

IBTEX No. 50 of 2017

Mar 09, 2017

USD 66.75 | EUR 70.34 | GBP 81.20 | JPY 0.58

Cotton Market		
Spot Price (Ex. Gin), 28.50-29 mm		
Rs./Bale	Rs./Candy	USD Cent/lb
20509	42900	82.15
Domestic Futures Price (Ex. Gin), March		
Rs./Bale	Rs./Candy	USD Cent/lb
21520	45015	86.20
International Futures Price		
NY ICE USD Cents/lb (March 2017)		78.39
ZCE Cotton: Yuan/MT (May 2017)		16,645
ZCE Cotton: USD Cents/lb		91.47
Cotlook A Index - Physical		87.1
Cotton & currency guide:		
<p>In the broader term cotton so far this week is holding a positive stance however the gains have been limited while we compare with past few week's performance. The spot price of cotton in India advanced to Rs. 44,000 per candy. In a single day on Wednesday the gain was more than Rs. 350 per candy. The equivalent parity price with USDINR pair at 66.75 is around 84.20 cents per pound for Shankar -6 variety. The arrivals which were earlier estimated to rise above 200,000 bales a day has not been so high. In last three days of the week arrivals are at an average of 175,000 bales. In fact on Wednesday the arrivals declined to only 165,000. Basically the tighter supply and steady demand from local mills is keeping the underlying commodity price higher. We believe if the scenario continues in the same</p>		

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fashion then price may remain overall positive in the near term.

Coming onto the global counter past during the week cotton price moved 79.40 cents per pound while post that price corrected and now hovering round 78 cents. We believe market is now consolidating and failing to see major movement. However, the eye would be today on the export sales figure from the US. Looking at the last four to five weeks performance of export sales and likely that the exports would remain near half million bales may again push the cotton price higher. Nevertheless any significant drop in the exports number could make a reverse position for cotton price. Since that we do not have any major trigger in the market the entire world would eye the export data releasing today. Also the USDA report is expected to release today in the US and believe the same would bring in lot of fresh cues on the market. Until then cotton price may continue to trade sideways with a bit of positive sense.

However, while we look at the price chart of ICE cotton May future the behavior post the price correction this week from the high looks little precarious. We see if market fails to hold the support of 77.50 then larger correction could be witnessed.

For the day we expect cotton price to trade in the range of 77.50 to 78.60 cents. At the domestic market the March may move in the range of Rs. 21300 to Rs. 21700 per bale.

Currency Guide:

Indian rupee depreciated 0.2% to trade near 66.83 levels against the US dollar. Rupee is pressurized by strength in US dollar amid increased talks of Fed's rate hike. Weakness in equity market and concerns about Trump's immigration policies is also weighing on the currency. Rupee may trade in a range of 66.65-66.95 and bias may be on downside due to weaker risk sentiment.

**Compiled By Kotak Commodities Research Desk , contact us :
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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

China: Yarn Expo Spring 2017 to host over 390 exhibitors



More than 390 exhibitors from 12 countries will showcase their yarns and fibres at the Yarn Expo Spring 2017 that will take place in Shanghai, China from March 15-17. The trade fair is expanding by nearly 20 per cent this year and will cover a comprehensive range of high-quality sourcing options to accommodate the changing

needs of the market.

The trade fair will showcase some of the world's highest quality yarn and fibre products, such as natural and blended yarns including cotton, wool, flax/regenerated flax, silk, and man-made fibres and yarns, as well as specialty products including elastic, and fancy and blended yarns.

Exhibitors from countries like China, Hong Kong, Japan, India, Indonesia, Korea, Pakistan, Singapore, Slovakia, Thailand, Uzbekistan and Vietnam are participating in the fair. The overseas exhibitor line-up remains strong with 90 international suppliers taking part.

While the India Pavilion, Pakistan Zone as well as leading exhibitors from Uzbekistan and Vietnam will showcase competitive cotton yarns, elastic yarns and eco-products, exhibitors from Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Slovakia and Thailand will impress buyers by exhibiting a series of cutting-edge fancy yarns, and synthetic, knitting and metallic fibres and yarns. Birla Planet will demonstrate its Birla spunshades, Birla micro-viscose and Birla micro modal products.

