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NEWS CLIPPINGS –03-05-2018

ATIRA to help cut power consumption in cotton gins	Fibre 2 Fashion http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/atira-to-help-cut-power-consumption-in-cotton-gins-242005-newsdetails.htm

The Ahmedabad Textile Industry's Research Association (ATIRA) is working towards developing a technology to help cotton gins cut their power consumption by up to 40 per cent. This research and development project, spanning a year, was given to the association for the improvement of cotton ginning by the state government's industries and mines department.

The technology being used in cotton gins currently is over 30 years old and needs to be updated, said RM Sankar, ATIRA's principal scientific officer. He said that the complex ginning machinery has multiple moving parts and the association is working towards reducing the number of these parts to reduce power consumption by up to 40 per cent.

Sankar added that the decrease in moving parts will also reduce the number of spare parts used in the machinery, thus reducing the maintenance cost by close to 40 per cent.

ATIRA researchers are aiming to complete the project within 10 months, according to a leading daily. Besides making machinery maintenance relatively easy, the new upgrade will also help increase production, as per the scientists.

ATIRA officials estimate that the production speed of cotton gins will increase from 70 kg per hour currently to 90 kg per hour after installing the upgraded technology.

GST Council to select hybrid model for simplifying filing returns on Friday	Business Standard http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/gst-council-to-select-hybrid-model-for-simplifying-filing-returns-on-friday-118050300057_1.html

In a relief for businesses, the Goods and Services Tax Council is to simplify filing of returns at a meeting on Friday, through a 'hybrid model' recommended by a panel led by Bihar deputy chief minister Sushil Modi.

The proposed model is a fusion between the recommendation by Infosys Chairman Nandan Nilekani and the 'provisional credit model' suggested by government officers. A buyer will get input tax credit based on the seller's uploading of invoices, including missing ones. This would be irrespective of whether seller has actually paid the tax.

"The Council will discuss (this). It is expected to get acceptance," said an official.

In the provisional credit model, the buyer would provisionally get input tax credit once he uploaded the missing invoices. This was to get reversed in three months if the seller had not uploaded the invoices and paid the tax.

“In the hybrid model, there will be no linkage to seller making the payment. A buyer will get credit as soon as a seller uploads the invoice. The buyer will not be denied any credit if the tax is not paid by the seller,” said the official.

Another officer said this could be a big positive for business as a whole. “How can a buyer control the seller paying taxes?”

“It would be unfair to business if non-payment of GST by the seller results in the buyer having to reverse credit already taken after paying the tax to the seller. Consequently, any model that does not require any reversal of bonafide credits would be welcome,” said M S Mani, partner at consultants Deloitte India.

In non-payment of taxes, the authorities will follow it up with the seller, based on the liability generated from the invoice upload. If the seller does not have money to pay or cannot be located, then the authorities would catch the buyer, the official said.

To make things easier, invoice uploads will be allowed on a daily basis, instead of on a monthly basis through the existing GSTR-1 form.

GST Network, information technology backbone for the indirect tax, has sought sufficient time to implement the approved return filing model. Hence, the current system of GSTR-3B (summarised return) and GSTR-1 (outward supply) will continue for the time being beyond June 30.

Gujarat expo to connect local businesses with garment retail giants	**DNA India** http://www.dnaindia.com/business/report-gujarat-expo-to-connect-local-businesses-with-garment-retail-giants-2610968

The Farm to Fashion expo, to be held in the city beginning March 4, will act as a liaison between garment and fabric manufacturers from Gujarat and retail giants likes Walmart, Philip-Van Heusen (PVH Corp), Gini and Jony, Reliance Trendz, Arvind Ltd, and Simba Fashions (Bangladesh), who will be attending it.

Sources say, participation of such buyers will open gates for small business in Gujarat and help expand their footprint across the nation and even abroad.

