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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Dominican Rep top textile exporter to US among CAFTA-DR

Among the member nations of CAFTA-DR (Central America Free Trade Agreement-Dominican Republic), Dominican Republic exports the maximum amount of textiles and apparels to the US.

Dominican Republic textile and apparel exports to the US have risen by 6.48 percent from US\$ 184.9 million to US\$ 196.9 million for January-April period of 2013, according to 'Major Shippers Report- U.S. General Imports' published by Office of Textiles and Apparel (OTEXA) of the US Department of Commerce.

Besides Dominican Republic, the other countries under CAFTA-DR are Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Among these countries, Guatemala and Honduras have shown a rise of 4.6 percent and 1.15 percent, respectively, in their textile and apparel exports to the US during the first four months of the current year.

On the other hand, the exports of textiles and apparels from Costa Rica, Nicaragua and El Salvador to the US recorded a fall of 20.95 percent, 5.75 percent, and 2.87 percent, respectively during the period under review.

Although Dominican Republic has topped the CAFTA-DR list in textiles and apparel exports to the US, it is at 25th position in the US import list, the report shows.

The US imported textile and apparel worth US\$ 31.8 billion from all over the world, during the first four months of 2013.

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Bangladesh garment exports soar 11.84% in July-May FY'13

The exports of readymade garments from Bangladesh increased to US\$ 19.313 billion in the first eleven months of the current financial year 2012-13, registering a rise of 11.84 percent over exports worth US\$ 17.267 billion made during the corresponding period of the previous fiscal year.

Woven garment exports from Bangladesh stood at US\$ 9.923 billion during July-May 2012-13, showing a year-on-year growth of 14.10 percent, according to the data released by the Export Promotion Bureau (EPB).

Knitwear exports totaled US\$ 9.39 billion during the eleven-month period, an increase of 9.56 percent over exports of US\$ 8.57 billion made during the corresponding period of 2011-12.

However, exports of home textiles from the South Asian nation dipped by 12.62 percent year-on-year to US\$ 721.97 million, EPB data showed.

The sharp rise in Bangladesh's apparel exports has come at a time when the Bangladesh Government is taking various steps to reform the country's garment sector, owing to increased pressure from foreign buyers, including the US and the EU, following the collapse of Rana Plaza in April this year that resulted in the death of over 1,100 people.

The readymade garment industry accounts for about 80 percent of Bangladesh's exports.

Over the last three decades, the Bangladesh clothing sector has grown from a **scratch to become the world's second-largest apparel exporter, next only to China.**

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China: ShanghaiTex 2013 opens to good start

ShanghaiTex 2013 Unveils Over 1,000 Exhibitors Exhibiting High-Tech Textile Machinery Equipment & Showcasing Latest Innovations.

SHANGHAI, June 10, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- **The 16th International Exhibition on Textile Industry (ShanghaiTex 2013)** stages its grand opening today (June 10) in **Shanghai New International Expo Centre**. Covering 100,000m² in total exhibition space, the four-day exhibition will be held until **June 13** (Thursday) and is expected to attract over **1,000** leading enterprises in the textile machinery sector from **25** countries and regions around the world, including **Austria, Bangladesh, Brazil, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong SAR, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, mainland China, Pakistan, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, The Netherlands, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the USA**. As estimated, it will attract over **60,000** professional visitors as well as 20 associations and enterprise delegations from around the world. Focused on the theme of "Leading the Transformation and Upgrading of China Textile Industry", **ShanghaiTex 2013** fully presents new products, new machinery, new technology and new processes for the textile industry from home and abroad to meet the new needs that have arisen during the rapid development of the textile market.

Renowned Exhibitors Presenting State-of-the-Art Equipment and Technology

Aiming to promote the development of the textile industry in a timely way, **ShanghaiTex 2013** attracted a full range of leading enterprises to participate in the exhibition. The "Digital Printing Machinery Zone", as a new zone in halls W3 and W4 in the Dyeing & Finishing Area for this exhibition, attracts extensive attention from worldwide, including high-quality enterprises in the industry such as DGI, Digital Textile Solution, Digital Textile Technology, Digitex, Durst Phototechnik, Epson, Ergsoft, Human Digital, Huntsman, J. Zimmer, Konica Minolta, Kornit Digital, Mimaki, MS Srl, Printpretty, Setema, Stork, Shenzhen Textalk Graphic Technology, Toshin Kogyo, Yeman, Homer, Nanjing Shidao, Huangye, etc. These exhibitors target to lead the new trend for digital textile printing and meet the new demand of market development.

In view of the industry trend of pursuing energy-saving, high-efficiency, environmentally friendly dyeing and finishing equipment, **ShanghaiTex 2013**, as an industrial advocate, showcases new technology, new products and new solutions on printing, dyeing and finishing equipment from worldwide in cooperation with many prestigious enterprises to establish a one-stop new procurement platform. Leading enterprises include China Hi-Tech Group's Fong's Industries, Brazzoli, Chemtax, Yeman, Erhardt+Leimer, Gofront, Tong Geng / Hangzhou Donglin, Hsing Cheng, Asia Kingdom, Jebesen & Co, Logic Art,

Santex, Thies, Yechang Textile, SDL Atlas, Copower Technology, Sinoca, Neowin, Zhejiang Hongtao, Texpro & Stentex Machinery, Shanghai Jianxin, Lianyungang Yingyou, Jilong Machine, Key Cheng, etc.