More than 300 domestic exhibitors will be highlighted in six display zones – Fancy Yarn Zone, Natural Cotton Yarn Zone, Colourful Chemical Zone, Quality Wool Zone, Green Linen Zone and e-Commerce Zone – to reveal a

wide range of innovative yarns and fibres, such as nylon, viscose filament, renewable and recycled fibres and much more.

Besides selling and sourcing, all fairgoers can also gain inspiration and learn the latest market insights from the Shenghong China Fibre Trend Area 2017-18 in the Colourful Chemical Zone, as well as from a series of informative seminar sessions.

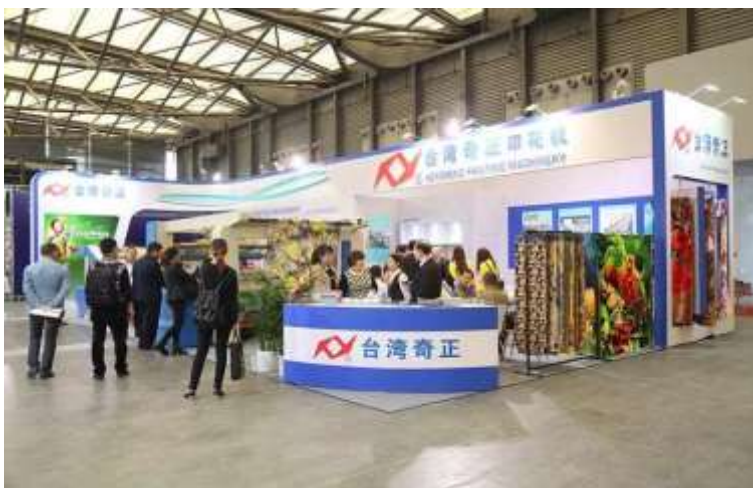
Along with Yarn Expo Spring 2017, four other textile trade fairs will be held concurrently from March 15-17 at the same venue – Intertextile Shanghai Apparel Fabrics Spring Edition, Intertextile Shanghai Home Textiles Spring Edition, PH Value and the China International Fashion Fair (CHIC).

Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, the Sub-Council of Textile Industry, China Cotton Textile Association, China Wool Textile Association, China Chemical Fiber Association, China Bast & Leaf Fibres Textiles Association and China Textile Information Centre are organising the Yarn Expo Spring.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Mar 08, 2017

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China: Digital textile conference to give an insight on industry



The China Digital Textile Conference (CTDC) has been organised along with the International Digital Printing Industry Fair (TPF) with an aim to provide visitors a complete experience and insight about the industry and to help source exhibited technology and raw material. The conference

will be held on April 18, while the fair will take place from April 19-21.

The forum is expected to attract more than 250 worldwide professionals on digital printing machinery and technology suppliers, end users of digital

printing, college experts as well as designers. The speakers' line-up has more than 18 experts and leaders of textile digital printing industry. The conference will be attended by leading digital printing machinery companies, ink suppliers, digital printing consumables and design software. As the most influential conference in digital textile industry, CDTC will be a platform for suppliers and users to discuss the opportunities and challenges of this rapid-growing industry.

Among the highlights is the 'WTiN Professional Insights into Future Development'. Tansy Fall, Editor digital textile of World Textile Information Network (WTiN) will speak on the size and shape of digital textile market. Fall's focus will be on where key growth markets are currently within the industry, forecast future growth.

Top industry experts from textile, dyeing and printing design industries will share their insights on new age digital printing and give future direction and application advantages of digital printing. Walanwalan.com will speak on design trends in digital textile printing.

A roundtable discussion will also be held to focus on various topics related to digital printing. Here suppliers can interact with users and share the solutions of bottlenecks in the production process.

B V Denis Jahic, regional sales manager of SPG Prints will speak on 'Digital Textile Printing Technology Enabling Fast Fashion'. Also, Luca Sandron, international sales manager, In èdit Software, and technical support manager in Asia Kevin Liu will discuss on the importance of colour management software and techniques of getting the perfect colour on the fabric.

TPF 2017 will also have several product and technical presentations to provide more opportunities for exhibitors to promote their high-quality products and new technologies. Workshops on different topics will be held, giving an opportunity to gain knowledge about digital printing and its development, as well as market insights and design trends.