"Representatives of Walmart and other major brands have approached us. This will be a huge opportunity for local players to showcase their products to top buyers from across the country and even foreign buyers. We urge them to reap full benefit of the textile exhibition and the various sessions that will be held," said Shailesh Patwari, President, Gujarat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCI). GCCI, along with Maskati Market Kapad Mahajan, is organising the exhibition, which will be on till May 6.

Local players believe this will benefit local manufacturers by helping them reach markets where these brands have their footprint.

Nitin Prasad, V-P (sourcing), India, Phillip Von Heusen; Navneet Bhagat, M-D of Simba Fashions; Yogesh Chaudhary, V-P of Gini and Jony; representatives of Arvind Ltd and Reliance Trenz, are some of those who would attend the exhibition. Organisers have invited close to 400 buyers, which include major export houses from Delhi, Bengaluru, Mumbai and other major hubs, along with international buyers from Bangladesh, Vietnam, and Indonesia.

In addition to interaction with prospective buyers, the expo will host a series of knowledge sessions.

Meena Kaviya, Chairperson, Textile Committee, GCCI, said this will give local businesses an idea of regulatory requirement, technological updates, sustainable business practices, environment regulations, certification aspects, global scenario, government incentives, and other business insights. A white paper depicting the road map for the growth of textile sector will be prepared by sectoral experts. It will be presented to the central government as an input for the upcoming textile policy.

The three-day expo aims to strengthen the entire garment production chain, right from cotton growers to garment makers in Gujarat, and to halt the export of low-value textile products and instead, create value added products within Gujarat to help local farmers and small businesses.

Squeezed Domestically and Globally, India's Garment Exports Are Being Stretched Thin	**The Wire** https://thewire.in/economy/squeezed-domestically-and-globally-indias-garment-exports-are-being-stretched-thin

India's garment industry fears job losses over next two to three months as its export competitiveness remains under pressure due to a sharp reduction in duty drawback rate and a blockage of working capital due to the continuing delay in input credit refunds by the government.

Garment exports declined by 3.83% in dollar terms in 2017-18 as exporters failed to get orders due to a higher price. The fall in rupee terms was even sharper at 7.6%.

As *The Wire* has reported previously, Indian exporters also have struggled to benefit from China's eroded competitiveness in apparel exports due to an increase in industry wages. Exporters from Bangladesh, Vietnam and Cambodia have instead benefited at the cost of their Indian counterparts.

Industry sources said garment exporters have been refunded just Rs 1,500 crore out of Rs 4,000 crore due to them in input credit since July 2017. They are paying interest rate on short-term loans taken by them from banks for working capital, which is impacting their cost competitiveness.

A Gurgaon-based garment exporter, with an annual turnover of Rs 42 crore, told *The Wire* that his company is yet to get refund of Rs 2.5 crore due to it as input credit.The duty drawback rate for garment exports has been reduced from 11.2% to 3.5% post-GST.

This exporter also said the industry could be forced to resort to layoffs if its core problems are not addressed soon.

Following an outcry by the industry over the reduction in duty drawback rate after GST implementation, the commerce ministry raised incentives by 2% under the Merchandise Export from India scheme (MEIS) in the mid-term trade policy review last December.

However, operating costs of garment exporters still remain 5% higher than the pre-GST era.

H.K.L. Maggu, chairman, Apparel Export Promotion Council, said garment exporters' margins have been dented by 5-6% after the implementation of GST. Moreover, since exports from Bangladesh and Vietnam enjoy duty-free access in the EU and the US, India's competitiveness further gets eroded in these key markets, Maggu added.

Inability to leverage

China's garment exports have shown a declining trend in recent years as its costs of production rise on the back of an increase in wages. But India has not been able to benefit from China's retreat from labour-intensive garment export market, Maggu told *The Wire*.

As a fallout of India's falling competitiveness in exports, he said, the Tirupur garment industry has seen a 15% decline in business activities over the last eight months.

