” is a continuation of celebrations held during previous year around the National Handloom Day. This year, the 10th National Handloom Day was celebrated on 7th August. The event focused on the glorious tradition of Handloom and Handicrafts. It also provided market connect to the handloom weavers and artisans. ■



# India-US Sign Landmark MSME MoU: Boosting Trade & Innovation

*India and the US have signed a landmark MoU to foster collaboration in the MSME sector, promoting trade, innovation, and empowering women entrepreneurs.*



**I**ndia and the US signed a "landmark" agreement that provides a framework for both sides to explore cooperation in the micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) sector.

External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Shri Randhir Jaiswal said the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) would enable MSMEs of the two countries to foster trade.

"India-US signed a landmark MoU that enables MSMEs of the two countries to participate in global markets, drive innovation, foster trade, and support women entrepreneurs," he said on X.

The MoU was signed in line with a decision taken during Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's visit to

the US in June last year.

The pact was inked by the two sides in New Delhi.

The MoU provides a framework for both sides to discuss issues concerning the MSME sector and explore possibilities of cooperation.

It envisages the exchange of expertise between the two sides on issues related to improving MSME participation in the global marketplace; cooperation in areas of technology and digital trade, green economy; and trade facilitation, people familiar with the matter said.

It also provides for the joint conduct of programmes for women entrepreneurs to empower them and facilitate trade partnership between women-owned small businesses of the two countries, they said.

Recognising the crucial role that MSMEs play in advancing inclusive growth, expanding exports and boosting employment, the two sides also agreed to explore the development of a "Business Matching Digital Platform" to boost business opportunities, the people cited above said. ■



## Revolutionizing Apparel Practices: AMHSSC and bluesign® Unveil New Course on Sustainability

- ◆ AMHSSC's Sustainability Curriculum Launched to Transform India's Apparel Sector
- ◆ From Tiruppur to Noida: AMHSSC's ESG Roadshow Champions Sustainable Apparel Practices
- ◆ ESG Roadshow Sparks Excitement for New Apparel Sustainability Course Across India

In a significant step towards promoting sustainability in the textile and apparel sector, Apparel, Made-Ups & Home Furnishing Sector Skill Council (AMHSSC), working under the aegis of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, has launched a groundbreaking eLearning course titled "Foundation of Apparel Sustainability" in partnership with the Swiss company bluesign® technologies. This initiative aims to educate and empower professionals, industry leaders and industry aspirants across the India with the necessary knowledge and skills to integrate sustainable practices into their work, helping the industry align with global sustainability standards.

To enhance awareness of sustainable practices in the apparel industry, AMHSSC launched an ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance) awareness campaign through a series of roadshows in seven major Indian cities. The campaign began in Tiruppur on August 5, 2024, and traveled through Bangalore, Mumbai, Gurugram, Jaipur, and Kolkata, before concluding in Noida on August 13, 2024. These events were strategically designed to raise awareness about the new eLearning course and underscore the growing importance of sustainability within the Indian textile and apparel sector.

### Launch Event in Tiruppur

ESG Roadshow kicked off in Tiruppur, one of India's key textile hubs, at the Tiruppur Exporters Association (TEA) Auditorium on August 5, 2024. This event marked the official unveiling of the "Foundation of Apparel Sustainability" eLearning course. Themed "Elevating Environmental Social Governance (ESG) and Reducing Impact in the Indian Apparel & Textile Industry," the event attracted a distinguished gathering of industry leaders, including AMHSSC Board Directors, AEPC Members, TEA office bearers, leading apparel exporters, and buying agents.

Chief Guest, Shri K M Subramanian, President of the

Tiruppur Exporters' Association (TEA), also praised the eLearning course as a timely resource for the Tiruppur industry. He encouraged industry leaders to seize this opportunity to enhance their sustainability practices and position themselves as leaders in the global apparel market. The event was well-received, with attendees expressing enthusiasm about the new course and the potential it holds for the future of the industry.



### Bengaluru: Charting a Sustainable Future

Following the successful launch in Tiruppur, the ESG Roadshow moved to Bengaluru, where the eLearning course continued to generate significant industry interest. Bengaluru, known for its vibrant textile and apparel industry, responded positively to the initiative.

Chief Guest Shri Naren Goenka, Founder of Tex Export Industries Ltd., echoed these sentiments, emphasizing the importance of empowering industry leaders with sustainability knowledge. He noted that this knowledge is crucial for the industry's future, as sustainability becomes a key driver of success in the global market. The course, which spans eight weeks and begins in September 2024, is designed to provide participants with the skills needed to lead sustainable practices within their organizations.





### Highlighting Sustainability in Mumbai's Home Textile Sector

In Mumbai, the ESG Roadshow shifted its focus to sustainability within India's burgeoning Home Textile industry. The event brought together industry leaders to discuss the role of sustainability in this sector, which holds a 7% share of the global market. Shri Vijaykumar Jamnadar Agarwal, Director & Member of Creative Garments Pvt Ltd., highlighted India's rich textile heritage and the growing importance of sustainable practices such as the use of recycled textiles and organic cotton.



Shri Agarwal also emphasized the need for compliance with global carbon regulations, showcasing how India's commitment to ESG principles can drive global leadership in the Home Textile sector. His message resonated with the audience, particularly as more international brands, such as Shoppers Stop and Landmark, are increasingly prioritizing ESG-compliant suppliers.

Shri Rajesh Masand, President of the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) and Director at AMHSSC, further stressed the need for the industry to adapt to ESG standards. He encouraged industry leaders to embrace the new eLearning course as a valuable tool in enhancing their sustainability practices and strengthening their position in the global market.

Shri Premal Udani, Managing Director of Kaytee Corporation (P) Ltd, and Director on the Board of AMHSSC, highlighted India's pride in meeting quality deliveries in the Apparel Sector. He stated that India is now gearing up to become a leader in ESG compliance, aiming to become a shining beacon in every aspect of social compliance.

### ESG Roadshow in Gurugram: Balancing Profitability and Sustainability

The next stop on the ESG Roadshow was Gurugram, where the focus was on balancing profitability with sustainability. The event featured a significant address by Shri Sudhir Sekhri, Chairman of the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), who emphasized the resilience of Indian manufacturers in overcoming past challenges. He called for a collective effort to raise ESG

awareness within the industry and advocated for a multi-stakeholder approach to ensure global competitiveness.

Guest of Honour Shri Virender Uppal, Chairman of Richa Global, echoed these sentiments, stressing the importance of ESG in the textile industry. He affirmed that the newly launched eLearning program by AMHSSC and bluesign® technologies would provide industry professionals with essential knowledge to implement sustainable practices. The event in Gurugram highlighted the need for the industry to work together to achieve sustainability goals while maintaining profitability.



### Celebrating Sustainability in Jaipur

ESG Roadshow then moved to Jaipur, where the partnership between AMHSSC and bluesign® technologies was celebrated for its role in driving sustainability within the apparel sector. The event brought together prominent industry leaders, including Sh. Zakir Hussain, President of the Garment Exporters Association of Rajasthan (GEAR), and Shri Ravi Poddar, Proprietor of Cheer Sagar. Their collaboration was praised for reinforcing the industry's commitment to a more sustainable future.

During the event, speakers emphasized the importance of sustainability in the global apparel industry and the need for Indian manufacturers to adopt best practices in this area. They highlighted the potential of the "Foundation of Apparel Sustainability" eLearning course to upskill industry professionals and enhance the global competitiveness of Indian manufacturers. The event in Jaipur was a testament to the growing recognition of the importance of sustainability within the Indian textile sector.



### Kolkata's Focus on Sustainability and Export Potential

In Kolkata, the ESG Roadshow continued with a strong focus on sustainability and the export potential of the Eastern region. Dr. Vijay Yadav, CEO of AMHSSC, expressed deep appreciation for Padma Shri Dr. A. Sakthivel's visionary leadership in launching the "Foundation of Apparel Sustainability" program. Dr. Sakthivel highlighted the course's potential to equip industry professionals with the knowledge and skills needed to drive sustainable practices within their organizations.

Sh. Anil Buchasia, Managing Director of Amrit Exports and Regional In-Charge for the Eastern Region of AEPC, also praised the initiative, noting the impressive export potential of East India. He pointed out that the region has the capacity to match the renowned Tiruppur export hub, and that the adoption of sustainable practices would further enhance its global competitiveness.

The event in Kolkata underscored the importance of sustainability in boosting the export potential of the Indian textile and apparel sector. As more international buyers prioritize ESG compliance, the adoption of sustainable practices will be key to securing new business opportunities and maintaining a competitive edge in the global market.



### Noida: Setting a New Standard for Sustainable Manufacturing

The final stop on the ESG Roadshow was Noida, where the focus was on setting new standards for sustainable manufacturing. Shri Lalit Thukral, Proprietor of Maharana of India, announced the upcoming Apparel Park in Noida, which will feature 125 green factories. This development is set to establish Noida as a leader in eco-friendly apparel production and reinforce its role in promoting sustainability within the Indian textile sector.



Shri Thukral also pledged that one participant from each company in the Noida cluster would enroll in the "Foundation of Apparel Sustainability" eLearning course. This commitment reflects the industry's dedication to upskilling its workforce and ensuring that sustainability becomes a core component of its operations.



Shri Mithileshwar Thakur, Secretary General AEPC in his address stated that, "The Developed world particularly European Union is extremely serious about compliance with these norms. They have brought plethora of ESG compliance / sustainability related legislations like CBAM, CSRD, CSDDD, Ecodesign Regulations, EU deforestation Regulation etc in recent past leaving the Indian industry with the choice of either comply or perish."