Organised by WTiN and co-organised by UBM China, TPF 2017 will promote industry development and create a platform for digital printing machinery, supplier and users to exchange techniques and seek business

opportunities. It will focus on the latest industry trends, print technology developments, inks and more.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Mar 08, 2017

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Karachi: Dull trading activity seen at cotton market



Trading activity remained dull at cotton market on Tuesday as ginners were reluctant to dispose of their stocks at prevailing prices, despite strong demand from spinners. Ginners were demanding higher prices influenced by soaring world cotton prices.

However, spinners were unwilling to pay high prices to avoid compromising their competitive edge. The shortage of quality cotton and limited stocks of unsold cotton with ginners also impacted trading.

The Karachi Cotton Association (KCA) spot rates remained unchanged.

Limited trading were reported to have changed hands on the ready counter. Major transactions included 587 bales from Tando Adam at Rs6,800, 200 bales from Khanewal at Rs6,900 and 300 bales from Haroonabad at Rs7,100.

New York cotton touched the seasonal peak of 79.97 cents per pound. Although China released some cotton stocks on Monday, the move failed to check the rising cotton prices worldwide. Indian cotton also recorded fresh gains.

Source: yarnsandfibers.com– Mar 08, 2017

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Wool demand is continuing to grow in EU, US & China

The demand for wool is continuing to grow in major international markets for imported clothing like the EU and the US. The demand is forecast to grow more strongly in China—the world's largest producer and exporter of woollen clothing and textiles. Increasing domestic consumption of luxury woollen textiles is also a factor pushing wool demand in China.

The continuing growth in wool demand has led to increase in the price of wool in Australian dollars since 2014, Senior ABARES economist Dr Caroline Gunning-Trant said in her analysis presented at ABARES Outlook 2017. Australia's leading forum for public and private decision-makers in agriculture, Outlook marks its 47th annual conference this year with expert analysis of innovation in agriculture.

"In the two years since early January 2015, prices have risen by about 35 per cent," Gunning-Trant said. "The Australian Eastern Market Indicator (EMI) wool price is forecast to rise by 8 per cent in 2016–17 to around 1,360 c/kg."

"Prices are expected to peak next year before easing in real terms as wool production increases... And by the end of 2021–22, prices are expected to still be relatively high at around 10 per cent above the 10 year average in real terms," she said.

The upward trend in prices reflects the constrained supply of apparel wool—given lower flock numbers—and firm demand, particularly for fine wool.

"By the end of 2016–17, shorn wool production is forecast to be 5 per cent higher than last year, reflecting flock rebuilding across the sector supported by good pasture growth on the back of 2016 rainfall... And the national sheep flock is forecast to increase to 73.6 million head in 2016–17 and to continue increasing to around 83 million head by 2021–22," she added.

According to Gunning-Trant, wool exports are forecast to rise by 4 per cent and reach 442,000 tonnes in 2017–18, as the expanding national flock results in further increases to the number of sheep shorn. "This trend is expected to continue over the medium term and exports in 2021–22 are

projected to grow to around 492,000 tonnes, valued at \$3.9 billion, in real terms."

The export growth is supported by a slow but steady increase in international demand, especially in the EU, the US and the Chinese markets.

Source: fibre2fashion.com– Mar 08, 2017

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Bangladesh : Council formed to resolve crisis in garment sector

The government has formed a tripartite council to resolve any crisis in the garment sector through dialogues.

In a gazette on Monday, the labour ministry published the names of the representatives of the council, which will be headed by the state minister for labour and employment.

Six government officials from different ministries, including the labour secretary, and six leaders from Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association and Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association will be in the committee, according to the gazette.

Six trade union leaders from different associations will also be present in the committee, the gazette said.

The council will mainly suggest the government how to improve the industrial relations between the factory owners and the garment workers and how to improve their productivity.

The council members will meet thrice a year to discuss the latest labour situation to update the government.

The head of the council can call more meetings if necessary, the gazette said.

The director general of the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments, labour director of the labour directorate and director general of industrial police will also be present at the meetings.

In consensus, the tripartite body can include any person anytime from home and aboard if they think it is necessary.

The council will be in place until the issuance of further notice in this regard.

The deputy secretary of the labour ministry will act as the member-secretary of the committee.

The council was formed, as the international community put pressure on the government after the arrest of 35 workers and unionists during the Ashulia garment unrest in December last year. However, the detainees were released later.