The garment industry has a huge potential to create jobs. But Prime Minister Narendra Modi's job creation mission is getting defeated due to lack of support from the finance ministry, the AEPC chairman said. He, however, added that the industry is getting full support from the textiles ministry.

Meanwhile, the US has complained to the WTO against MEIS subsidy regime, which expires on June 30. If the MEIS regime is not extended, garment exporters' margins could get further eroded. Because of the prevailing uncertainty over the future of MEIS, exporters are hesitant about taking new orders. They fear losing money if the subsidy scheme is allowed to expire.

The AEPC has asked the government to extend the MEIS regime till December 2018. However, sources said, the government has yet to take a view on this.

Global imports of garment fell from $475 billion in 2016 to $432 billion in 2017. This downtrend has the domestic industry worried.

The industry also feels that at a time when the global apparel trade faces serious headwinds, the government should step up its support to the domestic industry.

Meanwhile, in a report released two months ago, credit rating agency Icra has said that the pace of growth in India's apparel exports is likely to remain contingent upon the industry's ability to overcome the internal as well as external headwinds that it is currently facing.

While the transition to the new taxation and export incentive regime has posed liquidity challenges for the industry, intense competitive pressures in the global market, particularly in light of impending trade agreements and foreign currency movements pose additional challenges.

In addition, uncertainty on the apparel exports to the UAE looms, in light of inexplicable trends witnessed in the recent months, the rating agency has warned in a recent update on the industry.

The UAE had emerged as one of the prominent apparel export destinations for India, with its share increasing to 23% in FY'17 from 12% in FY'14.

Particularly for the ten-month period ending June 2017, India's apparel exports to UAE had grown at a sharp pace of 56% on a year-on-year basis. Subsequently, apparel exports to the UAE have fallen at an equally fast pace, by as much as 45% since June 2017.

Re-leasing of textile market land to traders to be discussed	**Times of India** https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/surat/re-leasing-of-textile-market-land-to-traders-to-be-discussed/articleshow/64006492.cms

The contentious issue of re-leasing the SMC land at very frugal rate will come up for discussion in the standing committee on Thursday. On one hand, the textile traders are demanding 25,000 sq metre of Surat Textile Market (STM) land to be released at throwaway prices, on the other hand, SMC is thinking of charging according to the provisions of Land Disposal Act 2002, which will earn the civic body about Rs 35 crore as rent on yearly basis. In 1967, SMC leased 24,435 sq metre of land to the STM Housing Society for textile market. Then the rent of the space was decided as Rs 2.10 per sq metre. Now, as the 50-year lease period is over, the society has asked for the extension of lease for another 50 years and offered the rent as Rs 57.57 per year per sq metre.

At present, the jantri rate for this place is Rs 52,250 per sq meter. Whereas the market rate of this land is at least 2.5 times that of jantri rate . Today the market rate in this textile market area of land in prime locality like the STM is Rs 1.25 to Rs 1.5 lakh per sq meter.

ccording to the old agreement, lease of 50 years got over on April 19, 2018. Now, we will be working on provisions of Land Disposal Act 2002. We will decide what needs to be charged as rent per year for this SMC land," said standing committee chairman Rajesh Desai.

"This is purely commercial activity that they have been doing there since past 50 years, and so we have given them a second option of buying the land at one go from SMC at decided price, which will be near to the actual market price. If they don't go for that, they will be paying the rent as per the present day norms," a senior SMC official said.

Another standing committee member said, "We are looking at about 15% of the market value as the rent per year for SMC, with the first priority to existing tenants. So if the market value is decided at 15-20% less than the projected value of Rs 350 core and nearby, the market value can be around Rs 300 crore and 15% of that can work up to Rs 40-45 crore and nearby."

However, it remains to be seen if the rulers of BJP are able to take this critical decision at a time when SMC faces cash crunch on one hand and textile traders are fighting the Goods and Servie Tax battle with government on the other hand.