So, while we may try to dismiss it as "White men's burden", it's for the larger good of the planet and there is no getting away from this, So, there is Damocles' sword hanging over the head of exports from developing countries like India. It's genuine threat. The challenge before us is to convert this threat into opportunity. Sustainability is going to be the cornerstone of apparel export business, SG AEPC remarked.

Shri Thakur further noted, as ESG awareness and adoption continue to grow in India, the industry is increasingly realizing its importance and the benefits it can bring, such as improved reputation, risk mitigation, and access to capital.

During the event, Dr. Sakthivel expressed his gratitude to the Noida Apparel Export Cluster and bluesign® technologies for their unwavering support in advancing sustainable practices within the Indian apparel sector. He emphasized that the successful implementation of ESG principles would not only benefit the industry but also contribute to the long-term health of the planet.



### **Empowering Leaders Through Education**



**Padma Shri Dr. A. Sakthivel, Chairman, AMHSSC**, delivered the keynote address in the campaign, emphasizing the importance of the course in advancing sustainability within the Indian apparel industry. He stressed that the course would not only help the industry align with global standards but also prepare garment exporters for

forthcoming sustainability regulations from the US and Europe. Dr. Sakthivel's message was clear: sustainability is not just a trend but a critical factor in ensuring the long-term success and competitiveness of the Indian textile sector.

Dr. Sakthivel highlighted the broader vision behind the course, stating, "This course is more than just an educational initiative; it represents a commitment to the future of our industry and our planet. By equipping our leaders with the knowledge and tools to implement sustainable practices, we are paving the way for a more responsible and resilient industry. By integrating sustainability into skill development programs, AMHSSC is ensuring that Indian professionals are equipped to meet the evolving demands of the global market."



Throughout the ESG Roadshow, **Ms. Katherina Verena Mayer, Director of Customer Relations for South Asia** at bluesign® technologies, introduced the eLearning module, which is designed to empower leaders in the Indian Apparel & Home Furnishing sector to implement ESG practices effectively at all organizational levels. She

emphasized the broader impact of the course, stating that it benefits not only the apparel industry but also supports the long-term sustainability of our planet.

The eLearning course, which begins in September 2024, will span eight weeks and cover a range of topics related to sustainability, environmental stewardship, social responsibility, and governance. The course is structured to be accessible to a wide audience, from entry-level workers to seasoned professionals. It uses a mix of interactive modules, case studies, and practical examples to ensure that participants can apply what they learn in real-world settings. This practical approach is essential, as it ensures that the principles of

sustainability are not just theoretical concepts but can be effectively implemented in day-to-day operations. This initiative is not just about educating industry professionals—it is about driving a fundamental shift towards sustainability and responsible business practices within the industry.

As the ESG Roadshow highlighted, the future of the Indian textile and apparel industry depends on its ability to adapt to changing global demands for sustainability and ethical business practices. By equipping industry leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to implement ESG principles, AMHSSC and bluesign® technologies are helping to ensure that the Indian apparel sector remains competitive on the global stage while contributing to a more sustainable future for all.

The response to the ESG Roadshow across the seven cities has been overwhelmingly positive, with industry leaders recognizing the importance of sustainability and expressing their commitment to driving change within their organizations. As the industry continues to evolve, the "Foundation of Apparel Sustainability" eLearning course will play a crucial role in shaping the future of the Indian textile and apparel sector, helping it achieve global leadership in sustainability.

#### **Key Takeaways:**

- Indian apparel industry is committed to sustainability.
- E-learning course is a crucial step towards achieving sustainability goals.
- Collaboration between industry stakeholders is essential for success.
- The focus on skill development is vital for building a sustainable workforce.
- The roadshow has created a strong foundation for future sustainability initiatives. ■





## *Sustainability Isn't Just Skin Deep—Are You Paying Attention to Your Factories?*

By- Jane Mosbacher Morris



Factories are often the least transparent part of a supply chain, despite being central to the production process. According to McKinsey, more than 80 percent of a product's greenhouse gas emissions and more than 90 percent of its biodiversity impact originate from its supply chain. Concerningly, many companies still struggle with visibility into their suppliers' operations. A recent survey revealed that nearly 50 percent of businesses feel they are either "struggling" or "not great" at digitizing their supply chain, with more than half lacking insight into their upstream activities.

**I**n today's business landscape, companies are eager to show off their eco-friendly materials, cut down on single-use plastics and commit to carbon neutrality. Sustainability demands more than superficial changes, however, to adequately respond to investor, consumer and regulatory pressures. It requires a deep examination of the entire supply chain, particularly the factories that underpin it.

### **Investor Pressure: Beyond Compliance to Accountability**

Investor expectations are beginning to shift significantly. More than 77 percent of individual investors globally are seeking companies that not only offer market-rate returns, but also demonstrate a commitment to positive social and environmental impacts. This shift isn't just a trend; it reflects a



fundamental realignment towards responsible investing. Activist shareholders are increasingly holding companies accountable for human rights abuses within their supply chains. Earlier this year, a *Business of Fashion* article detailed how shareholders pressured a major corporation to address allegations of human rights violations, showcasing how even industry leaders face backlash, fines, and reputational damage when falling short of expectations.

Companies that pay attention to the players that they're including in their supply chains are even rewarded with better financing terms and improved operational performance. A *Harvard Business Review* study found that firms with strong sustainability practices enjoy a lower cost of capital and enhanced shareholder value, making sustainability as a strategic advantage.

#### **Consumer Pressure: The Demand for Transparency**

Consumers are also driving the push for sustainable practices. An IBM survey revealed that 57 percent of consumers are willing to alter their purchasing habits to mitigate environmental harm, and 79 percent consider sustainability important. Brands that fail to offer transparency risk losing consumer trust and loyalty. Conversely, those demonstrating an authentic commitment to ethical practices can forge stronger connections with customers and gain a competitive edge.

Accenture's research supports this, showing that companies with robust sustainability initiatives often outperform their peers. Approximately 63 percent of consumers prefer to buy from purpose-driven brands, translating into increased sales, higher retention rates, and a more resilient market position.

#### **Regulatory Pressure: Global Legislation Intensifies**

Governments worldwide, too, are tightening regulations to enforce sustainability and social compliance. In the U.S., the Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act (UFLPA), enacted in 2021, presumes goods from the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region are made with forced labor unless proven otherwise. This law has already led to the detention of over \$1.7 billion worth of shipments in 2024 alone, illustrating the severe risks of non-compliance.

Canada's 2023 *Fighting Against Forced Labor and Child Labor in Supply Chains Act* mandates annual reporting on measures to prevent illegal labor practices. In addition, the European Union's Corporate

*Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)* requires comprehensive reporting on sustainability and social compliance metrics for companies importing into the EU. Non-compliance with these regulations can result in substantial fines and legal repercussions, not to mention negative press.

#### **Conclusion**

Investing in supply chain transparency and sustainability is not just a regulatory or ethical mandate—it is a strategic imperative with significant business implications. Sustainable practices can lead to cost savings through improved resource efficiency and reduced waste. In addition, they can drive innovation, as companies developing sustainable technologies and processes often gain a competitive edge and create new market opportunities.

Sustainability strategies must look beyond surface-level initiatives like give-back programs and eco-friendly materials but must take that next step to examine the environmental and social compliance footprints of their factories. By addressing the pressures from investors, consumers, and regulators, companies can forge a more resilient, operationally efficient supply chain that is truly sustainable.

Jane Mosbacher Morris is the founder and CEO of *THE MARKET*, a supply chain software for ethical and sustainable sourcing. She is also the author of Penguin Random House's "Buy the Change You Want to See: Use Your Purchasing Power to Make the World a Better Place" (2019). *Women's Wear Daily* named her one of the most influential ESG leaders in retail. ■

**Source: Sourcing Journal**





# AUSTRALIA

*The India-Australia bilateral relationship is underpinned by shared values of a pluralistic, and democratic foundation. Expanding economic engagement and increasing high-level interaction have always been the focus of bilateral relations. In recent years, the India-Australia relationship has charted a whole new trajectory of transformational growth. Bilateral cooperation has seen exponential growth in existing frameworks of cooperation and further expanded across a wide spectrum of new areas opening up new possibilities, both at bilateral as well as global levels.*

*According to the 2021 census, about 9,76,000 in Australia trace Indian ancestry. Indian diaspora is the second largest and fastest growing diaspora in Australia. This community has been growing steadily and represents around 3.1% of Australia's total population of about 26 million. Indian students numbering 1,22,391 (September 2023) form the second largest cohort of foreign-born students in Australia.*

*Australia and India upgraded bilateral relationship from a 'Strategic Partnership' in 2009 to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership (CSP) in 2020. Over the years, an array of institutional mechanisms has been put in place to promote bilateral cooperation.*

*The India-Australia economic relationship has grown significantly in recent years. As part of its efforts to develop a strong economic relationship with India, the Australian Government commissioned the India Economic Strategy to 2035 to define a pathway for Australia to unlock opportunities offered by Indian Economic growth. ■*



## Economic Overview:

**Highly developed, diversified, regionally and globally integrated economy; strong mining, manufacturing, and service sectors; net exporter driven by commodities to East Asian trade partners; “Future Made in Australia” program focused on green energy investments**

### ◆ Economic Indicators:

Indicators	Value (in USD)
Real GDP (Purchasing Power Parity) (2023 est.)	1.584 trillion
Real GDP growth rate (2023 est.)	3.02%
Real GDP per Capita (2023 est.)	59,500 (2023 est.)
Real GDP Growth Rate (2023 est.)	3.02%
Inflation Rate (2023 est.)	5.6%

Source – The World Factbook – CIA 2024 & AEPC's Analysis

### ◆ Exchange Rate:

Indicators	Value (in INR)
1 Australian Dollars	Equal to 56.33

Source – X-Rates 2024 (August 2024) & AEPC's Analysis

### ◆ Climate:

Australia is a huge area, and it has seven distinct climate regions: equatorial, tropical savanna, humid subtropical, Mediterranean, hot desert, and semiarid and oceanic climates. The very center of Australia is extremely hot and dry with a desert climate.