Additionally, the "Knitting and Hosiery Machinery Zone", which is situated at halls W1 and W2, showcase the latest knitting and hosiery machines and equipment. Key exhibitors include Santoni, Lonati, **Karl Mayer**, Groz-Beckert, Cixing, Memminger, Nanxing, Changzhou Diba Textile Machinery, Nantong Tianyuan, Fujian Xingang, Yantex (Yantai), **Jinjiang Hongji**, Changzhou Wuyang, Jiangsu Jinlong, Tayu Machine, Flying Tiger Technology, etc. All participating enterprises will present their latest products.

The "Spinning and Textile Machinery Zone" in halls E1 and E2 attracts the world's best enterprises with the common highlights of automation, high efficiency and energy saving. Outstanding enterprises in this zone include China-Hi-Tech Group, Pacific Mechatronic Group, Rieter, Savio, Trutzschler, Oerlikon, Mazuoli, Loepfe, Uster, LMW, Murata, Changzhou Tonghe, Qingdao Tianyi, Qingdao The Dongjia, Geron, Qingdao Over-world, Sobone Machinery, Shanghai Jwell, Shanghai Chunrui, Shanghai Crosrol, Shaanxi Baocheng, Ningbo Dechang, Beijing Chonglee, etc. They will display their latest technology at their exhibition booths.

ShanghaiTex 2013 receives favorite support from Italian, German, South Korean and Taiwan pavilions. Specifically, the exhibition area of the Italian Pavilion is almost three times larger than their last participation. The exhibitors will jointly present high-efficiency, environmentally friendly technology and products to help industrial enterprises in transformation and upgrading.

In addition, in halls E3 and E4, a wide range of weaving machinery, special parts and accessories for textile machinery can be found.

Fabulous Concurrent Events Presenting a Flawless Combination of Textile Materials with Technology

In addition to a one-stop demonstration of textile machinery and equipment, **ShanghaiTex 2013** concurrently presents "Textile Technology Zones" to enable industry players to access the latest technology, first-hand information and latest development trends of the textile market. For example, the "Digital Garment Printing Zone by Kornit Digital" in the new "Digital Printing Machinery Zone" enables digital printing exhibitors to showcase their one-stop service of machinery technology, software programs and printed products. Buyers can learn creative ideas and get technical guidance through visiting the zone and understanding the products and services in person. What's more, they can get special gifts at the exhibition.

"Knitting in Style – Home Decor Exhibition Tour", which is another highlight of the exhibition, is to promote the cooperation and exchange between the upstream and downstream sectors for home textile and home design. The organizer cooperated with a prestigious textile machinery agent – Chemtax Industrial Co., Ltd, and a well-known design workshop – **Liu de Biolley**, to build a 200m² home environment to provide a full presentation of international textile innovation, creative home textile design and home environment arrangement art.

Lastly, the "Fashionable Yarns Showcase" presents the latest yarn material and knitting technology and demonstrates the production of garments using yarn or fiber at ShanghaiTex 2013. The organizer collaborated with prestigious exhibitors and international textile brands to enable visitors to experience the latest textile technology and product advantages based on new technology.

Apart from that, the organizer concurrently organized over 20 seminars and forums, including "2014-2015 Sportswear Design & Trends Forum" and "A New Approach for Environmental Friendly Printing Solution by Kornit Digital", where professional speakers highlight popular textile technical trends and industry development trends.

Overwhelming Support from High-End Buyers and Domestic/Overseas Buyer Groups

Originating in 1984, **ShanghaiTex** is a textile exhibition with proprietary national brands and the longest history in **China**, and has received vigorous support from textile industrial associations of various provinces such as **Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Fujian, Heilongjiang, Jiangxi, Anhui, Xinjiang Autonomous Region, Hunan, Henan, Shandong, Shanxi, Guizhou, Guangdong, Sichuan, Yunnan, Hubei and Shanghai**. Through steady development over the past 30 years, **ShanghaiTex** has become the optimal channel to obtain market information and explore new technology, and is a preferable sourcing platform for global textile production enterprises, and an important platform for enterprises to promote and market their products and technology.

The estimated number of visitors for **ShanghaiTex** is around 60,000, including 6,000 overseas visitors. There are approximately 30 domestic and overseas visitor groups that have confirmed participation in this exhibition. Overseas visitor groups include Brazilian Textile Association, **Vietnam** Chamber of Commerce, **Hong Kong & Kowloon** Spinning Weaving and Dyeing Trade Workers General Union and Industry and buyer groups from **Brazil, India, Indonesia, South Korea, Thailand, Turkey and Vietnam**. Domestic buyer groups are from **Zhejiang, Jiangsu, Fujian, Xinjiang Autonomous Region, Henan, Shandong, Guangdong, Hubei, Hebei, etc.**