Taxpayers may file GST Tran-1 by May 10	The Hindu http://www.thehindu.com/business/taxpayers-may-file-gst-tran-1-by-may-10/article23752133.ece

High Court order cites tech glitches

The Bombay High Court has extended the deadline for filing of GST Tran-1 by 10 days after it was highlighted that technical glitches made it impossible for many to make the submission before the due date of April 30.

“... interest of justice would be served if we extend this date of 30th April, 2018 in relation to filing of TRAN-1 and which filing was not possible due to technical glitches / IT related glitches. We extend it to 10th May, 2018,” said the bench comprising Justice S.C. Dharmadhikari and Justice Anuja Prabhudesai.

It was clear that this facility was extended only to those taxpayers who could not access the system due to technical glitches, added the judgment.

It also said taxpayers would have to provide proof of their inability to access the portal due to technical glitches. GST Tran-1 is a filing that is required to avail credit in lieu of the taxes filed before the roll out of the Goods & Services Tax.

Guj HC issues notices Centre, state govts on plea on GST	Times of India https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/guj-hc-issues-notices-centre-state-govts-on-plea-on-gst/articleshow/64005421.cms

The Gujarat High Court has issued notices to the central and state governments and the GST Council on a petition challenging the "absence of provisions" under the GST Act which "blocks" advocates from availing the input tax credit.

A bench of Justices Akil Kureshi and B N Karia issued notices yesterday and sought the response of both the governments on June 21.

Petitioner Nipun Singhvi, a lawyer, said the absence of provisions for availing the input tax credit by advocates was resulting in a cascading effect as the GST on taxable legal services is being passed on to the litigants by way of the professional fees, on which again GST is being charged.

Through his counsel Vishal Dave, the petitioner said the provisions under sections 17 (2) and 17 (3) of the GST Act, 2017 are unconstitutional, as they block availing of the input tax credit on GST on legal services offered by advocates.

The absence of the provisions for availment of input tax credit by advocates is leading to a cascading effect and is "in essence leading to a break in the credit chain which is in direct conflict with the very underlying fundamentals of the GST law," the petition stated.

The petitioner prayed for directions to the respondents to introduce a mechanism for availing the input tax credit on expenses incurred with respect to the GST availed by the advocates

India to WTO: No breach of farm subsidy limits in FY15 and FY16	**Economic Times** https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-to-wto-no-breach-of-farm-subsidy-limits-in-fy15-and-fy16/articleshow/64006326.cms

India informed the World Trade Organization that it did not breach farm subsidy limits in the two years 2014-15 and 2015-16. The outgo for commodities such as rice, wheat and coarse grains in its minimum support programme – the price it pays to farmers when buying their produce – was below the ceiling, it said, putting to rest doubts raised by the US and Australia, among others, that India's farm subsidies have been increasing.

Input subsidies for farmers including support for fertilisers, irrigation and electricity were $24.8 billion and $23.5 billion in the two years respectively, India said in the submission of its domestic subsidy programme to the multilateral body over a week ago. "It is a good development that we are getting updated," said an expert on WTO matters. The outgo on minimum support prices was below the permitted levels for cotton, pulses, groundnut, sunflower and mustard seed. The limit for developing countries including India, is 10% of agricultural production.

GREEN BOX SUBSIDIES

Among the permitted subsidies, known in WTO parlance as Green Box, India's support declined to $18.3 billion in 2015-16 from $20.8 billion in 2014-15. "India needs to relook its agriculture schemes and bring them in the Green Box because of the unlimited elbow room available there," the expert said, adding that India can fine-tune its input subsidies to farmers and bring them into the Green Box. "The direct benefit transfer for fertilisers is one such subsidy," he said.