### ◆ Average Tariff for India:

The India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) has come into effect from December 29, 2022.

The India-Australia (ECTA) trade agreement provides an institutional mechanism to encourage and improve trade between the two countries. It covers almost all the tariff lines in HS Code 61 and 62 dealt with by India and Australia. Therefore, export and import items under these HS codes will be on zero duty.

### ◆ Australia's Apparel Trade:

Bilateral trade between Australia and India (in USD Mn.)				
	2021	2022	2023	% Change 2023 over 2022
Australia's imports from the world	7391.91	8257.52	7538.11	-8.7
Australia's imports from India	288.62	338.63	346.71	2.4
India's Share in Australia's total RMG imports from World %	3.90	4.10	4.60	12.2

Source – UN Comtrade & AEPC's Analysis

The above table shows that Australia's RMG imports from the World were to the tune of USD Mn. 7538.11 in 2023 showing a decline of 8.7% as compared to 2022. RMG exports from India to Australia increased from 338.63 USD Mn. in 2022

to 346.71 USD Mn. in 2023 registering an increase of 2.4% compared to 2022. India's percentage share in Australia's RMG imports from the World has also increased to 12.2% in 2023. ■

## ♦ Top RMG Supplier to Australia

<b>Top RMG supplier to Australia and India's Position</b>			
<b>Position</b>	<b>Countries</b>	<b>Imported value in 2023 (in USD mn)</b>	<b>% Share</b>
	<b>World</b>	<b>7538.11</b>	<b>100</b>
1	China	4445.68	58.98
2	Bangladesh	837.24	11.11
3	Viet Nam	554.33	7.35
4	<b>India</b>	<b>346.71</b>	<b>4.60</b>
5	Indonesia	254.07	3.37

Source – UN Comtrade & AEPC's Analysis

The above table shows that China has remained a top supplier of RMG to Australia with a 58.98% share in 2023. India is the 4th largest supplier of RMG to Australia with a 4.60% share. Bangladesh and Vietnam have a share of 11.11% and 7.35% respectively. ■

## ♦ Australia's Top 10 RMG Products Import from the World Vs. India's share:

<b>Top 10 RMG products imported by Australia from the World</b>					
<b>USD Mn.</b>					
<b>S. No.</b>	<b>HS Code</b>	<b>Product label</b>	<b>Imported from World in 2023</b>	<b>Imported from India in 2023</b>	<b>India's Share in %</b>
		<b>Total RMG</b>	<b>7538.11</b>	<b>346.70</b>	<b>4.6</b>
		<b>Sum of Top 10</b>	<b>2862.28</b>	<b>109.73</b>	<b>3.8</b>
1	610910	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted	571.69	55.79	9.8
2	611020	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of cotton, knitted or crocheted ...	363.42	10.38	2.9
3	620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted ...)	348.05	6.60	1.9
4	611030	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of man-made fibres, knitted ...	335.02	0.96	0.3
5	620462	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton (excl. knitted ...)	300.56	7.24	2.4
6	620520	Men's or boys' shirts of cotton (excl. knitted or crocheted, nightshirts, singlets and other ...)	212.98	14.41	6.8
7	610990	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of textile materials, knitted or crocheted (excl. cotton)	204.06	1.96	1.0
8	620443	Women's or girls' dresses of synthetic fibres (excl. knitted or crocheted and petticoats)	181.82	7.94	4.4
9	610463	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of synthetic fibres, ...	174.33	1.03	0.6
10	621210	Brassieres of all types of textile materials, whether or not elasticated, incl. knitted or ...	170.33	3.43	2.0

Source – UN Comtrade & AEPC's Analysis

The above table shows Australia's top 10 RMG products imported from the World vis-à-vis India and India's % share in those top 10 products. The top 10 products imported from the World were to the tune of USD 2862.28 Mn. in 2023 and imports from India of these top 10 products were to the tune of USD 109.73 Mn. India has a 3.8% share in Australia's top 10 products imported from the World.

The top 10 products imported by Australia from the World include (i) T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted (ii) Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of cotton, knitted or crocheted (iii) Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excl. knitted) etc. ■



◆ Australia's top 10 RMG products imported from India

Top 10 RMG Products Imported by Australia from India (in USD mn)				
S. No.	HS Code	Product label	Import from India, 2023	% Share in 2023
		Apparel	346.70	100.0
		Sum of Top 10	203.46	58.7
1	610910	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted	55.79	16.1
2	620442	Women's or girls' dresses of cotton (excl. knitted or crocheted and petticoats)	36.07	10.4
3	611120	Babies' garments and clothing accessories of cotton, knitted or crocheted (excl. hats)	21.05	6.1
4	620449	Women's or girls' dresses of textile materials excl. of wool, fine animal hair, cotton or ....	14.95	4.3
5	620630	Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of cotton (excl. knitted or crocheted and ...	14.89	4.3
6	620520	Men's or boys' shirts of cotton (excl. knitted or crocheted, nightshirts, singlets and other ...	14.41	4.2
7	620444	Women's or girls' dresses of artificial fibres (excl. knitted or crocheted and petticoats)	13.22	3.8
8	610462	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of cotton, knitted...	12.31	3.6
9	611020	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of cotton, knitted or crocheted ...	10.38	3.0
10	610510	Men's or boys' shirts of cotton, knitted or crocheted (excl. nightshirts, T-shirts, singlets ...	10.36	3.0

Source – UN Comtrade & AEPC's Analysis

The above table shows Australia's top 10 RMG products imported from India. Australia's top 10 products imported from India were to the tune of USD 203.43 Mn. with a 58.7% share in Australia's total RMG import from India.

The top products imported by Australia from India include **(i)** T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted, **(ii)** Women's or girls' dresses of cotton (excl. knitted or crocheted and petticoats), **(iii)** Babies' garments and clothing accessories of cotton, knitted or crocheted (excl. hats). ■



## The Apparel Export Promotion Council celebrated 78th Independence Day at Gurugram

From August 13-15, 2024



**A** EPC celebrated the 78th Independence Day in its headquarters at Gurugram and other regional offices nationwide. The following activities were rolled out in all the offices of the Council from 13-15th August, 2024 for Independence Day Celebration:

1. Displayed a Web banner on the Council's website to propagate the "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign.



2. Designed a Selfie Point on the "Har Ghar Tiranga" theme to facilitate employees to click their selfies and post the same at [www.harghartiranga.com](http://www.harghartiranga.com)



3. Flag hoisting was done in all the offices of the Council. At Apparel House, the Chairman AEPC has hoisted the National Flag which was followed by signing the National Anthem. To spread the brightness and colours, tri-colour confetti poppers were blown. Tiranga Rally was organized. Kite flying competition was held and winner was awarded.



4. All the employees of the Council hoisted Tiranga at their residences between 13th to 15th August, 2024 under the "Har Ghar Tiranga" Campaign and uploaded their family pictures with Tiranga at [www.harghartiranga.com](http://www.harghartiranga.com).



5. Decorated all the offices of the Council in the Tri-Colour theme between 13-15th August, 2024.



6. Illuminated office premises with tri-colour lights during the nights from 13-15th August, 2024.

7. AEPC also organized an essay writing competition for employees and their kids. Employees and their family members submitted write-ups on the topic "Significance of the Independence Day", winners were awarded. ■



## World Nature Conservation Day Celebrated by AEPC

The Council has celebrated the World Nature Conservation Day on Monday, July 29, 2024. The theme of World Nature Conservation Day, 2024 was “healthy environment is a foundation for a stable and productive society” keeping in mind the same, Tree Plantation was done at the Council Head Office and its other Regional Offices. The aim to celebrate it is to come together and support nature and educate people not to exploit it.

In addition to this a poster-making competition was also kept for the employees’ kids on the topic “Save the

Earth”. In this competition, 14 children had participated. A “Certificate of Appreciation” with a token gift was presented to all the participants for their enthusiastic and active participation in the competition. ■



## AEPC was observed # एक पेड़ माँ के नाम #Plant4Mother campaign

The Council organized the tree-planting event on August 7, 2024, as part of the Global campaign # एक पेड़ माँ के नाम #Plant4Mother at the Apparel House, Gurugram and all its regional offices spread in India.

Under this campaign, 30 plants were planted by the Council's employees. **Glimpses of the event are as under**



To increase the awareness, AEPC did various social media posts and made aware to all garment traders and others in the value chain to plant tree and ensure a sustainable earth that should last for all. ■

## National Flag Day on 22nd July, 2024 was observed at AEPC

The National Flag Day was observed on July 22 annually to celebrate the adoption of the tricolour designed by Pingali Vekayya as the flag of India.