Meanwhile, **ShanghaiTex 2013** receives superb support from prestigious domestic and overseas textile enterprises. Those overseas enterprises include Crescent Textile (**Pakistan**), Tamishna Group (**Bangladesh**), Utah Group (**Bangladesh**), Dewhirst Group (**Bangladesh**), Sumiya (**Bangladesh**), ICS Group (**Turkey**), The Thai Silk (**Thailand**), Li & Fung (**Singapore**), TAL (**Hong Kong**), Tumi Asia (**Hong Kong**) and Vinexad Group (**Vietnam**) etc., and over 500 prestigious textile and garment enterprises in **China** include Jiangsu Sunshine Group, Luthai Textile, Chang Shu Huamao Textile, Erdos Group, Ningbo MH, TianHai Lace, Toray Sakal Printing & Dyeing (Nantong), Esquel Group, **Chang Shu Bing Lun**, Hangzhou Hangmin Damei Dyeing, Shen Hong Group, Texhong Textile Group, Yama Ribbons & Bows, Xinao Textile, Qinghai Cashmere (Group), White Rabbit Textiles Group, Wanyu Knitting, H&M, etc.

ShanghaiTex is held biennially in the odd-numbered years in **Shanghai, China**, and is sponsored by Shangtex Holding Co Ltd, China Council for the Promotion of International Trade Shanghai Sub-council, **China Chamber** of International Commerce and **Shanghai Chamber** of Commerce. **ShanghaiTex 2013** is organized by Adsale Exhibition Services Ltd, Shanghai Textile Technology Service & Exhibition Center and Shanghai International Exhibition Co Ltd.

Interested parties please visit www.ShanghaiTex.cn or www.ShanghaiTexOnline.com for more information about ShanghaiTex 2013.

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China: ShanghaiTex adds new theme zones

This new theme zone is the first appearance in ShanghaiTex 2013 at digital printing machinery area to respond to the needs of the market for textile and garment printing fashion and trend.

The Digital Printing Machinery Zone has showcased Chinese and foreign textile and garment printing technology, and is focusing on the latest digital printing technology, supplies, software solution, programs and fashion trends. Key exhibitors include: DGI, Digital Textile Solution, Digital Textile Technology, Digitex, Durst Phototechnik, Epson, Ergsoft, Kornit Digital, Human Digital, Huntsman, J. Zimmer, Konica Minolta, Reggiani, Mimaki, MS Srl, Print Prett, Ricoh, Stork Prints, Teman and many more.

Highlight : The unprecedented scale of the Italian Pavilion The ever largest Italian pavilion has occupied 2,500 sqm exhibition space at ShanghaiTex 2013 where visitors are in a position to meet more than 35 active leading manufacturers and suppliers. The Italian exhibitors are demonstrating their technology advancement in the design and manufacturing of machinery with low environment impact and high energy savings.

To name a few key exhibitors, they are Signal, B TSR, Bianco, A. Piovan, Corino, Fait Group, Tecnorama, Savio, Santoni, Lonati, Brazzoli, Loris Bellini, Ms Srl, Lafer, Durst, **Corghi, Reggiani, etc...**

Highlight 3: Automation solutions for enterprises ShanghaiTex this year has focused on the automation demand from textile industry. The Spinning and Techtextile Machinery Zone have attracted exhibitors of electronic control systems, inverters etc that helps enterprises solve manpower shortage, and upgrade and transform their whole operation.

Highlight 4: Professional Concurrent Events 1) Knitting in Style – Home Décor Exhibition Tour Working together with Liu+de Biolley Design Studio and well-known textile machinery distributor Chemtax, the “Knitting in Style” has been designed to demonstrate the new knitting, weaving and spinning technology and their application in a warm and stylish home.

2) Digital Garment Printing Zone By Kornit Digital At the new Digital Printing Machinery Zone, industry leading high-speed digital garment printing provider Kornit Digital has demonstrated total solution of machinery, software applications and printed outputs, where visitors are being provided with inspirational ideas and technical advice.

3) Interactive Seminars and Forums In addition, the exhibition has more than 10 professional seminars and forums which are being held concurrently. Two of the most-discussed forums are “A New Approach for Environmental Friendly Printing Solution by Kornit Digital” and the “2014-2015 Sportswear Design & Trends Forum”.

Industry experts and scholars are gathered to bring smart ideas to help upgrading and transformation of enterprises, and let audience understand and grasp the latest trend of new textile development

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China mulls reforms to controversial cotton buying

China revealed it was considering reforms to its controversial cotton stockpiling programme, the day after a warning from leading economists over the futures of the country's world-leading processing industry. Liu Xiaonan, A senior trade official in the National Development and Reform Commission, China's closely-watched economic planning agency, acknowledged that the country's cotton policy "has room for improvement". "The cotton policy has weakened the role of the market," Mr Liu said. "We have to look at this issue."