In the Green Box category, the amount spent on public stockholding for food security purposes (allocation for distribution and buffer stock) was $17.1 billion in 2014-15 and $15.6 billion in 2015-16. Low-income or resource-poor farmers accounted for 99.29% of farm holdings, the government said in its submissions, citing the agricultural census for 2010-2011. This number was 99.15%, according to the agricultural census for 2005-2006. India provides support to farm producers mainly through operations of the agriculture ministry.

Cabinet approves continuation of Umbrella Scheme 'Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana' in Agriculture Sector	**Business Standard** http://www.business-standard.com/article/news-cm/cabinet-approves-continuation-of-umbrella-scheme-green-revolution-krishonnati-yojana-in-agriculture-sector-118050200798_1.html

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has given its approval for the Umbrella Scheme, "Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana" in agriculture sector beyond 12th Five Year Plan for the period from 2017-18 to 2019-20 with the Central Share of Rs. 33,269.976 crore..

The Umbrella scheme comprises of 11 Schemes/Missions. These schemes look to develop the agriculture and allied sector in a holistic and scientific manner to increase the income of farmers by enhancing production, productivity andbetter returns on produce. The Schemes will be continued with an expenditure of Rs.33,269.976 crore for three financial years, i.e., 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20.

3. The Schemes that are part of the Umbrella Schemes are :-

(i) Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) with a total central share of Rs. 7533.04 crore, MIDH aims to promote holistic growth of horticulture sector; to enhance horticulture production, improve nutritional security and income support tofarm Households.

(ii) National Food Security Mission (NFSM), including National Mission on Oil Seeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP), with a total central share of Rs.6893.38 crore. It aims to increase production of rice, wheat, pulses, coarse cereals and commercial crops, through area expansion and productivity enhancement in a suitable manner in the identified districts of the country, restoring soil fertility and productivity at the individual farm level and enhancing farm level economy. It further aims to augment the availability of vegetable oils and to reduce the import of edible oils.

(iii) National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA) with a total central share of Rs.3980.82 crore. NMSA aims at promoting sustainable agriculture practices best suitable to the specific agro-ecology focusing on integrated farming, appropriate soil health management and synergizing resource conservation technology.

(iv) Submission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE) with a total central share of Rs.2961.26 crore. SMAE aims to strengthen the ongoing extension mechanism of State Governments, local bodies etc., achieving food and nutritional security and socio-economic empowerment of farmers, to institutionalize programme planning and implementation mechanism, to forge effective linkages and synergy amongst various stake-holders, to support HRD interventions, to promote pervasive and innovative use of electronic / print media, inter-personal communication and ICT tools, etc.

(v) Sub-Mission on Seeds and Planting Material (SMSP) with a total central share of Rs.920.6 crore.

SMSP aims to increase production of certified / quality seed, to increase SRR, to upgrade the quality of farm saved seeds, to strengthen the seed multiplication chain, to promote new technologies and methodologies in seed production, processing, testing etc., to strengthen and modernizing infrastructure for seed production, storage, certification and quality etc.

(vi) Sub-Mission on Agricultural Mechanisation (SMAM) with a total central share of Rs.3250 crore. SMAM aims to increase the reach of farm mechanization to small and marginal farmers and to the regions where availability of farm power is low, to promote 'Custom Hiring Centres' to offset the adverse economies of scale arising due to small landholding and high cost of individual ownership, to create hubs for hi-tech and high value farm equipment, to create awareness among stakeholders through demonstration and capacity building activities, and to ensure performance testing and certification at designated testing centers located all over the country.

(vii) Sub Mission on Plant Protection and Plan Quarantine (SMPPQ) with a total central share of Rs.1022.67 crore. SMPPQ aims to minimize loss to quality and yield of agricultural crops from the ravages of insect pests, diseases, weeds, nematodes, rodents, etc. and to shield our agricultural bio-security from the incursions and spread of alien species, to facilitate exports of Indian agricultural commodities to global markets, and to promote good agricultural practices, particularly with respect to plant protection strategies and strategies.