On the occasion of The National Flag Day, a special online quiz about the National Flag was organized for the employees of the Council on 22.07.2024 where all have participated with great interest and enthusiasm. Winners were awarded with a token prize. ■



# AEPC celebrated 10<sup>th</sup> HANDLOOM DAY

**A** EPC observed Headquarter and celebrated the 10th Handloom Day in its headquarter at Gurugram and other regional offices nationwide. On the occasion of the 10th Handloom Day celebration, the Council has taken the following initiatives and made all its efforts to spread the message of hashtag

**#MyProductMyPride & #MyHandloomMyPride:**

**1. Designed a Scrolling Web Banner and uploaded on the home page of the council's website**



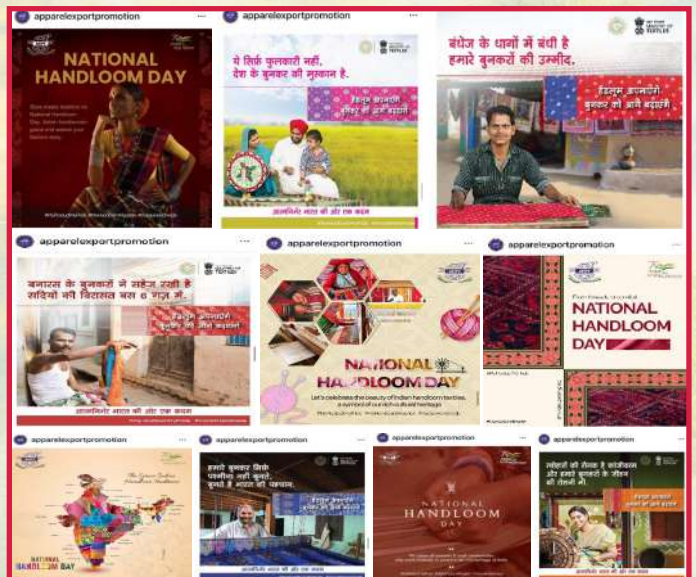
The scrolling banner hyperlinked was created to share and showcase the following information/material relating to the handloom sector

**2. Special Messages was created and circulated among the member exporters** of the Council requesting them to be part of this endeavor by buying and wearing handloom products and post pictures using hashtag **#MyProductMyPride & #MyHandloomMyPride**. They were also requested to motivate the officials in their respective organizations, their family members and friends to be part of this campaign and support the handloom weavers by buying the handloom products and posts the pictures at the given hashtag. Further they were also be shared with the tweet link/various video links/links to know the weavers success stories to know more about the handloom sector and disseminate the information among others.



**3. Social Media coverage of the Campaign**

The following posts were uploaded in all the Social Media Platforms





## AEPC Southern Region Incharge Meets FM

**D**r. A. Sakthivel, AEPC Southern Incharge, along with the President of TEA, met with the Hon'ble Union Finance Minister in Coimbatore on 11/09/2024. They submitted a detailed memorandum requesting continued support for the industry, specifically asking for the continuation of the Interest Equalization Scheme and a reduction in the capital requirement under the PLI Scheme 2 from 100 crores to 25 crores. Mr. C. Eswarasundar, Adl. Director and Mr.

D. Anand, TEA EC member and Smt. Vanathi Srinivasan, Member of Tamil Nadu Legislative Assembly were also present.



### EVENTS CALENDAR

## Forthcoming overseas Fairs for the 2024-2025



### AEPC's participation in the Global Sourcing Expo Melbourne, Australia

AEPC to participate in the Global Sourcing Expo Melbourne, Australia scheduled to be held from 19th to 21st November 2024 under the MAI Scheme of the Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India.

### AEPC's participation in India Fashion & Lifestyle Show, Tokyo, Japan



AEPC to participate in the India Fashion & Lifestyle Show, Tokyo, Japan scheduled to be held from 15th to 17th January 2025 under the MAI Scheme of the Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India.

### AEPC's participation in Sao Paulo Pret-a Porter, Sao Paulo, Brazil



AEPC to participate in Sao Paulo Pret-a Porter, Sao Paulo, Brazil scheduled to be held in January 2025 under the MAI Scheme of the Ministry of Commerce, Govt. of India. ■

# Union Minister of Textiles Shri Giriraj Singh launches India's first fashion forecasting initiative 'VisioNxt'

**- Fashion industry to benefit from VisioNxt's AI and EI based trend insights: Shri Singh**

**U**nion Minister of Textiles, Shri Giriraj Singh launched the 'VisioNxt Fashion Forecasting Initiative' of National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT), a bilingual web portal and the India-specific Fashion Trend Book 'Paridhi 24x25'. The event was also graced by the Union Minister of State for Textiles and External Affairs, Shri Pabitra Margherita and Textiles Secretary, Smt. Rachna Shah.



In his address, Shri Giriraj Singh stated that the VisioNxt project has been launched under the visionary leadership and guidance of the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. Shri Giriraj Singh said that after 2014,

India began prioritizing indigenous design and manufacturing and VisioNxt is a result of this shift.



In this era of fast fashion, VisioNxt initiative will foster healthy global competition and elevate Indian culture and design to new heights on the global stage, Shri Singh said. He noted that the fashion industry will benefit from Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) based trend insights offered by VisioNxt. This service will establish

India as a leader in the global fashion sector, he added.

At the Global Textile Summit in 2017, the Prime Minister highlighted the gap in the availability of India-specific real-time trend insights for industry stakeholders. Recognizing the necessity for a tech-enabled trend prediction system, India aims to engage in a dynamic dialogue—drawing inspiration from within while projecting its influence outward—to understand the mindsets and aspirations of Indian citizens.

In response, VisioNxt—a Trend Insights and Forecasting Initiative—was conceived and established at NIFT Delhi (Creative Lab) and NIFT Chennai (Insights Lab), with the support of the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, in 2018. The initiative, now centralized in Chennai, focuses on delivering trend insights and forecasting for the Indian fashion and retail market. It also offers various trend related consultancy services, academic courses, workshops etc.

NIFT VisioNxt is India's first-ever initiative that combines AI and EI to generate fashion trend insights and forecasts. Its mission is to identify, map, and analyse geo-specific trends, reflecting the positive plurality, cultural diversity, and socio-economic nuances of India while collating comprehensive trends and insights.

India's entry into the forecasting space offers multiple advantages: it reduces dependence on global forecasting agencies, provides unique insights into Indian fashion consumers, integrates India's strength in information technology with textiles, and combines artificial and human intelligence.

To support weavers, manufacturers, retailers, domestic businesses, homegrown designers, and fashion brands, this report is available in Hindi and English through the VisioNxt portal ([www.visionxt.in](http://www.visionxt.in)). The initiative empowers users to design, produce, and launch consumer-focused, targeted collections for this diverse nation 'Paridhi' will mark the launch of the first inclusive fashion trend forecast by VisioNxt, along with a web portal to disseminate India-specific fashion trends.

VisioNxt has achieved this through the development of a unique prediction model known as "DeepVision," designed to decode patterns and interpret fashion trends in India. This model identifies product specifics, such as whether an item is a Kurta or Kurti, red or yellow, plain or striped, short or long, among other attributes, using convolutional neural network architecture at the Insights Lab of VisioNxt. These insights are then converted into comprehensive reports with design and color directions.

A pioneering AI deep learning model developed in-house, identifies over 60 Indian wear and 40 western wear categories through computation with mandated accuracy, facilitating machine learning applications—a first in India. The initiative also involved creating a comprehensive dataset of more than 70,000 primary apparel images, along with 280,000+ secondary image data, to identify patterns in key apparel attributes, including style, color, and regional accents.

VisioNxt positions India globally among countries that predict fashion trends, increasing the visibility of Indian fashion vocabulary and identity while reducing dependence on international trend agencies. ■





# *DPIIT may take a relook at FDI restrictions from China in policy review*

*No country in the world has been able to decouple with China, says Commerce Secretary*



**T**he Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) may take a relook at the FDI restrictions currently imposed on China as part of its overall review of the country's FDI policy. Stakeholder consultations are still on and a final decision is yet to be taken, sources have said.

"As far as the advise on easing of investment routes for Chinese companies to boost Indian exports is concerned, the DPIIT is already looking into what should be the overall revised FDI policy and is expected to examine the matter as well. It is working in that direction and doing stakeholder consultations. Let's see what happens" an official tracking the matter told businessline.

India introduced Press Note 3 in 2020 restricting FDI from China and other neighbouring countries sharing a land border with the country mandating that investments from these nations shall be permitted only with prior government approval. The objective was to prevent opportunistic takeovers or acquisitions of Indian companies.

The Economic Survey for 2023-24 released in July advocated increasing FDI from China to boost exports from the country. "Choosing FDI as a strategy to benefit

from China plus one approach appears more advantageous than relying on trade. This is because China is India's top import partner, and the trade deficit with China has been growing. As the US and Europe shift their immediate sourcing away from China, it is more effective to have Chinese companies invest in India and then export the products to these markets rather than importing from China, adding minimal value, and then re-exporting them," the Survey said.

It cited the example of countries such as Vietnam, Mexico, Taiwan and South Korea, that were direct beneficiaries of the United States' trade diversion from China while they saw a rise in Chinese FDI.

India's exports to China in April-July 2024 dipped by 4.54 per cent to \$ 4.8 billion while imports increased by 9.66 per cent to \$35.85 billion , as per the latest figures shared by the Commerce Department.

Instead of focussing on the export-import numbers, one needed to see if value addition was increasing in the country, said Commerce Secretary Sh. Sunil Barthwal.

"No country in the world has been able to decouple with China including the US and the EU. In trade, you are dependent upon all countries that are part of the value chain. As long as you are part of the value chain, there will be exports and there will be imports. The point is, are we moving up the value chain and whether high-value addition is happening domestically," Sh. Barthwal said.