Farmers vs mills

The comments come amid unease throughout the global cotton industry over a Chinese cotton policy which sees the government paying domestic farmers 20,400 yuan (\$3,325) a tonne for cotton, - equivalent to a little over 150 cents a pound, well above world market prices. In New York, cotton futures for July

were trading at 84.75 cents a pound in early deals on Friday. The policy has supported China's domestic prices at levels well above world levels, with benchmark September futures on the Zhengzhou exchange closing on Friday at 20,230 yuan a tonne. That has supported production, but not at prices that mills are keen to pay, with many turning to imports which, even after the payment of steep duties on non-quota purchases, are cheaper than domestic supplies. Separately, the China Cotton Association said that China's cotton imports made at full-tax rates this year had hit 757,000 tonnes by April, up nearly seven-fold year on year. '

'Sector at risk'

Mills' steep cotton costs is adding to pressure from high wage inflation and eroding their competitiveness on international markets. The US Department of Agriculture forecasts China's cotton consumption declining for a third-successive year in 2012-13, to its lowest in nearly a decade. And the sector looks set for further decline, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and UN Food and Agriculture Organization said in a much-watched report on Thursday, citing wage pressures alone. "Demographic projections indicate that China's working age population will decline over the next decade, increasing further pressure on wages," the report said. "Higher costs create pressures on net farm incomes and place China's dominant cotton processing sector at risk compared to other international competitors."

'Not our intention'

Commerzbank analysts said: "China's reserve policy is attracting increasing criticism in China because the higher local prices put the Chinese textiles industry at a competitive disadvantage." At the China Cotton Association, vice-president Gao Fang said that it "was not our intention when we formulated the policy" to put China's mills at a disadvantage. "We didn't expect it would be implemented for so long."

Stock sell-off ahead?

As an extra market distortion, the high domestic prices, coupled with a dearth of domestic consumption, have left China looking at stocks expected by US officials to end 2012-13 at 10.5m tonnes - equivalent to well over one year's supply, and to more than half world inventories. That has caused considerable discomfort among investors over the potential for a price collapse from a mishandled exit strategy. In fact, China has sold some 2.5m tonnes from its reserves so far in 2012-13, the association said, although this leaves the country with hefty further sales to meet its target of 4.5m tonnes by the close of the season next month. Commerzbank said: "A further 2m tonnes would need to be sold by this deadline. "This hardly appears possible without triggering a sharp fall in local prices - yet

this is doubtless the exact opposite of what the government wants. "After all, the reserve policy's objective is to guarantee a reliable income for the country's cotton producers."

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Germany: Texprocess platform for sewing machine producers

The world's manufacturers of sewing and clothing equipment and technical textile machinery are embarking on the second edition of Texprocess, the leading international fair, which will be opening its doors in Frankfurt from 10 to 13 June.

"The sector is facing new challenges. And yet, increasing production costs, an enhanced awareness of sustainability and a constant reduction in the fashion cycles are raising the demand for new, future-pointing technologies", said Elgar Straub, General Manager of VDMA Garment and Leather Technology, at the press conference before the opening of Texprocess in Frankfurt.

"Texprocess offers manufacturers of sewing and clothing equipment a global platform for presenting their innovations before an international public right in the middle of one of the leading consumer markets", Straub continued.

Manufacturers from abroad are ordering German sewing and clothing equipment

In the first four months of 2013, the number of incoming orders in the German manufacturing industry for sewing and clothing equipment was, in real terms, 20 percent higher than the result for the previous year. Domestic business was down by 16.9 percent, whereas foreign business was up by 26 percent on the previous year.

Sales of German sewing and clothing equipment showed an increase of real 5.6 percent in the first four months of 2013, with orders from within Germany up by 0.1 percent and orders from abroad up by 6.2 percent. German manufacturers of sewing and clothing equipment were able to boost their exports by six percent from €384 million in 2011 to €406 million in 2012. On the other hand, the

export volume of sewing and clothing equipment worldwide dropped by 1.6 percent from €4.53 billion in 2011 to € 4.46 billion.

In 2012, the main countries importing German sewing and clothing equipment were the USA, Turkey and the People's Republic of China. The USA moved up from third to first position, thus superseding Turkey as the most important market.

Industry Trends

Increases in wages and production and logistic costs, faster response times, and greater fashion-consciousness will lead to production plants being steadily moved closer to the consumer. Here the focus will be on markets such as Eastern Europe, North Africa and Latin America. A further trend is the growth in the integration of IT and automation in the manufacture of sewing and clothing equipment.

PLM and ERP systems, for example, support the entire value added chain of the clothing industry. Sustainability is also becoming increasingly important both in the clothing industry and among manufacturers of technical textiles. A growing awareness of the need to conserve resources and to improve efficiency, as well as a sense of corporate social responsibility, is a new challenge that the industry has to face.

To keep pace with this development, VDMA has developed the Blue Competence Initiative, the engineering industry's sustainability drive. With Blue Competence, manufacturers of sewing and clothing equipment can show that by means of constant innovation they can help to use energy more efficiently, conserve resources, reduce costs and increase productivity, despite reduced energy consumption.

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Bangladesh's garment exports increased in May, despite the catastrophic factory collapse a month before

The rhetoric from politicians and clothing brands has not let up since the Rana Plaza factory building collapsed in Bangladesh, killing over 1,100 workers. But neither have exports. Garment shipments were [up nearly 12% in May, from the year before](#), worth a total of \$19.3 billion.