(viii) Integrated Scheme on Agriculture Census, Economics and Statistics (ISACES) with a total central share of Rs. 730.58 crore. It aims to undertake the agriculture census, study of the cost of cultivation of principal crops, to undertake research studies on agro-economic problems of the country, to fund conferences/workshops and seminars involving eminent economists, agricultural scientists, experts and to bring out papers to conduct short term studies, to improve agricultural statistics methodology and to create a hierarchical information system on crop condition and crop production from sowing to harvest.

(ix) Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Cooperation (ISAC) with a total central share of Rs. 1902.636 crore. It aims to provide financial assistance for improving the economic conditions of cooperatives, remove regional imbalances and to speed up - cooperative development in agricultural marketing, processing, storage, computerization and weaker section programmes; to help cotton growers fetch remunerative price for their produce through value addition besides ensuring supply of quality yarn at reasonable rates to the decentralized weavers.

(x) Integrated Scheme on Agricultural Marketing (ISAM) with a total central share of 3863.93 crore. ISAM aims to develop agricultural marketing infrastructure; to promote innovative and latest technologies and competitive alternatives in agriculture marketing infrastructure; to provide infrastructure facilities for grading, standardization and quality certification of agricultural produce; to establish a nationwide marketing information network; to integrate markets through a common online market platform to facilitate pan-India trade in agricultural commodities, etc. (xi) National e-Governance Plan (NeGP-A) with a total central share of 211.06 crore aims to bring farmer centricity & service orientation to the programmes; to enhance reach & impact of extension services; to improve access of farmers to information &services throughout crop-cycle; to build upon, enhance & integrate the existing ICT initiatives of Centre and States; and to enhance efficiency & effectiveness of programs through making available timely and relevant information to the farmers for increasing their agriculture productivity.

The Schemes/Missions focus on creating/strengthening of infrastructure of production, reducing production cost and marketing of agriculture and allied produce. These schemes / missions have been under implementation for varying duration during past few years. All these schemes/missions were appraised and approved independently as separate scheme/mission. In 2017-18, it has been decided to club all these schemes / missions under one umbrella scheme 'Green Revolution - Krishonnati Yojana'.

Demonetisation has slowed down economic growth: Narayanasamy	**The Hindu** http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/tp-tamilnadu/demonetisation-has-slowed-down-economic-growth-narayanasamy/article23742674.ece

The demonetisation of high-value notes has slowed down the growth rate of Indian economy for the last two years, said Puducherry Chief Minister V. Narayanasamy here on Saturday.

He was here to addressing the 2nd edition of the Indian Business Congress (IBC) organised by the Entrepreneurs Council of India (ECI).

He said the circulation of high denomination currency among terrorists and hoarding of money was high. He said the Goods and Services Tax (GST) has only benefitted the rich.

The differential GST has hit spinning mills, textile industries, grinder making units and other industries, he added. Mr. Narayanasamy also invited entrepreneurs to make their investments in Puducherry.

Award

Earlier, Mr. Naranayasamy was given an award for best governance.

The award was given by former High Court Judge T.N. Vallinayagam.

Textiles home decor market to cross $185,000 mn by 2027	Fibre 2 Fashion http://www.fibre2fashion.com/news/textile-news/textiles-home-decor-market-to-cross-185-000-mn-by-2027-241996-newsdetails.htm

The global market for home décor textiles is expected to record an impressive growth between 2018 and 2027. Growing consumer confidence, capacity expansions, social responsibility and sustainability trends, and a booming e-commerce sector will take revenues from worldwide sales of these textiles to over $ 185,000 million by 2027, according to a new report.

Asia-Pacific excluding Japan (APEJ) will continue to dominate the global textiles home décor market, says the report by market intelligence company Transparency Market Research (TMR). Countries in that category like China and India, have remained leading global exporters of home textiles.