Source: The Daily Star - Mar 09, 2017

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Ghana : Govt to taste major demo as Textile workers hit streets on March 9

The government is expected to taste its first major demonstration from a workers' union as members of the Textile, Garment and Leather Workers' Union (TEGLEU) hints of hitting the streets on Thursday, March 9 to draw attention to what it is describing as the aggravated job insecurity in the textile industry.

The massive job losses, the union explained was as a result of the influx of counterfeit, pirated and smuggled African Prints into the local markets, which unfortunately has become the preserve of many Ghanaians.

Members of the union, which is part of the national organised labour group, the Trades Union Congress (TUC), said the planned peaceful procession would end with the presentation of a petition to the Minister of Trade and Industry (MoTI), Mr Allan Kyeremanten at the ministry by a four-member team.

The procession, according to the General Secretary of the Union, Mr Abraham Koomso, had become necessary as a result of the failure of the Ministry to take action on their plight, despite several attempts requesting for audience with the minister.

“The attention of MoTI has been drawn to this development but no action has been taken as the distressed manufacturing companies grind to a halt; resulting in the loss of over 20,000 workers,” he said in an interview on March 1, Accra.

Subsequently, two letters requesting for a meeting with the minister were not responded to and several physical attempts to meet with the minister, he explained, had also proved futile. The letters he said were dated January 30, 2017 and February 13, 2017.

“In view of this dire situation, we have resolved to embark on this procession on March 9, 2017 to amplify our grievances for MoTI to act swiftly by reconstituting the Task Force to check the illegal activities of some importers and traders to save our jobs,” he said.

Task force suspended

The import of cheap and pirated textiles onto the market, prompted the formation of an anti-textile piracy task force, established in 2010 by the ministry and has since operated to bring sanity into the business of trading in the products.

The task force, comprising representatives of the security agencies, the Ghana Standards Authority, the local manufacturers and the trade unions were able to seize some of these pirated textiles but had to deal with persistent resistance from traders, who sometimes endangered the lives of the group.

As at now the operations of the task force have stalled for no apparent reason and the union he said, has not been able to explain the circumstances.

Ailing sector

The sector trade union has over a decade consistently petitioned the government to deal with the illicit trading business which had virtually destroyed the local manufacturing companies and caused job losses.

Meanwhile the smugglers have intensified their activities with impunity to the detriment of the local textile manufacturing companies.

Source: Business Ghana – Mar 09, 2017

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Kenya to import high yield cotton seeds from Israel

Kenya will import two tonnes of certified seeds from Israel to distribute to local smallscale cotton farmers in the coming long rains season as part of efforts to revive the industry.

FarmersAgriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Cabinet Secretary Willy Bett confirmed Wednesday that government is importing the high yield seeds from Hazera Genetics through Amiran Kenya Limited. Hazera, a global leader in seed industry, is headquartered in Israel.

Bett confirmed that the importation deal is being undertaken with a view to improving local cotton productivity and as well increase farmers' income base.

“These seeds has undergone mandatory tests by Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Services (KEPHIS) and is ready for commercialization,” said Bett.

The seeds will be distributed to farmers for planting during the coming long rains season.

“The yield potential of this seed is 2,000 kilograms per hectare and therefore this is a major step in addressing the yield gap and competitiveness of value chain,” Bett said.

Once proved viable and adaptable to local ecological zones the seeds will be multiplied to enable more farmers access and increase their farming.

The seed importation deal is meant to supplement local initiatives the government is undertaking to produce and commercialize the varieties.

The cotton industry is grappling with numerous challenges such as low production, high production cost, high cost of inputs especially pesticides for producers and power cost for processors.

Source: NewsGhana.com.gh - Mar 08, 2017

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NATIONAL NEWS

Textiles Minister announces several initiatives, special campaign to provide MUDRA Loans to women handloom weavers

On the occasion of International Women's Day today, the Union Textiles Minister Smriti Zubin Irani has announced 'Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya National Awards', a new category of awards specially for women handloom weavers and women handicraft artisans.

Noting that only one woman has so far received the Sant Kabir Award, the Minister said that the awards are being instituted from this year, so that women weavers and artisans receive due recognition and economic benefits associated with the Awards.

The Minister also launched a special campaign to provide MUDRA Loans to women handloom weavers all across the country.

Irani said that more than 1,700 women weavers are being given such loans, to start the campaign. Five weavers received MUDRA loans from the Minister, on the occasion.

The Minister also launched a national campaign to eliminate the exploitative and unhygienic practice of thigh reeling in India (thigh reeling of tasar silk is usually practiced by marginal women entrepreneurs, working every day in their homes during spare time).