[American and European clothing manufacturers](#)—which account for 23% and 60% of garment imports from Bangladesh respectively—have been trying to minimize any consumer or public relations fallout. [H&M, Zara](#) and [Abercrombie & Fitch](#) are among those who have signed safety agreements with suppliers. But although the Rana Plaza collapse in April triggered [the odd boycott](#) and **increased global scrutiny, the impact on Bangladesh's exports has been minimal.**

Critics have also questioned the effectiveness of safety agreements in a country where corruption, poverty and poor regulation are rampant. The Bangladeshi government [announced on Monday](#) that seven building inspectors had been suspended from duty pending the outcome of an investigation. A preliminary report suggests that the inspectors had never actually visited the five factories in the Rana Plaza building, one of which had not been licensed since 2008.

But it is not entirely status quo in Bangladesh. Some suppliers have been black-listed by western retailers—and **they're not happy about it. Simco Group is one** such supplier, which [Reuters reports](#) lost an order from JC Penney for 500,000 pairs of pajamas, and was put on a safety black-list by Wal-Mart for unauthorized sub-contracting. **One of Simco's subsidiaries** [has threatened to sue Wal-Mart](#) for losses.

If Bangladesh can improve its safety record while maintaining its **competitiveness, that's a good sign. There is scant indication that it has yet** managed to do this, although the true impact on garment exports and safety standards will take longer to calculate. If anything, the Rana Plaza disaster has forced retailers to take a closer look at the murky world of suppliers that the retailers [previously admitted](#) **they don't know much about, or overlooked to their** advantage.

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Post-Bangladesh fashion industry initiative inventory

The fashion business world's fundament was shaking as the fundamentals of the Rana Plaza factory building in Bangladesh literally collapsed. Everybody is aware of the wry reality that it often takes disasters and crises to bring about fundamental changes. Having said that, everybody realizes also that this is the time to make real improvements. A good article in the Economist on the Rana Plaza factory disaster noted that there are three things that companies can do. They can get out of Bangladesh quick, they can stay and try to improve the situation or they can stay and pretend nothing happened.

The second option seems to be where most of the action is. The Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh is signed by 30 + mainly European companies. In the US and Canada, associations have devised a North American Safety Initiative. In addition, some companies such as Gap say that they have their own programs into place. The Accord was hailed as a breakthrough because it introduced binding financial obligations by the signees.

None of the initiatives are uncontended of course. In a characteristically provocative piece, David Birnbaum wrote that he believes financial support by buyers will not improve things and lays the blame too much on the buyers in the eyes of the public. On the other hand, I would argue that it is the ground breaking move by the companies that have signed the accord that has gone a long way to salvaging the public image of the fashion industry. Fortunately this discussion has not reached the end consumer. Even though consumers often seem to vote with their wallet when shopping and not with their conscience, it is unavoidable that these terrible disasters are hurting the image of the fashion industry.

At some point this must have an influence on buying behavior. Disagreements inside industry can further hurt the image. Before this happens, the industry has to find a way to move forward together after Rana Plaza. The International Apparel Federation (IAF) is committed to maximizing the gains companies get from global cooperation. So, how is it planning to act on this commitment in the case of Bangladesh? Firstly, the IAF represents through its 40+ national industry association members all of the apparel brands and manufacturers and not just the very large ones. It will be interesting to see in what practical ways also smaller companies can support the necessary improvements in factory safety in Bangladesh.

The IAF is acting as a trait d'union between the different agreements now signed and its member industry associations. Secondly, a way must be found for the total industry to communicate that they are out there improving the situation, working together to prevent such disasters from taking place again. And, for a large part, the industry is of course already working hard to make the improvements. But there are many initiatives and consumers do not always see **the whole picture. A broader framework for all to follow, such as the UN's Ruggie Guiding Principles**, could help to communicate unity and a sense of the (right) direction. The IAF will present an action plan shortly which includes the quest for this broader framework.

And what can companies do in the meantime when they want to make a contribution to preventing further factories from disappearing into heaps of rubble? I would recommend that they check with their association to see how they can best get involved with a broader, preferably a global initiative. If for

some reason this is not possible, then just drop an email to Matthijs Crieteer at Crieteer@iafnet.com.

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NATIONAL NEWS

Invista unveils Lycra Brand Fiber – Type 166L in India

Invista - the leading fiber and fabric innovator in textile industry space unveiled its latest Lycra Brand Fiber – **Type 166L at its third edition of ‘Lycra Rendezvous’** held in Bengaluru last week.

The latest Lycra Brand Fiber – Type 166L is expected to be a boon for the mills with its increased tenacity for improved break performance, resistance to chlorine during bleaching, high recovery power after aggressive finishing and heat setting performance.

The two day event witnessed participation from leading mills, garment makers, buying houses and brands from the textile and apparel industry. Leading exhibitors who were presenting Fall Winter 14 collection were segment Alok Industries, Anugraha fashions, Arvind, Avensa, Banswara Syntex, Design Legacy, EXIM Knits, Ginza Industries, GOKAK Textiles, Jeanologia, KG denim, Mafatlal Denim, Maral Overseas, New Horizon Knits, Pangea, Prism Knit, Raymond UCO, Vardhman and Young Brands Apparel.

The first day of Lycra Rendezvous delighted the influencers from the textile, fashion and retail space through a spectacular showcase of innovative fabrics that are creating a buzz on the fashion streets globally. The show displayed the latest denim fabric innovation from Invista, Tough Max Lycra fabric and how it can create the grunge look sought after by men in India and globally, with laser treatment and finishing. Mr. Rajiv Dayal, Managing Director, Mafatlal Denims said,

“One of the areas of denim innovation was the creation of jeans for men and young boys, which is comfortable and yet very rugged. To cater to this identified

need we launched a denim fabric range based on Tough Max Lycra fabric innovation from Invista.