Manufacturers and exporters of home textiles in India have recorded higher profit margins. The Chinese home textile industry is currently focusing more on garments business. Considering US home textile imports, China will continue to be dominant, with relatively larger number of shipments compared to other APEJ countries, says the report.

Bed linen is expected to be the most remunerative product in this market, with an estimated revenue share of over 33 per cent during 2018-2027. Demand for bed linen is likely to grow at a brisk pace, with a steady stream of opportunities expected to emerge in both developed and developing markets.

Sensing the lucrativeness of this segment, manufacturers are focusing on consolidating their position, the report says. Prominent manufacturers are also focusing on increasing capacity and setting up new plants. Welspun India opened a new plant in Anjar, Gujarat, recently and forayed into the flooring solutions segment.
Bombay Dyeing is focusing on a massive revamp of its home textile business by investing over $ 15 million.

However, a key challenge for stakeholders in this segment is the highly fragmented presence of unorganized players.

Indoor applications of home décor textiles are expected to account for bulk revenue share of the market. However, revenues from outdoor applications of home décor textiles will increase at a relatively higher compound annual growth rate till 2027, says the report.

The key companies underpinning expansion of the global home décor textiles market are Mannington Mills, Inc., Companhia de Tecidos Norte de Minas, Kurlon Enterprise Limited, American Textile Company, Inc., Leggett & Platt, Incorporated, Nitori Holdings Co., Ltd., Williams-Sonoma, Inc., Berkshire Hathaway Inc., Ashley Furniture Industries, Inc., Mohawk Industries, Inc., and Inter Ikea Systems

Govt Establish Rs 2.5 Billion Cotton Endowment Fund For Enhancing Crop Output	Par.Com https://par.com.pk/news/govt-establish-rs-2-5-billion-cotton-endowment-fund-for-enhancing-crop-output

The government has established cotton endowment fund with an initial worth of Rs 2.5 billion in order to create indigenous resources for conducting research and development activities in the field of cotton crop across the crop growing areas in the country.

The aim of the establishment of the fund was to generate internal resource to conduct research for producing high-yielding seed verities and innovative technologies to produce over 15 billion cotton bales annually, said Chairman pakistan Agriculture Research Council (PARC) Dr Yousuf Zafar.

Talking to APP here on Wednesday, he said prior to this cotton seed was the primary source of income, which was spent to meet the research and developmental expenditures of Pakistan Central Cotton Committee (PCCC).

He said the PCCC was mandated to conduct research and produce high yielding, disease resistant seed verities of cotton seeds and recommend the measures to enhance per acre crop production.

He said the amount being received from the millers on account of cotton cess was mainly used to fulfill the administrative expenses of PCCC, adding that many textile mills had obtained stay orders from the courts, which had also reduced the income through cess.

The endowment fund would help to generate about Rs. 600-700 million annually and it could be spent to meet the research and development expenditures despite asking the government for funds every month, he remarked.

The PARC further informed that pre-Central Development Working Party (CDWP) had been granted to the project and it would be presented in the next meeting of CDWP for approval for the establishment of the fund.

Meanwhile, he said the fund would help to bring more areas under cotton crop production, adding that this year area under cotton was expected to increase due to reduction in sugarcane prices and stabilization of commodity prices in local markets.

He said cotton sowing in China and US had witnessed sharp decrease, adding that Pakistan was importing 4-5 million bales to fulfill its domestic requirements and the initiative would help to bridge the gap between local demand and supply.

This year, he said government was also working on pro-active approach to enhance the per-acre crop output and stop the down ward shifting of crop production, adding that provision of certified seed and availability of pesticides were ensured by the government to exploit the existing crop production potential.

Dr Yousuf Zafar said government had also imported the trap-ropes from Japan to safe the crop from any possible pest attack and get maximum crop output during the season, adding that this traps were distributed among the growers free of cost.