Irani noted that 30% of the tasar silk produced in India is through the practice of thigh reeling. The Minister said that in order to put an end to this unhygienic and inhuman practice, the Ministry is starting the distribution of woman-friendly Buniyaad Reeling Machines to woman silk reelers.

Developed by Central Silk Technological Research Institute that falls under the aegis of Central Silk Board (CSB), Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India, the Buniyaad machine not only reduces the drudgery involved in thigh reeling, but also improves productivity and income.

The Textiles Minister also launched an online “Handloom Weaver MUDRA Portal” in association with Punjab National Bank.

Irani said that often, the handloom weavers are not able to know the status of the MUDRA loan application, after applying for the same.

She said that the portal will address this gap; the portal will allow weavers and officials to do real-time tracking of the loan application status.

Further, through the portal, regional offices of Banks will be able to submit claims and transfer funds electronically directly to the weaver’s loan account. The new system will reduce the delay in disbursement of claims and financial assistance to handloom weavers. The Minister announced that the new system will be functional from April 1, 2017, the beginning of the new financial year.

Two MoUs were also signed on the occasion, between the Ministry of Textiles and National Backward Classes Finance & Development Corporation under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, with the main objective of increasing earnings of millions of women handloom weavers & artisans belonging to backward classes, who work in the handloom & handicraft sectors. This will be done by undertaking large number of cluster development projects.

On the occasion, Irani distributed sanctions for three Scheduled Caste Artisans Cluster Projects and two Scheduled Tribe Artisans Cluster Projects, to women beneficiaries.

Source: business-standard.com- Mar 08, 2017

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India's cotton yarn exports to rise on strong Chinese demand

As the Chinese cotton auction started at a 25 percent premium over the prevailing fibre rate in India, Indian exporters are pinning hopes on a revival in cotton yarn exports.

Despite a robust demand from Bangladesh, overall cotton yarn exports remained under pressure during the current financial year due to sluggish demand from China. For the April–December 2016, India’s cotton yarn exports slumped by 12 per cent to 872.19 million kgs from 987.21 million kgs in the corresponding period last year. Cotton yarn exports from India rose by a marginal 4.29 per cent at 1307.11 million kgs for the financial year 2015-16 from 1253.33 million kgs for the previous year.

The first day of Chinese auction quoted cotton prices between Rs 51,000 and Rs 56,000 a candy (356 kgs) as against Rs 42,000 a candy currently prevailing in most local markets here. This means Chinese cotton is costlier by a wide margin.

Also, the cotton being auctioned in China is up to seven-year old. By nature, the quality of natural cotton starts deteriorating after a two-three years as the fiber starts growing yellow.

Still Chinese spinning mills buying cotton perhaps for blending with fresh cotton. But, because of high prices, India tends to gain despite 3.5 per cent levy of duty by China on import from India.

India faces direct competition from Vietnam as China has allows zero duty import from there. So, instead of cotton, Chinese textiles mills would move to purchase cotton yarn from India.

“We are expecting, therefore, cotton yarn exports to turn positive this year after a steep decline last year,” said Siddhartha Rajagopal, Executive Director, The Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council (Texprocil).

Meanwhile, cotton yarn demand from domestic mills have also revived with its price has risen by five to seven per cent in the last two-three weeks. Yarn price follows the trend of cotton price movement, of course, with a lag of 1-2 months. Today, cotton prices have risen sharply so far this calendar year with the benchmark Shankar 6 variety hitting to the level of Rs 12,188 a quintal on Tuesday, the highest in five months. Cotton (Shankar 6) price has jumped by over 10 per cent this calendar year. This level of cotton price was earlier seen on October 8, 2016. International price of cotton at 79 \$-cents per pound is also all time high.

“Yarn demand from overseas buyers remained sluggish since October price hike in cotton as importers held their orders in anticipation of price fall. But, now they believe that cotton prices are not going to come down. So, they are booking cotton and cotton yarn. So, the overall demand has revived in the last few weeks,” said Manikam Ramaswami, Chairman And Managing Director, Loyal Textile Mills Ltd, a Chennai-based textiles manufacturer.