Sh. Barthwal said that once a country exports more, the input requirement also increases and imports go up.

A total of 526 FDI proposals worth \$11.9 billion were received and scrutinised under Press Note 3, between April 2020 and December 31 2023, of which 124 proposals were approved while 201 were rejected, as per government figures. ■



# *Benninger's FabricMaster revolutionizes textile dyeing in India*



**T**he Swiss company Benninger, renowned for its innovative textile machinery, has introduced its latest marvel, the FabricMaster, to the Indian market. This soft flow machine is already making waves globally, with installations in Europe, the USA, Peru, Central America and Bangladesh. Now, it is set to transform the Indian textile industry, with production taking place at Benninger's High Tech Fabrication facility in Pune.

The first FabricMaster in India has been operational for a year at Amarnath Dyeing And Bleaching Works Private Limited. The machine's outstanding performance has led Amarnath to order a second unit, underscoring their complete satisfaction with its capabilities. This second machine is now ready to leave the Benninger Works in Pune, marking another milestone in the FabricMaster's journey.

"This innovative technology transforms our production capabilities, setting new benchmarks in the industry. Our new machines will help us reach our goal of becoming the leader in quality fabric processing while caring about ecology. The machines will help us do so by enhancing our efficiency, reducing waste, and minimizing our environmental impact. This investment not only underscores our commitment to excellence but also to sustainable practices that benefit both our customers and the planet", says Sh. Sudarshan Chandak, Director at Amarnath Dyeing And Bleaching Works Private Limited.

### **Excellent dyeing performance**

The FabricMaster is designed to handle the most

challenging dyeing tasks with ease. It excels in dyeing difficult Lycra blends of Cotton, Rayon, Nylon, and Modal fabrics in open width form, without any rope marks or edge curling.

The FabricMaster ensures optimal dye penetration and color consistency achieving uniform fabric handling during the dyeing process. This is ensured thanks to the FabricMaster's nozzle which can be precisely adjusted based on the weight of the fabric being dyed. Lightweight fabrics benefit from low liquor volume, while heavier fabrics are treated with increased flow. Furthermore, the internal fabric plaiter operates at varying speeds, accommodating different fabric types. Moreover, its automated add tank ensures accurate chemical addition simplifying chemical dosing and mixing.

Key factors are minimal consumption of water, steam, chemicals and dyestuff, to ensure right-first-time results with lowest waste. The FabricMaster boasts an optimized chamber design, resulting in the lowest liquor ratio among water-driven piece dyeing machines. The carbon footprint of the FabricMaster is designed to be the future industry benchmark for sustainability. ■





## *India soon to become a manufacturing hub, says PM Sh. Narendra Modi*



**T**he government is taking steps to transform India into a global manufacturing hub, Prime Minister Sh. Narendra Modi said as he called for improving the quality of products and services to attain international standards.

While addressing the nation on Independence Day, PM Modi said that there should be focused on "design in India, design for the world" and urged to create products that cater to both domestic and international markets.

"India is known for its best quality. Now we have to focus on the field of design in India for the world. We have to try to make sure that the Indian Standard should become the International Standard. When the Indian standard becomes the international standard, then everything of ours will be easily approved. This will depend on the quality of our production, service, and our approach," Sh. Modi said.

"The day is not far when India will be the hub of industrial manufacturing and the world will be looking towards it," PM said.

Further, he spoke about the government's ambitious Rs 1.97 trillion production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme, which is seeing great success. The scheme aims to make India a manufacturing powerhouse, curb import dependence and create employment opportunities.

According to PM, due to the policies implemented by the government, India has been able to create an ecosystem to manufacture mobile phones, and export them to the world, instead of being dependent on the import of phones in the past. The outcome has been similar even in the case of toys.

"FDI reforms have also given us great strength. MSMEs' have got a great boost. A new system has developed and due to that our manufacturing sector has become a manufacturing hub of the world," Sh. Narendra Modi said.

The Prime Minister's speech is also a reflection of the Bharatiya Janata Party manifesto that promised to make India a global manufacturing hub and enhance employment in crucial sectors such as electronics, defence, mobile, automobiles.

The party wants to make India a global electronics manufacturing hub by 2030. Sh. Modi also said that the world's biggest companies want to invest in India. "I have seen this after the elections, most of the people who are asking to meet me in my third term are investors... This is a very big golden opportunity. I request the state governments to attract investors," Sh. Modi said.

PM further said that India is trying to be self-reliant in defence and is emerging as a global manufacturing hub due to the steps taken by the government in the last few years.

PM also pointed out that there was a time when the majority of the defence budget was used to procure weapons and equipment from abroad, but his government focused on indigenous manufacturing to make the nation self-reliant.

According to government data, the annual defence production hit a record high of Rs 1.27 trillion in FY24 grew by nearly a third at Rs 21,083 crore. During the April-June quarter of the current fiscal, defence exports grew 78 per cent on year to Rs 6,915 crore. ■



## *India eating into RMG exports share of Bangladesh: CareEdge Ratings*

**Bangladesh's FY24 garment exports were around 3.2 times of India's, but this ratio was 2.5 times in Q1 FY25, reflecting India eating into the share of Bangladesh, CareEdge Ratings said.**

**India may gain around 6-8 per cent and 10 per cent of Bangladesh's monthly export orders in the near term and medium term respectively if the unrest in the latter continues.**

**B**angladesh's readymade garment (RMG) exports during the last fiscal (FY24) were around 3.2 times of India's, but during the first quarter (Q1) of this fiscal (FY25), this ratio narrowed down to around 2.5 times, reflecting India eating into the share of Bangladesh, according to CareEdge Ratings.

Apart from the impact of socio-political upheavals in Bangladesh, this was also aided by various initiatives to enhance the competitiveness of Indian RMG exports, the Indian rating agency noted. The socio-political uncertainties prevailing in Bangladesh may result in global RMG brands and retailers with a significant presence in Bangladesh diversifying their sourcing for meeting their delivery schedules, especially if the crisis persists for more than a quarter or two, it said in a release.

In such a situation, India is expected to gain around 6-8 per cent and 10 per cent of Bangladesh's monthly

export orders in the near term and medium term respectively, translating into monthly incremental export opportunity of around \$200-250 million in the near-term and \$300-350 million in the medium-term, it said.

India has enough headroom to increase RMG exports by 20-25 per cent given the available capacities in the sector.

With the China+1 sourcing strategy already in the works, global RMG brands and retailers have limited alternatives such as India, Vietnam and Cambodia to replace Bangladesh, and India is in a prime position to capitalise on the opportunity, it said.

Bangladesh's RMG exports registered a 17-per cent de-growth in Q1 FY25 on a year-on-year (YoY) basis, while Indian RMG exports have grown by 4 per cent during the same period. ■





## *FTAs are two-way traffic, four signed during Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's govt are fair and in India's interests: Shri Piyush Goyal*

- **Shri Goyal urges industry to use QCOs to raise quality, competitiveness**
- **Govt setting up 12 new industrial parks, 5-6 mega textile parks lined up: Shri Goyal**



those negotiations.

Noting the Government's achievements in the last 10 years, Shri Goyal said that businesses and people recognize the transformation in the Indian economy. The GDP has doubled, Foreign Exchange Reserves has more than doubled and the current account deficit has come down significantly, reflecting how a good government can make a massive difference, Shri Goyal said.

Shri Goyal emphasised that the India-EFTA FTA signed under PM have a \$100 bn-investment commitment linked to concessions. Shri Goyal urged the industries' cooperation to move faster on FTAs and use the Quality Control Orders (QCOs) to their benefit and also to raise their standards. "QCOs will help with better market share and ensure that substandard goods don't flood the market", the Union Minister said.

Shri Goyal further urged the industry participants to provide inputs on ways to reduce compliance burdens, processes and procedures and urged them to make use of Rs 1 lakh crore of 'Anusandhan Fund' for private-sector driven research and development.

Shri Goyal added that the Government is setting up 12 new industrial parks across the country and has 5-6 mega textile parks lined up and also stated that Indian investors should be forthcoming in supporting startups and MSMEs by utilising benefits provided by the Government. "Let's be the change and make the difference we want to see in India", said the Commerce & Industry Union Minister.

Speaking of the governments before 2014, Shri Goyal asserted that Shri Narendra Modi inherited an economy struggling with high inflation and lower growth rates in 2014. The Union Minister asserted that the Modi government has managed to convert a fragile five economy at the time of UPA into a top five economy. ■

**U**nion Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal during his session at the 'Journey Towards Viksit Bharat: A Post Union Budget 2024-25 Conference' organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said that unlike the previous governments, Shri Narendra Modi government has signed four good Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) till now and has concluded the negotiations after undergoing extensive stakeholder consultations.

Shri Goyal said that India took a bold decision to walk out of RCEP as it was never a good decision to be a part of



## GST collections for July 2024 at ₹1.82 trillion, up 10.3% YoY

BY - BALKISHAN CHHABRA

**F**or the month of July, the collections were totalled at Rs 182,075 crore. So far in 2024, the total GST collection has been 10.1 per cent higher at Rs 9.13 lakh crore, as against Rs 8.29 lakh crore mopped up in the corresponding period of 2023. While July's GST collections fell short of the record ₹2.1 trillion in April, experts said they were in line with the robust GST revenue receipts, and are likely to further increase as the festive season approaches. July's GST figures represent sales from June 2024, which is typically a slower month before the onset of the festivities.