The initial reaction from the market is extremely positive and we hope this **segment continues to grow going forward.” Based on needs and wants of consumer** and thereby leading designers who claim that fabric innovation is what inspires them as they strive to make garments to match the lifestyle of the twenty-first century consumer.

The thought provoking sessions throughout the day highlighted why Tough Max **Lycra fabric is a designer’s dream because of its ability to be styled and** chemically treated to ensure a variety of interesting patterns and finishes that are in vogue. The audience also heard from the experts about the Indian male **consumer’s preferences** for apparel and specifically denims.

The day wrapped up with an array of fashionable denims showcased on the runway. The second day of Lycra Rendezvous focused on two primary aspects, shaping and comfort of intimate wear through two sought after innovations from Invista – Lycra Beauty Fabric and Lycra Free!T fabric.

Lycra Beauty fabric is the secret asset to shapewear that delivers what the **woman of today desires... sculpting, smoothing, comfort, style, quality, confidence.** The Lycra Beauty fabric collection is the foundation for silhouette enhancing garments with the versatility to range from firm control to featherweight smoothing, from understated elegance to high fashion drama.

Lycra Free!T fabric meet the consumers need for comfort

Mr. Shalindra Fernando, GM India and Sri Lanka, Triumph **said, “With Lycra** embedded in Shape Sensation - the latest shape wear collection of Triumph, women can fulfill their desire to look and feel glamorous and sensuous all day long without any discomfort. Lycra fabrics offered by Invista have enabled a new era of firming lingerie.

According to a global consumer study conducted by Invista, out of all the women surveyed, 93% showed interest in the shaping attribute when purchasing intimate apparel. This helps us identify the importance and potential of shapewear for the Indian market. Whatever their age or body shape, women want fashionable and performance inner wear without compromising on **comfort.”**

From the manufacturing perspective, the eventful day also expanded on the use of Easy Set Lycra fiber that favors moldability of delicate fabrics and ensures all day comfort to the consumers. A series of insightful presentations provided the

fabric, garment and narrows **maker's perspective on quality** fabrics, garments and elastics.

Visibly excited Andrew Evans, Managing Director, Invista – South Asia shared, the last two days of the third edition of Lycra Rendezvous have been extremely engaging and insightful in bringing together the best minds across the textile industry. The response that we have received for our innovations is fantastic and we are very confident of the consumer response as well. Our innovations Tough Max Lycra fabric, Lycra Beauty Fabric and Lycra Free!T fabric meet the consumers need for fit, comfort and freedom of **movement.**”

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Indian cotton seen up on thin supply, concerns over lower sowing

(Reuters) - Cotton prices in India are expected to trade higher this week due to a decline in spot supplies and good demand from millers, while concerns over lower acreage and firm global prices are also seen supporting prices.

Domestic cotton supplies have declined as the season has ended and farmers are busy with planting.

The sowing of cotton has begun and it will pick up pace with the spread of monsoon rains, traders said.

India's monsoon recorded higher than average levels in the first week of the four-month season, weather office sources said on June 6, reflecting a timely onset and progress so far over the southern states.

"Cotton is seen extending gains due to concerns over lower acreage. Farmers in Maharashtra and Rajasthan are seen shifting to soybean and guar for better returns," said Chowda Reddy, a senior analyst at JRG Wealth Management.

The local currency hit a record low on Monday.

The weakness in the Indian rupee has made Indian cotton, as well as cotton yarn, competitive in the global market.

The Indian rupee is at an all-time low, making cotton and cotton yarn exports competitive, while firm global prices are also supporting the natural fibre futures in India, Kotak Commodities said in a research note on Monday.

The June cotton futures contract ended 1.37 percent up at 19,220 rupees per bale of 170 kg each on the Multi Commodity Exchange.

Sales from government reserves, however, were seen weighing on the sentiment.

The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) had offered to auction 58,200 bales on Monday, according to a notification on its website.

In New York, the most active July contract on the Intercontinental Exchange was up 0.04 percent to 84.89 cents per lb at 1325 GMT.

China, the world's largest cotton importer, is looking at changing its aggressive stockpiling policy which traders say has distorted prices and supplies. (Reporting by Meenakshi Sharma; Editing by Jijo Jacob)

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Cotton blooms on demand boost

Cotton price gained slowly and strongly on the back of short supply and good demand from domestic mills. According to market sources internationally, mainly in China, limited stock position may boost the export from India and it may support the price rise.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton was traded higher by Rs 200 to Rs 39,300-39,800 a candy of 356 kg. In some places the fibre was quoted at Rs 40,000. V 797 cotton A grade was offered at Rs 27,500-28,500.

Kapas or raw cotton increased by Rs 5 to Rs 1,000-1,025 for 20 kg in Gujarat.

About 8,000 bales of 170 kg each of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 27,000-28,000 bales arrived in India.

A cotton broker said that demand from domestic mills is very strong and it may further gain this month.