Meanwhile, a recent Care Ratings report forecast India’s cotton yarn output to decline by five to seven per cent to 3,936 million kgs for the financial year 2016-17 on the back of sluggish demand in past months with substitution taking place from man made fibre (MMF) as well as distressed direct yarn exports due to lower demand from China. Yarn demand in other export markets will be healthy, the report said.

After declining by 10 per cent in 2011-12 cotton yarn production increased by over 14 per cent y-o-y to 3,583 million kgs in 2012-13. In 2013-14, production increased by about 10 per cent to 3,928 million kgs. High cotton prices and easy availability of MMF at competitive rates led to slower growth of production of cotton yarn.

Spinning mills, however, have urged the government to extend 2 per cent tax benefit to yarn sector under Merchandise Exports from India Scheme (MEIS).

Cotton yarn exports from India

Financial year	Quantity (million kgs)	Value (\$ million)
2013-14	1310.14	4555.38
2014-15	1253.33	3938.19
2015-16	1307.11	3610.56
2016-17*	872.19	2369.74

Source: Texprocil. *April–December

Source: business-standard.com- Mar 08, 2017

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‘Market for handlooms with designer touch has increased’

The increased exposure to handloom and crafts of the various regions of India in the last few years has enabled consumers to appreciate genuine products that are handmade or handcrafted. The value of these products has grown and the increasing number of e-commerce websites selling ethnicwear has led to a broader market for handlooms with a designer touch.

"There has been a revival of ethnicwear in the recent past due to customer appreciation and due to government campaigns like Make in India. This market is definitely going to see an upward trend if uniqueness and quality of products are maintained," Subhashini Srinivasan, founder, The S Studio told Fibre2Fashion in an exclusive interview.

The market for ethnicwear is growing steadily in India as well as abroad as Indian handloom fabrics and sarees get their due recognition.

"With good exposure to online shopping and through apps in mobile phones, the need to go to a physical store to shop is now less. Consumers are able to shop for ethnicwear from the comfort of their homes," added Srinivasan.

Speaking about the factors that influence the growth of ethnicwear, she said, "People's awareness about the exclusiveness of a handcrafted product is extremely important for the growth of Indian ethnicwear. And with the cost of making these products increasing due to lack of labour, it is important that they receive proper remuneration to continue making such quality ethnic wear."

Source: fibre2fashion.com- Mar 08, 2017

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In red since last two years, Indian textile sector is shaken by demonetization

Malegaon: Mood in textile industry was upbeat this Diwali. For, after two successive poor monsoons, more than the normal downpour last rainy season had infused fresh blood in the textile sector which was reeling under intense pressure since Jan/Feb 2014.

November 08, 2016 however changed everything. Shock, disbelief and uncertainty were writ large upon every face. Dreams of the weavers who had expected to regain the lost ground were shattered. Markets abuzz with hectic activities till now wore a deserted look. Over 1.5 million looms came to a standstill, and hundreds of thousands of laborers were left jobless. This was when Prime Minister Modi took the sudden decision to demonetize rupees 500 and 1000 old currency notes.

“The immediate impact of the demonetization was shock and disbelief. We were unable to comprehend from where we will get the cash the industry needed to run the routine business”, Nehal Ansari of Taj Textiles, Malegaon said.

Same was the case in Bhiwandi.

“The textile industry basically runs on cash. As it needs a huge transaction every day, mostly in cash, it is next to impossible to run powerlooms without cash”, Javed Ansari of Bhiwandi Powerloom Federation said.

Unlike Ichalkiranji where monthly salary is a norm, labourers in Bhiwandi and Malegaon are respectively paid fortnightly and weekly wages. It means the two largest textile clusters which host more than 50% of India’s power looms would need a huge amount of cash every week and fortnight.

“It was suicidal to run power looms under such a situation. It means hiring labourers without assuring them the wages. You can do such thing for some time. But, not for weeks and months”, Ansari added.

The result was that the power loom units known for their 24x7 work cultures started shutting down one by one. It led to the exodus of labourers, mostly from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Assam and West Bengal.

“We have come here for work leaving behind our families in our home towns. We live in shared rooms and take food from local bissi centers. Every fortnight when we are paid wages, we pay part as room rent and food charges and the remaining to our kin back home.

“This is the cycle in our routine life. If this cycle is disturbed, we will be left without shelter and food”, Shahensha Khan, a labourer who came from Bihar, said.

Market insiders said the weavers incurred losses amounting to millions of rupees in the last two months post demonetization, and it will take years for the situation to become normal and back on track.