### **Introduction of RCM Liability/ITC Statement from Aug 2024 on GST Portal**

To assist taxpayers in correctly reporting Reverse Charge Mechanism (RCM) transactions, a new statement called "RCM Liability/ITC Statement" has been introduced on the GST Portal. This statement will enhance accuracy and transparency for RCM transactions by capturing the RCM liability shown in Table 3.1(d) of GSTR-

3B and its corresponding ITC claimed in Table 4A(2) and 4A(3) of GSTR-3B for a return period. This statement will be applicable from tax period August 2024 onwards for monthly filers and from the quarter, July-September-2024 period for quarterly filers. The RCM Liability/ITC Statement can be accessed using the navigation: Services >> Ledger >> RCM Liability/ITC Statement.

### **Reporting Opening Balance in RCM ITC Statement.**

**RCM ITC opening balance can be reported by following below navigation:**

Login >> Report RCM ITC Opening Balance or Services >> Ledger >> RCM Liability/ITC Statement >> Report RCM ITC Opening Balance

- In case the taxpayers have already paid excess RCM liabilities by declaring the same in Table 3.1(d) of GSTR-3B however he hasn't availed corresponding ITC through Table 4(A)2 or 4(A)3 of GSTR-3B, due to any reason, in such cases

taxpayer need to fill Positive value of such excess paid liability as RCM ITC as opening balance in RCM statement.

- In case the taxpayers have already availed excess RCM ITC through Table in Table 4(A)2 or 4(A)3 of GSTR-3B however he hasn't paid corresponding liability by declaring the same in table 3.1(d) of GSTR-3B, in such cases taxpayer will be needed to fill a negative value of such excess claimed ITC as RCM as opening balance in RCM Statement.

- In case taxpayer need to reclaim the RCM ITC, which was reversed in earlier tax periods through Table 4(B)2 of GSTR-3B, if eligible, he can reclaim such RCM ITC in Table 4A(5) of GSTR-3B. Please note that such RCM ITC shall not be reclaimed through Table 4(A)2 and 4(A)3 of GSTR-3B. Such RCM ITC reversal need not to be reported as RCM ITC opening balance.

#### **For Opening Balance pls reconcile till tax Period:**

**Monthly filers:** Report the opening balance considering RCM ITC till the July-2024 return period.

**Quarterly filers:** Report the opening balance up to Q1 of FY 2024-25, considering RCM ITC till the April-June, 2024 return period.

Deadline to declare Opening Balance: Opening balance can be declared till 31.10.2024.

**Amendments in Opening Balance:** Taxpayers can rectify any errors committed while declaring the opening balance on or before 30.11.2024, he shall be provided three opportunities for the same.

This amendment facility shall be discontinued after 30.11.2024.

#### **Furnishing bank details before filing GSTR-1. New Rule from Sep 2024**

##### **Rule 10A - Furnishing of Bank Account Details.**

After a certificate of registration in **FORM GST REG-06** has been made available on the common portal and a Goods and Services Tax Identification Number has been assigned, the registered person, except those who have been granted registration under rule 12 or, as the case may be rule 16, shall 4[within a period of thirty days from the date of

grant of registration, or before furnishing the details of outward supplies of goods or services or both under section 37 in FORM GSTR-1 or using invoice furnishing facility, whichever is earlier, furnish information with respect to details of bank account on the common portal.

Now, from **01st September, 2024** this rule is being enforced. Therefore, for the Tax period August-2024 onwards, the taxpayer will not be able to furnish GSTR-01/IFF, without furnishing the details of a valid Bank Account in their registration details on GST Portal. Therefore, all the taxpayers who have not yet furnished the details of a valid Bank Account details are hereby requested to add their bank account information in their registration details by visiting Services > Registration > Amendment of Registration Non - Core Fields tabs on GST Portal.

#### **INSERTION OF NEW SECTION 74A TO REPLACE SECTION 73 AND SECTION 74 OF THE CGST ACT FROM FY 2024-25 ONWARDS**

74A. Determination of tax not paid or short paid or erroneously refunded or input tax credit wrongly availed or utilised for any reason pertaining to Financial Year 2024-25 onwards.

**[The author is Senior Partner in M/s. CHHABRA B K & ASSOCIATES (Delhi / NCR)].** ■



# 5th meeting of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement Joint Committee held in Jakarta

**T**he 5th AITIGA Joint Committee and related meetings for review of ASEAN-India Trade in Goods Agreement (AITIGA) were held in ASEAN Secretariat, Jakarta, Indonesia from 29th July to 1st August 2024, marking a significant milestone in enhancing economic cooperation between ASEAN and India. The meeting was co-chaired by Shri Rajesh Agrawal, Additional Secretary, Department of Commerce, India and Ms. Mastura Ahmad Mustafa, Deputy Secretary General (Trade), Ministry of Investment, Trade & Industry, Malaysia. Delegates from all 10 ASEAN Countries and India participated in the meeting.



AITIGA Joint Committee had initiated discussions for review of AITIGA in May 2023 and after finalising its Terms of Reference and Negotiating Structure, AITIGA JC and its Sub-Committees started negotiations in February 2024. The first 2 rounds of negotiations were held in February 2024 in New Delhi and in May 2024 in Putrajaya, Malaysia. During the 3rd round of negotiations in Jakarta, Indonesia, all 8 Sub-Committees dealing with 'National Treatment and Market Access', 'Rules of Origin', 'Standards, Technical Regulations and Conformity Assessment Procedures', 'Sanitary and Phytosanitary', 'Legal and Institutional Issues', 'Customs Procedures and Trade

Facilitation', 'Trade Remedies' and 'Economic and Technical Cooperation' met alongside 5th AITIGA JC and held substantive discussions making significant progress during this round. All the Sub-Committees reported the outcomes of their discussions to the 5th AITIGA JC which provided them further guidance to steer their future work.

The Indian lead of delegation held bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Vietnam on the sidelines of 5th AITIGA JC meeting to develop a common understanding on the issues being discussed in the AITIGA review. Separate meetings were also held with ASEAN Secretary General Dr. Kao Kim Hourn as well as ASEAN Deputy Secretary General Mr. Satvinder Singh to discuss the possibilities in enhancing economic cooperation between India and ASEAN through review of AITIGA.

Indian delegation interacted with Indian businesses in Jakarta on 31st July 2024 over a dinner arranged by Embassy of India in Jakarta and listened to the experiences of industry and their expectations from AITIGA review.



ASEAN is an important trade partner of India with about 11% share in India's global trade. The review of AITIGA, signed in 2009, will help create further opportunities for businesses on both sides to enhance the level of India-ASEAN trade. The next meeting of AITIGA Joint Committee will be held in India from 19-22 November 2024. ■





## Afghanistan's textile factory resumes operations after 18-year hiatus

**A** textile factory in Kandahar has resumed operations after an 18-year hiatus caused by the war waged by the United States and its allies in Afghanistan.



Source: asia24.media

According to the Department of Culture and Information of the Taliban, the factory is currently utilizing about 400 of its 3,000 machines to produce textiles for the Ministries of Health, Defense, and Internal Affairs. The remaining 2,600 machines are intended for commercial use, requiring nearly 14,000 workers to operate at full capacity.

The textile factory, which was originally opened under

Afghanistan's first president, Mohammad Daoud, includes two workshops capable of processing 7,692 tons of cotton per year and producing 41 mn meters of fabric annually. The facility, built in 1977 by Soviet and German companies, ceased production in 2006 due to the conflict involving the United States.

Dozens of other factories in Afghanistan faced similar disruptions during the war, but production has gradually resumed following the Taliban's return to power in 2021. Notably, the state bakery "Silo-e-Markazi" in Kabul resumed production two years ago after a 30-year break.

The reopening of the Kandahar textile factory is expected to provide employment opportunities and contribute to the region's economic growth. As the factory ramps up production, it will need nearly 14,000 workers to operate at full capacity, potentially boosting the local economy by generating income for thousands of families.

The revival of the Kandahar textile factory is part of a broader trend of industrial rejuvenation in Afghanistan. The Taliban government has focused on restoring the country's industrial sector, aiming to stabilize the economy and improve self-sufficiency. ■

## Indonesia extends textile import tariffs amid industry slump

**T**he Indonesian government has announced a three-year extension of safeguard tariffs on imports of textiles, carpets, and other fabric coverings to protect and enhance the competitiveness of the domestic textile industry.

Local news outlet Jakarta Global said the tariffs come as the textile and textile product (TPT) sector continues to struggle with declining domestic and export demand, as well as increasing competition, particularly from Chinese imports.

The site explained how the decision to extend the tariffs follows a concerning trend in the industry's employment figures. The influx of textile imports, particularly from China, has triggered a drop in employment, with the workforce declining from 3.98 million in 2023 to 3.87 million in 2024.

Febrio Kacaribu, head of the fiscal policy agency at the Ministry of Finance, shared with the news site: "The government is closely monitoring this situation and providing solutions to support the long-term recovery of the TPT industry's fundamentals."

This decline is part of a broader pattern of job losses in Indonesia, with the Manpower Ministry reporting 32,064

layoffs between January and June 2024, a 21.4% increase from the same period last year.

Jakarta Global mentioned that the Indonesian Filament Yarn and Fiber Producers Association (Apsyfi) reported how around 30 textile factories shut down between January and May 2024, resulting in 10,800 layoffs. This figure is significantly higher than the 7,200 layoffs reported in 2023 in Bandung and Surakarta alone.