Spinners were expecting that ginners would increase selling in coming days due to arrival of monsoon in key growing areas.

China's massive cotton stockpiles have been interpreted as bearish for prices by the US Department of Agriculture, but analysts suggest a tight supply outside the country and the unwillingness of local textile mills to buy at auction, which will push prices higher into next season.

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Textiles Ministry collecting data on varieties of Kapas

The Central Government is making efforts to collect data on different varieties of Kapas (Kapas is unginned cotton) viz, short staple, medium staple, medium long staple, long staple and extra long staple from ginners and traders of north Karnataka.

“This data on different varieties will consists of opening stock, cotton imported, cotton sold in the domestic market and closing stock on monthly basis to file the returns, to arrive at realistic balance sheet of cotton production,” said Krishna Prasad, Assistant Director of Textiles, Union Ministry of Textiles. **“The traders to avail himself of the benefit of the textile department should try to provide the necessary information to help upgrade the statistics of national cotton production,”** he added.

He toured the cotton growing region in north Karnataka and interacted with cotton ginning, pressing and traders located in Hubli-Dharwad, Gadag and

Haveri districts. The main interaction was held at the Karnatak Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Hubli, in association with the Karnataka Cotton Association, Hubli. The Central Government has introduced different forms for **cotton traders, ginners for accurate statistics collection.** “The forms are very simple and easy to understand. Every ginners and traders has to compulsorily get the registration as per the notification of the Union Government by **furnishing the details to the office of the Textile Commissioner, Bangalore,**” Prasad said.

“The main object of the department is to collect the latest data for providing minimum supporting price to the farmers,” he added.

Data collection by Union Ministry of Textiles comes on the back of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) including North Karnataka in its study on **India’s cotton prospects.**

According to the office-bearers of KCCI, the USDA team studied agriculture production with reference to cotton production and consumption estimates. **“Recently agricultural specialist of the US Consulate, Mumbai, interacted with cotton growers and traders at Hubli,”** said Poonamchand Ostawal, President, Karnataka Cotton Association.

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Sharp dip in cotton imports by Russia & Japan: Report

Over the years, there has been a sharp decline in imports of cotton made by **Russia and Japan, which were the world’s leading cotton importers in 1990.**

In 2012, China and Bangladesh were the world’s top importers of cotton, while Russia and Japan slid to 13th and 15th places, as per a report “Global Cotton Supply & End Use Demand: Trends & Forecasts 2013” prepared by the Market Watch division of Fibre2fashion.com.

According to the report, Russia accounted for 17.3 percent share in world's cotton imports in 1990, which fell to 1.33 percent in 2012. Similarly, Japan's share dropped from 9.64 percent in 1990 to 0.84 percent share in 2012.

In comparison, China's share in global cotton imports shot up from mere 7.21 percent in 1990 to 30.49 percent in 2012.

Bangladesh, Turkey and Pakistan were not among the top 15 cotton importers in the world in 1990, but cotton imports by these nations have grown considerably and they occupied the second, third and fourth positions, respectively, in 2012.

Region-wise, South Asia, North America and Caribbean nations increased their import of cotton between 1990 and 2012. Most importantly, the share of South Asian region has grown from a meagre 1.76 percent in 1990 to a whopping 18.84 percent in 2012.

On the other hand, the EU-25 region witnessed a sharp decline in cotton imports from a 21.42 percent of world share in 1990 to 10.88 percent in 2012.

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Asian Fabricx gears up for IKEA's India operations

This seemingly sleepy town, almost sandwiched between Bangalore on one side and Kanyakumari on the other, breathes [textile](#). About two and a half hours' drive from Coimbatore on an easy morning, with lush coconut trees, mills, car & bike showrooms, medical colleges and shops such as 'Coffee Prince' and 'Flying Cakes' lining the roads leading to the town, [Karur](#) is quite unlike Tamil Nadu's other textile bastion, Tirupur, which is more about latest fashion, designers, international buyers and now, somewhat idling factories. Karur doesn't offer

much in terms of shopping and entertainment or leisure, and while textile is its mainstay business, a local points out the town is also known for supplying mosquito nets to the [World Health Organisation](#). Finance, truck transportation and bus-building are among the other prominent businesses here.

The town is also home to [Asian Fabricx](#), one of the oldest and largest Indian suppliers to [IKEA](#), the world's largest furniture and furnishing chain, which recently secured the Cabinet's nod to invest Euro 1.5 billion (Rs 10,500 crore) in India to set up retail stores. Six to seven hours away is Tuticorin, the closest port that ships out bedspreads, curtains, kitchen linen and cushions made by Asian Fabricx to European shores, to be sold across 300 IKEA stores worldwide. Tuticorin has yet another link to the Euro 27-billion Swedish chain - Ramesh Flowers, an IKEA supplier that deals with dried flowers for potpourri, home fragrances and the works, with a 100 per cent women workforce, is located in the city.

The sprawling 12-acre complex that houses the Asian Fabricx corporate office and factory dedicated to IKEA, business with which accounts for 65 per cent of the supplier's revenue, has a surprise element: No shoe is allowed inside the plush corporate office. Visitors are made to take these off at the entrance; top executives, including the managing director, walk around barefoot or in socks.