“The industry has been thrown behind by many years due to demonetization”, Nehal Ansari said.

Interestingly, this is the season which normally sees a huge demand of cotton fabrics in the market. But, even as the industry struggled to come out of the shock of demonetization, shortage of cotton yarn forced the industry in reverse gear once again.

“This is the period when fresh cotton comes in the market and prices are normally between 32,000 to 35,000 per candy of 355 kgs. But, today the cotton despite good output is selling at 43,000 to 45,000 per candy. As a result, cotton yarn prices are skyrocketing and weavers are unable to match the price of their fabrics with the one in the market”, Sharique Zubairi of Suhana Textiles, Malegaon said.

From January/February to the next 3-4 months normally there is a huge demand of cotton fabrics mainly because of two reasons. One the upcoming marriage season and second is the summer when people prefer cotton fabrics.

“Had there been adequate supply of cotton yarn these days, the weavers would have definitely recovered some losses incurred due to demonetization”, Zubairi said.

Meanwhile, polyester continues to be under pressure due to 30% anti-dumping duty imposed on imported synthetic fibers. There was hope and anticipation when Textile Minister Smriti Irani promised in August 2016 during a meeting with stakeholders that she will take up the issue with the Commerce Ministry and will try to find out a solution beneficial for the industry.

Irani repeated her assurance after she visited Bhiwandi a couple of months ago.

“Five months have passed and we are yet to hear from the Ministry of Textiles if it has taken any decision over Irani’s assurances”, Rashid Tahir

Momin, former MLA and himself a weaver who was present in the meeting, said.

Failing to get any positive response from the Textile Ministry, the weavers anticipated that the Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley would announce some measures to bring the struggling textile sector – second largest after agriculture, back on the right tracks. They were however disappointed as the General Budget 2017-18 had hardly any mention of the Textile Sector.

Then came yet another assurance from Textile Minister Smriti Irani. When the issue of the struggling Textile Industry was raised in the Parliament in the first half of the budget session, Irani said "she has some good news for the sector. But, they could be made public only after the election process in the five states are over".

The Parliament resumes session today and the election process in five states have also been wrapped up. The weavers now again look at Irani to know the "good news" she had promised in the first half.

Source: ummid.com- Mar 09, 2017

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PAU develops country's first Bt cotton varieties

Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana has said that it has developed country's first genetically-modified (Bt) varieties of cotton – the seeds of which could be reused by farmers, resulting in saving the repeated cost they have to bear every season.

“Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has identified three Bt cotton varieties – namely PAU Bt 1, F1861 and RS 2013 – for cultivation in states of Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan. They (ICAR) have asked us to put up the proposal regarding releasing of these varieties,” PAU vice-chancellor Dr Baldev Singh Dhillon told The Hindu.

Dr. Dhillon said that the notification regarding these varieties could be out by as early as next month after ICAR's scheduled meeting. Meanwhile, the process for multiplying the seeds would be started. “We are expecting that by next year we will be able to distribute few seeds to farmers for sowing in fields. Surely, by next to next year we will distribute seeds on large scale,” he said.

“PAU Bt 1 and F 1861 were developed by PAU, whereas, RS 2013 was developed at Rajasthan Agricultural University (RAU), Bikaner. While the PAU Bt 1 was completely developed at Punjab Agricultural University, the F 1861 and RS 2013 varieties were converted to Bt version by Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur. All the three varieties carry "cry1Ac" gene imparting resistance against bollworm complex,” said an official PAU statement.

Dr. Dhillon said with the cultivation of these varieties, the cotton farmers will not have to purchase the costly Bt cotton hybrid seed every year. “The farmers can keep their own harvest for next sowing season. Bt cotton hybrids became popular due to ‘Bt technology’ which imparts resistance to bollworms, which are a major cause of yield loss in cotton,” he said, adding that with the adoption of these new Bt varieties by the farmers, a major shift is likely to take place in cotton cultivation in northern states.

Notably, cotton is the only genetically-modified seed that’s legally allowed in India. Punjab alone needs around 20-25 lakh packets of Bt cotton seed for sowing of crop which roughly amounts to around Rs. 225 crores.

“The price of seed of these Bt cotton varieties shall much lower as compared to current market price of Bt cotton hybrids seed, and thus, there is a scope to reduce the cost of cultivation and increase the savings of the farmers,” he added.

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