Further highlighting the textile industry's plight, the Confederation of Indonesian Workers (KSPN) said nearly 50,000 layoffs in the TPT industry from January to early June 2024. However, Jakarta Global claims the true extent of job losses may be underreported, as many companies are reluctant to disclose layoffs to avoid impacting their relationships with banks and buyers.

The hardest-hit regions were said to be West Java and Central Java, which host the largest concentration of textile industries in the country.

The latest data to come from the US Office of Textiles and Apparel on the top ten suppliers of apparel to the US, Indonesia saw market share fall by -0.3% while the country's shipment volumes slid 7.2% to 47m SME. ■



# Shri Piyush Goyal calls for faster negotiations of BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement

*BIMSTEC countries to focus on partnership in supply chains, e-commerce, digital public infrastructure and food security: Shri Goyal*



**B**IMSTEC members should re-examine the priorities of member nations with regards to trade negotiations so that the delayed Free Trade Agreement can be finalized. This was stated by Union Minister of Commerce & Industry Shri Piyush Goyal while delivering his speech at the inaugural edition of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) Business Summit organised by Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in partnership with Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

In his address, Shri Goyal said that there is a need to reassess the reasons behind the delay in the BIMSTEC Free Trade Agreement. Shri Goyal said that the members need to come up with a set of cogent recommendations that are acceptable to all seven countries. Shri Goyal called for the Trade Negotiating Committee and the business community to consider a preferential trade agreement to begin with to foster intra-regional trade and investment and enhance regional competitiveness.

Shri Goyal called upon the BIMSTEC members to introspect on the current trading relations noting that trade among the BIMSTEC countries is small. There's a long way to go before we can achieve its full potential, he said. The Union Minister called for deeper integration amongst the member nations to provide honest feedback and help strengthen trade facilitation and cross-border movement of goods. He further said that there should be a focus on reducing trade deficit, strengthening of trade

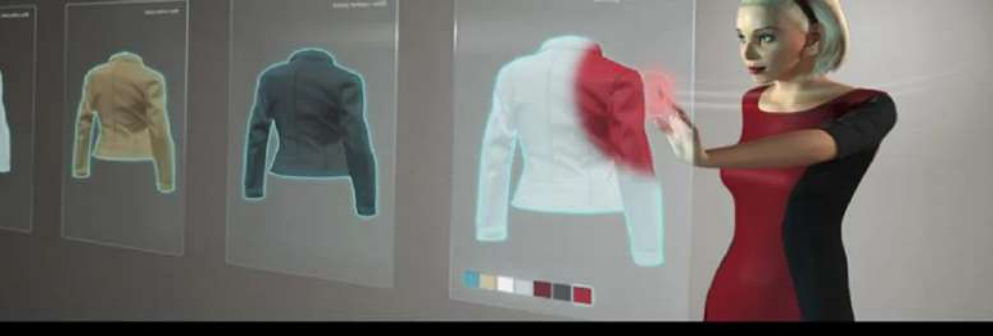
facilitation measures to strengthen partnership in e-commerce, digital public infrastructure and better integration of custom borders with the aid of technology. The Minister noted that there is a need for computerisation of border controls, faster clearances of the import-export online application processes which will help in Ease of Doing Business.

The Minister said that there should be a focus on strengthening supply chains, removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers, strengthening of trade facilitation measures by adopting international norms and seamless transport connectivity, essential to unleashing the full potential of trade and investment cooperation among the BIMSTEC Member States. Shri Goyal expressed hope in greater integration of startups and entrepreneurs of the seven member countries to provide assistance in investment, trade and tourism. He also urged the member nations need to encourage technology and foster agricultural cooperation to secure food security, healthcare and human resource development among each other.

On Blue Economy, the Union Minister said the member states have a thriving blue economy or demand of ocean products enhancing livelihoods and job creation while preserving marine and coastal ecosystems. He further said that regional value chains can add to agricultural and mineral produce to become a developed region.

Speaking on the situation in Bangladesh, the Union Minister expressed deep concern over the developments and wished for a bright future and a smooth transition of governance for the nation. In conclusion, Shri Goyal quoted poet Rabindranath Tagore - "If I can't make it through one door, I will go through another or I will make a door", urging the BIMSTEC countries to collaborate with India's business community to create new alternatives for a prosperous region.

BIMSTEC, or the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation is a grouping of countries in South Asia and South East Asia – Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Bhutan and Nepal. ■



## *Fashion Design Apps Market - Massive Growth opportunity Ahead | Procreate, Sketch*

**The Fashion Design Apps market size is estimated to increase by USD at a CAGR of 8.59% by 2030.**

**F**ashion Design Apps are software applications, typically available on mobile devices and computers, that assist designers, students, and fashion enthusiasts in creating, visualizing, and refining clothing and accessory designs. These apps often provide tools for sketching, 3D modeling, color and fabric selection, pattern making, and even virtual fitting. Fashion design apps streamline the design process, enabling users to experiment with different styles and concepts digitally before moving on to physical prototyping.

According to HTF Market Intelligence, the Global Fashion Design Apps market to witness a CAGR of 8.59% during the forecast period (2024-2030). The Latest Released Fashion Design Apps Market Research assesses the future growth potential of the Fashion Design Apps market and provides information and useful statistics on market structure and size.

This report aims to provide market intelligence and strategic insights to help decision-makers make sound investment decisions and identify potential gaps and growth opportunities. Additionally, the report identifies and analyses the changing dynamics and emerging trends along with the key drivers, challenges, opportunities and constraints in the Fashion Design Apps market. The Fashion Design Apps market size is estimated to increase by USD at a CAGR of 8.59% by 2030. The report includes historic market data from 2024 to 2030. The Current market value is pegged at USD.

The Major Players Covered in this Report: Adobe Illustrator (United States), CLO 3D (South Korea), CorelDRAW (Canada), Procreate (Australia), Sketch (Netherlands), Fashionary (Hong Kong), TUKAcad (United States), Autodesk SketchBook (United States), Revolution Design Software (Canada), DesignBox

(United States). Additionally, other players that are part of this detailed analysis are Fashmates (United States), Shima Seiki's SDS-ONE APEX (Japan), VStitcher by Browzwear (Singapore), StyleCAD (South Korea), Fashion Toolbox (United Kingdom).

### **Market Trends:**

- **Integration of Augmented Reality (AR):** AR features in fashion design apps allow users to visualize how garments will look in a real-world setting or on a 3D model.

### **Market Drivers:**

- **Growth in the Fashion Industry:** The continuous expansion of the global fashion industry drives the demand for tools that make the design process more efficient and innovative.

### **Market Opportunities:**

- **Expanding User Base:** With increasing interest in fashion design, especially among younger generations, there is a growing market for accessible and user-friendly design apps.

### **Market Challenges:**

- **High Learning Curve:** Advanced fashion design apps can be complex, requiring significant time and effort to learn, which may deter some users.

### **Market Restraints:**

- **Cost of Development and Maintenance:** Developing and maintaining a high-quality fashion design app can be expensive, especially with the need for frequent updates and new features.

**The titled segments and sub-sections of the market are illuminated below:**

In-depth analysis of Fashion Design Apps market segments by Types: by Type (2D Software, 3D Software)

Detailed analysis of Fashion Design Apps market segments by Applications: by Application (Enterprises, Individuals, Institutions)

**Major Key Players of the Market:**

Geographically, the detailed analysis of consumption, revenue, market share, and growth rate of the following regions:

- The Middle East and Africa (South Africa, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Israel, Egypt, etc.)
- North America (United States, Mexico & Canada)
- South America (Brazil, Venezuela, Argentina, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, etc.)
- Europe (Turkey, Spain, Turkey, Netherlands Denmark, Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, Russia UK, Italy, France, etc.)

Italy, France, etc.)

- Asia-Pacific (Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, Vietnam, China, Malaysia, Japan, Philippines, Korea, Thailand, India, Indonesia, and Australia). ■



## Indian Textile Industry Collaborates With ILO To Improve Labour Standards In Cotton Sector



**T**he Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) has partnered with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) to enhance labour practices in India's cotton industry.

This collaboration aims to address longstanding concerns about child labour and other substandard working conditions in cotton production.

The initiative will implement ILO's Fundamental Principles and Rights to Work (FPRW) on a pilot basis in key cotton-growing districts of Madhya Pradesh throughout 2024.

These principles focus on five critical areas: freedom of association and collective bargaining, elimination of child and forced labour, non-discrimination, and

promotion of safe working environments.

CITI Secretary General Chandrima Chatterjee emphasised the dual benefits of this program, stating, "By ensuring that our cotton is produced under fair and dignified conditions, we not only uplift our farmers but also enhance the reputation of Indian cotton on the global stage."

India, the world's second-largest cotton producer and consumer, has approximately 6.5 million cotton farmers across 11 states.

The average landholding is 1.26 hectares, with women comprising 40 per cent of cotton farmers—one of the highest percentages globally.

The cotton industry's labour practices have faced international scrutiny, particularly from countries like the United States, potentially impacting India's export potential for raw cotton, textiles, and garments.

This new initiative seeks to address these concerns and improve working conditions throughout the cotton value chain.

The program's success could have significant implications for India's cotton industry, its global reputation, and the livelihoods of millions of farmers and workers involved in cotton production. ■

## *E-Commerce Personalization Software Market to Set an Explosive Growth in Near Future: OptinMonster, Monetate, Apptus*

Stay up to date with E-Commerce Personalization Software Market research offered by HTF MI. Check how key trends and drivers are shaping this industry growth.