This dust-free initiative might have nothing to do with the efficiency of machines; it is more of a local practice. That said, all processes at this factory have to follow rigorous steps, monitored closely by the Swedish chain, before any product is put in a box with a green tag, meaning it has been cleared.

V Ashok Ram Kumar, managing director at Asian Fabricx, whose association with IKEA dates back to 1982, says, the company had started in 1974 with 15 employees; now, it has 2,000, of which 60 per cent are women. The fact that it produces about 1.5 million metres of fabric a month for IKEA gives away its scale and size.

Apart from this dedicated IKEA factory, Asian runs a dyeing unit in the town, as well as another facility for other buyers such as UK's B&Q and French chain Castorama.

Just a few days ago, soon after it secured the Cabinet clearance, IKEA had invited all its prominent suppliers (there are 65 in India) to its Gurgaon headquarters, to discuss plans for the coming years. Kumar, who attended that

meeting, is hopeful of growth in business once IKEA starts operations in the country.

The partnership talk focused on growth and gearing up to double the Swedish chain's India sourcing from the current \$500 million, in a few years.

The right fit

Currently, IKEA's sourcing from Asia, including China, accounts for 32 per cent of its global sourcing; it sources 64 per cent from Europe and the rest from America. Within South Asia, 70 per cent of the total volume sourced comprises textiles, including rugs and towels.

Despite the company planning to double its India sourcing, in a recent interview, IKEA India head Juvencio Maeztu had told Business Standard the company would wait for the right locations and affordable prices before rolling out stores in the country.

Perhaps, it's a similar search for the right fit that makes processes at IKEA supplier factories, including the Euro 46-million Asian Fabricx, quite long-drawn. For instance, it might take as many as 48 days to make and ship out a bedcover or a table linen from the time the order is placed, in contrast to a much shorter time-cycle for many other buyers.

WHAT COMES FROM WHERE

Asian Fabricx factory dedicated to IKEA in Karur, Tamil Nadu

<p>\$450 million worth material sourced by IKEA from India, set to double soon</p> <p>> Company's sourcing from Europe is 64%, Asia 32%, rest from America</p> <p>70% of IKEA's sourcing volume in South Asia is made of textiles including rugs and towels</p> <p>65 suppliers in India work with the largest furnishing chain of the world</p>	<p>Top five retail countries in terms of sales are:</p> <p>> Germany > USA > France > Italy > Russia</p> <p>1.5 million metre of fabric is made every month by Asian Fabricx at Karur for IKEA</p> <p>1.5-tonne dyeing machine at the facility handles 1,000 bedcovers in one go</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Source: IKEA, Asian Fabricx</p>
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While external lab research takes time, IKEA's approval procedure is lengthy, too. Executives from the company's quality team come here every week to

inspect and ensure zero defects in products. Sometimes, samples are sent to Sweden for approval.

Kumar lists manpower shortage as a challenge in this business. "We certainly need more people when there's a sudden increase in order volumes." To beat labour shortage, automation is being focused on. For instance, 'Indira', a bedspread in white, blue and black and a favourite of Europeans for decades, has seen a transition from handloom to shuttle-less or auto looms. IKEA terms Indira an iconic product,

As one walks from one block to another, officials stop to explain the technology behind the machines used in the labs. The launderometer, which looks somewhat like a mini bar in a hotel room, is used to check colour-fastness by keeping the raw material in a condition chamber. While the cobb tester assesses water absorption property, the GSM cutter determines the gm per sq metre, or weight, of a fabric and the sanforising machine reduces shrinking.

To study fading, the Xenotest machine, the latest addition (secured for about \$40,000), lodges fabric for five to six days and tries to imitate sunlight. After the washing, bleeding, shrinking and fading processes in the lab, if it is felt a correction isn't possible, the item is scrapped.

The overall cycle at the plant is multi-layered - yarn, dyeing, winding, warping, weaving, checking, sanforising, cutting, sewing, finishing, testing and finally, dispatching. Also, there are steps to ensure goods are easy to export; compressed packing of cushions is one such instance. A machine sucks out the air inside and then seals it; when a customer opens the seal, anywhere in the world, the cushion comes back to shape.

Apart from transition to automation, various aspects, too, have also changed at the factory. Earlier, 80 per cent of the yarn was dyed before weaving into fabric; now, to reduce costs, most weaving is done without dyeing the yarn.

A visit to the company's dyeing plant, located close to it, shows the 12-18-hour process of dyeing, a controversial issue, after the recent Madras High Court order against polluting units led to many closures. Compared to the fabric-dyeing machines, which weigh about 1.5 tonnes each and can take in 1,000 bedspreads at a go, officials are keen to demonstrate their acumen in reusing the water and salt through many petri dish experiments.

Ruling out under-age labour or possibilities of worker unrest, officials list the benefits at Asian - fixed wages, full-time employees, salary-linked bank accounts and automated teller machines for all, a baby care centre, a dining hall, a kitchen and staff buses. Workers, who could be working in shifts or in a nine-to-six band, are also entitled to a break every two hours.

Considering what is made at Karur is perhaps sold in Europe, America and other global markets at much higher prices, does Asian Fabricx have any retail plans? Officials smile but deny any such plans as of now.

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