Commerce minister, governor discuss promotion of textile industry	Pakistan Today https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/05/01/commerce-minister-governor-discuss-promotion-of-textile-industry/

Federal Minister for Commerce and Textile Pervez Malik met Sindh Governor Muhammad Zubair at the Governor House here.

The two leaders discussed in detail the economic development and promotion in the fields of textile and commerce as well as the steps taken to encourage the textile industry, investment in new textile industries, and other matters, said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

The Sindh Governor said Pakistan is rich in natural resources and human resource, and there is a need for maximum utilisation of these resources. He stressed the need for encouraging the people associated with the textile industry as well as investors to achieve the required results.

The federal minister told the Governor Sindh that steps for promoting and encouraging the textile industry at every level and attracting local and foreign investors towards this field are drawing positive results.

He said both local and foreign investors are investing in textile industry which is helping in the eradication of poverty and unemployment.

Bangladesh tops China, India	The Daily Star https://www.thedailystar.net/business/bangladesh-tops-china-india-1570804

Bangladesh overtook China and India in ethical compliance in apparel segment on the back of improved workplace safety following pressure from international inspection and remediation agencies, according to a new survey.

“In particular, ethical scores in Bangladesh rose by an average of 15 percent during the past 12 months,” said AsiaInspection in its first quarterly report of 2018 released last month.

This was likely reflecting the continuous pressure to improve put on Bangladesh's textile and apparel manufacturers by the industry groups formed after the Rana Plaza collapse in 2013, it added.

Hong Kong-based AsiaInspection is a global leading quality control and compliance service provider that partners with brands, retailers, and importers around the world to secure, manage and optimise their supply chain.

Particularly, after the collapse, there is no scope to run businesses without ensuring quality and ethics, said Mahmud Hasan Khan, vice president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, while commenting on the survey.

This is because all renowned retailers and brands such as H&M, C&A, Walmart, Marks & Spencer and JC Penney source from Bangladesh in bulk, he told The Daily Star.

More than 80 percent of the garment business is run through strategic partnerships with renowned brands, according to Khan.

He said if any kind of unethical and non-compliant things are found in the supply chain of global apparel business, retailers and brands have to explain it to their customers.

Every form of compliance related to social and environmental issues, production, workers' welfare, workhour and working conditions is maintained in the supply chain, the BGMEA leader said.

“It is not possible to do business unethically now,” he said.

After the Rana Plaza collapse, two platforms were formed: the Accord, the platform of about 200 European retailers, and the Alliance, an agency of 28 North American retailers.

About 90 percent of the inspection and remediation of about 2,200 active garment factories affiliated with the Accord and Alliance have been completed.

Besides, 1,500 small and medium-sized garment factories are being inspected and monitored by the government.

The survey report—Q2 2018 Barometer: China unfazed by global trade stand-off, supply chains face new ethical concerns—is a synopsis of outsourced manufacturing and the quality control services industry.

Overall ethical audit scores in the first quarter offer some hope for improvement after a disappointing performance last year when there was a lower number of critically noncompliant factories.

“Time will show whether this quarter's data represents a positive turnaround, with lasting improvement hinging on regular follow-up and timely corrective action,” said the report.

Ethical scores by industry remain disparate, with homeware in the lead with an average score of 8.3 out of 10, and compliance in bodycare and accessories sectors continuing last year's downward trend.

“Meanwhile, audit scores of textile and apparel manufacturers have been rising since mid-2017, indicating that long-term improvement efforts may be finally bearing fruit.” Nevertheless, AsiaInspection data showed that factories are still plagued by health and safety issues, which were ranked the most pressing concerns in the first quarter, taking over working hours and wage compliance.

AsiaInspection is seeing strong demand for environmental audits, especially in China where brands and manufacturers struggle to comply with the new antipollution laws.

Pollution and waste management accounted for more than 80 percent of non-compliance found by AsiaInspection in the quarter, with more than two-thirds of them classified as major.