The e-commerce personalization software market refers to the segment within the broader e-commerce technology landscape focused on providing solutions that enable businesses to tailor their online shopping experiences to individual customers. These software platforms utilize various data points and algorithms to analyze customer behavior, preferences, and demographics, allowing businesses to deliver personalized product recommendations, targeted promotions, dynamic pricing, and customized content. The goal is to enhance user engagement, increase conversion rates, and foster long-term customer loyalty by delivering relevant and compelling experiences tailored to each shopper's unique needs and interests.

According to HTF Market Intelligence, the Global E-Commerce Personalization Software market to witness a CAGR of 20.3% during the forecast period (2024-2030). The Latest Released E-Commerce Personalization Software Market Research assesses the future growth potential of the E-Commerce Personalization Software market and provides information and useful statistics on market structure and size.

This report aims to provide market intelligence and strategic insights to help decision-makers make sound investment decisions and identify potential gaps and growth opportunities. Additionally, the report identifies and analyses the changing dynamics and emerging trends along with the key drivers, challenges, opportunities and constraints in the E-Commerce Personalization Software market. The E-Commerce Personalization Software market size is estimated to increase by USD 8.4 Billion at a CAGR of 20.3% from 2024 to 2030. The report includes historic market data from 2024 to 2030. The market value is pegged at USD 3.8 Billion.

### **The Major Players Covered in this Report:**

OptinMonster (United States), Monetate (United States), Barilliance (Israel), Evergage (United States), Dynamic

Yield (United States), RichRelevance (United States), Salesforce (United States), Yusp (Hungary), Apptus (Sweden), Attraqt (United Kingdom), Bunting (United Kingdom), CloudEngage (United States), CommerceStack (United States), Cxsense (United States), Emarsys (Austria), GeoFli (United States), LiveChat (Poland), OmniConvert (Romania), Personyze (Israel), Pure360 (United Kingdom), Others.

### **Market Trends:**

- Focus on customer journey personalization.
- Rise of headless commerce and personalization engines.

### **Market Drivers:**

- Rising customer expectations for personalized experiences.
- Growth of e-commerce and competition.

### **Market Opportunities:**

- Increased sales and revenue.
- Improved customer satisfaction and loyalty.

### **Major Key Players of the Market:**

OptinMonster (United States), Monetate (United States), Barilliance (Israel), Evergage (United States), Dynamic Yield (United States), RichRelevance (United States), Salesforce (United States), Yusp (Hungary), Apptus (Sweden), Attraqt (United Kingdom), Bunting (United Kingdom), CloudEngage (United States), CommerceStack (United States), Cxsense (United States), Emarsys (Austria), GeoFli (United States), LiveChat (Poland), OmniConvert (Romania), Personyze (Israel), Pure360 (United Kingdom), Others. ▣

# India's textile exports to touch \$65 billion by 2025-26: Invest India



India's textile industry is expanding at a rapid pace with the country's textile exports projected to touch \$65 billion by the financial year 2025-26, according to Invest India.

**I**ndia's textile industry is expanding at a rapid pace with the country's textile exports projected to touch \$65 billion by the financial year 2025-26, according to Invest India.

Projections indicate that textiles production in the country for both the domestic and export markets will grow at a compound annual growth rate CAGR of 10 per cent to reach the \$350 billion mark by 2030, an Invest India report states.

The figure has been estimated with respect to the Indian textile and apparel market size of around \$165 billion in 2022, of which the domestic market constitutes \$125 billion and exports account for \$40 billion.

India has also emerged as the second-largest manufacturer of personal protective equipment (PPE) globally. Production of PPE had picked up during the devastating COVID-19 epidemic when India emerged as an important exporter to cater to the needs of the world market.

With over 600 certified PPE-producing companies, India is well-positioned in a market expected to exceed \$92.5 billion by 2025, up from \$52.7 billion in 2019. The textile industry is also a major employment driver, providing direct jobs to 45 million individuals and an additional 100 million in related sectors, the report added.

India is the largest cotton producer (23 per cent) in the world and has the highest area under cotton cultivation

(39 per cent of the world area). Cotton plays a major role in sustaining the livelihood of an estimated 6.5 million cotton farmers. As a result, there is ample raw material available for the textile industry.

Several factors contribute to the industry's growth, including India's world-class infrastructure, a focus on technical textiles driven by demand from sectors such as automotive, healthcare, and infrastructure, and the availability of raw materials and skilled labour, it said.

The Indian government's Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme introduced with an allocation of Rs 10,683 crore has given a fillip to the textiles industry in the country. The initiative aims to scale up the production of man-made fibre apparel and fabrics as well as technical textiles.

Under the PLI scheme, 64 applications have been approved, involving a proposed investment of Rs 19,798 crore, with a projected turnover of Rs 1,93,926 crore and anticipated employment for 2,45,362 individuals. The policy has succeeded in attracting robust FDI flows into the textile sector. Investments are planned in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

From April 2000 to March 2024, India attracted \$4.47 billion in FDI in textiles, including dyed and printed fabrics.

India is one of the world's largest producers of textiles and apparel, contributing approximately 2.3 per cent to the country's GDP, 13 per cent to industrial production, and 12 per cent to exports.

The country holds a 4 per cent share of global textile and apparel trade, reflecting a significant share in the global market. ■





# MEDIA COVERAGE

**EP**

## Bangladesh Unrest Live Updates | Short-Term Garment Orders May Shift To India Due To Turmoil In Bangladesh: Exporters

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## 'No capacity to capitalise on Bangla garment sector crisis'

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**TE Raja Simhan**  
Chennai

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**THE HINDU**

## Indian garment sector expects short-term gains due to Bangladesh crisis

August 08, 2024

The crisis in Bangladesh is expected to impact the value textile and apparel sector in the short term. Sushil Kumar, Director of Color Textile Export Promotion Council, said \$1.7-billion worth of cotton, cotton yarn and fabric were exported by India to Bangladesh last fiscal, which is 17% of India's cotton textile exports.

Bangladesh reported cotton garments worth \$1 billion in FY23. There were reports of strikes stalled on other sides of the border and garment orders may shift to India. "We are not inclined to exploit this unorthodox situation in its friendly neighbouring country," he said.

International brands would not want to risk any additional sourcing points. India should position itself to tap the opportunity, he said.

According to the Apparel Export Promotion Council, it is likely that garment orders will shift to India in the short term and the Indian apparel industry may be asked to tap the opportunity by the situation.

Prabhu Dhanocharan, convenor of Indian Textile Exporters' Federation, said Bangladesh exports \$2.5 billion worth of garments to export worth \$1.3 billion in FY23. It is said that the factories in Bangladesh had been asked to resume work soon. While Indian garment orders may gain in the short term, nothing would return to Bangladesh as it is one of the largest buyers of Indian yarn and fabric. "We are not inclined to exploit this unorthodox situation in its friendly neighbouring country," he said.

He said business that there would be at best a minimal positive impact for the Indian garment industry to the current.

**Devdiscourse**

## Political Turmoil in Bangladesh: Implications for Indian Garment Exporters

Indian garment exporters express concern over the political unrest in Bangladesh, highlighted by former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation. Despite general approval for her departure, they emphasise India's focus on growing exports independently. Industry leaders urge a quick stabilisation to resume normal business operations and attract foreign investments.

Indian apparel exporters will continue to prefer market orders from Bangladesh as it remains the production loss and exports from Bangladesh will expand proportionally in the value of the total product flow.

"To meet demand, a lot depends on long-term political stability and harmonious business conditions," says north India-based apparel exporter S.K. Lohar.

India's ready-made garment (RMG) exports value in the first seven months of FY2024-25 saw a steep decline of 10.3% year on year, according to the Apparel Export Promotion Council (APEC), while Q1-24 figures show a modest turnaround, up 4%

**Fispost**

## Bangladesh Crisis LIVE: Parliament dissolved, Hasina's minister detained at airport

August 8, 2024 04:58:57

Bangladesh crisis may lead to temporary increase in Indian garment orders

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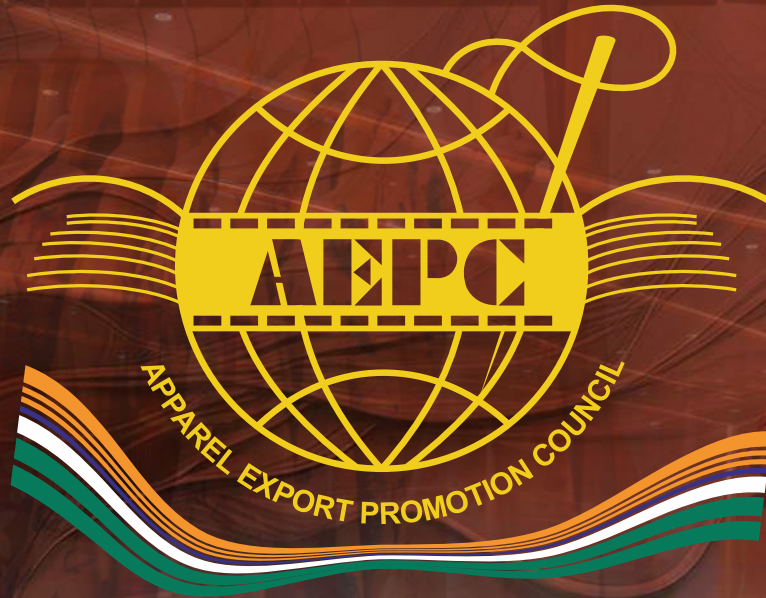
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# APPAREL EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

(Sponsored by Ministry of Textiles, Government of India)

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