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TEXPROCIL NEWS CLIPPINGS

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NEWS CLIPPINGS

	INTERNATIONAL NEWS
No	Topics
1	Australia: Aussie Sourcing Fair to feature high-tech fabrics
2	France: Lenzing to show Tencel/Cotton blends at Paris fair
3	Russia: Ivanovo to get two new textile plants by 2016: Governor
4	Senegal's Kolda region to revive cotton sector under BCI
5	China's Yarn Imports Driven by Currency Market
6	China looks forward to early FTZ with Sri Lanka: Official
7	Cotton Fiber & Yarn Price Comparison: China vs. India and Pakistan
8	US: Cotton Markets Waiting for New Harvest
	NATIONAL NEWS
1	SRTEPC calls for reduction in MMF excise duties to 4%
2	Cut in duty refunds to negate rupee effect EEPC for refixing of drawback rates to make exports competitive
3	Indian govt plans to boost Indore technical textile sector
4	Clothing exporters eyeing emerging economies
5	AATCC to host two-day technical textiles seminar in India
6	Government to aid textle start-ups via equity fund model
7	Higher cotton output likely

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Australia: Aussie Sourcing Fair to feature high-tech fabrics

Presenting a record number of exhibitors, and the most comprehensive seminar program to date, the Australian International Sourcing Fair (AISF) will unite manufacturers and wholesalers over an action packed three days from November 13-15, 2013.

From products featuring unique artistry and craftsmanship through to innovative, high tech fabrics, the AISF will connect the best international suppliers and manufacturers with Australian designers, wholesalers and retailers.

This season, the AISF is thrilled to introduce a new country, Taiwan, who will join the extensive list of countries participating. In addition, the AISF will welcome back Thailand and Fiji while Brand India will return bigger than ever before, filling the Indian Pavilion with a large focus on home textiles and floor coverings.

Highlights for the November fair will include the Carpet Council and TCF Council (Fiji) while Dynamic Sportswear Pakistan will return after a very successful year in 2012.

Creating a positive learning environment for visitors and exhibitors alike, the AISF will deliver a comprehensive and informative seminar program. Via these free, expert-lead seminars, the AISF will aim to help attendees make informed business decisions.

HOME

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France: Lenzing to show Tencel/Cotton blends at Paris fair

Lenzing is presenting "Natural Connection", the new marketing concept especially for

TENCEL/cotton blends, at the textile trade fairs in Paris.

The two cellulose fibers, TENCEL and cotton, are ideal partners. They go together perfectly and enhance each other with their properties. Both fibers are from Nature and possess similar properties such as good breathing properties. A blend with 30% TENCEL gives cotton fabrics a new definition. As a result of adding TENCEL, the fabric's hand, moisture management and sheen can be enhanced. Thus the innovation potential for TENCEL/cotton fabrics is great.

Depending on the blending ratio, the look and properties of these fabrics can be changed to suit any need. New marketing tools are now available for manufacturers and retailers to promote goods of TENCEL/cotton. "For TENCEL, cotton is the blending partner!

Consumers are interested in natural and high-quality materials. This marketing push is aimed at getting these products the attention they deserve. With this initiative, we are presenting our customers with marketing tools ideally suited to promoting TENCEL/cotton products at retail," Andreas Dorner, marketing manager, explains.

Cotton and TENCEL are used for similar applications. Their main applications are in the clothing sector in shirts and jeans and in bed linens in the home textile sector. In bed linens and shirt applications in particular, quality plays an important role. With a mixture of TENCEL, the yarn values can be considerably improved with regard to the strength and regularity.

These positive effects can be transferred to the final product and lead to a more attractive fabric with better performance values. Long-staple cotton with TENCEL is a logical combination. Luxury cotton is in high demand for the finest fabrics and the demand cannot be fulfilled. TENCEL can be used in these fabrics as an equal partner.

“Fabrics of long-staple cotton and TENCEL are unbeatable in terms of quality and visual appeal,” Dieter Eichinger, Vice President of the Textile Fibers Business Unit.

“There are numerous opportunities to place TENCEL in relevant products where the added value of a TENCEL/cotton blend would be appreciated. The combination of both fibers gives luxury textile manufacturers and retailers the chance to stand out from mass-produced products by means of innovation and marketing,” he explains

HOME

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****

Russia: Ivanovo to get two new textile plants by 2016: Governor

The Governor of Ivanovo region of Russia Mikhail Men announced the construction of two new textile plants in the region, one for manufacturing synthetic fibre and the other for production of technical textiles, which would be completed by 2016.

The Governor was speaking at the plenary session of the Eighth International Textile Industry Forum- ‘Golden Ring’ Exhibition 2013, held recently in the Ples city of the region.

According to an official statement, Governor Men said the plants would be constructed by the Russian representative of German company ‘Uhde’ with a total investment of 253 million rubles.

The main idea of the project is to create conditions to use locally produced raw material for the domestic textile industry, instead of using imported raw materials, he added.

Mr. Men said on completion, the plants are estimated to create around 1.4 million new jobs in the region.

The business program of the two-day forum attracted participation of around 200 representatives from 150 leading domestic and foreign textile companies from countries such as Germany, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Turkey as well as ten regions from Russia.

At the exhibition, the Governor and the Minister of Industry and Trade Denis Manturov, visited stands of various textile and garment enterprises, where sample products were displayed, and representatives from the companies also showcased new innovations and presented proposals for promising investment projects for the region.

HOME

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Senegal's Kolda region to revive cotton sector under BCI

The 'Better Cotton Initiative' (BCI) has been launched in the Kolda region of the Western African country of Senegal, for the revival of the cotton sector, after its successful implementation carried out in the neighboring country of Mali.

The cotton sector of the Kolda region would be revived within three years, following the launch of the Better Cotton Initiative, with an estimate of 760 million francs, reports Senegalese newspaper le Soleil.

The project will be financed by Solidaridad (Solidarity) organization which is based in Ghana, with support from the Society for the Development of Textiles and Fibres (SODEFITEX) of Senegal.

Boubacar Kamissoko, commercial director SODEFITEX, said in the year 2007-2008 the African cotton sector was facing a crisis which indicated there were certain constraints in the environment of cotton production, including soil fertility and high production costs.

The BCI has been launched in the country and the pilot project would take off in Kolda region with support from the National Federation of Cotton Producers (FNPC), and the Association of African Cotton Producers (APROCA), he added.

Sabaly Moussa, the president of APROCA, welcomed the launch and said it would help in boosting the regional production of cotton in the country.

HOME

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China's Yarn Imports Driven by Currency Market

China's domestic and import yarn markets remained depressed in last week, as demand stayed very weak and the Indian rupee sharply recovered from record lows. Our weekly report covers the China yarn index and local markets in Zhejiang, Shandong and Liaoning with prices of a large number of counts being released for spun cotton, polyester, viscose and blends. Historical data are available for download.

China's yarn market remained very weak in the last days, due to a lack of demand from downward processors in textile and clothing industries.

Most product prices continued very slightly declining, as a result, also reflecting lower fiber prices.

Lower inventories, larger production

Inventory levels are however declining while operating rates are rising, which could be a good sign for future market trends.

China's yarn import market was also relatively depressed in past days in China, with slightly declining prices.

The yarn import market remains extremely dependent on currency values, and the Indian rupee began seriously rebounding in last weeks, making Indian yarns more expensive in US$ terms.

This is reflected by our table of international yarn prices, with 30s combed cotton yarn prices surging 6.41% in last seven days.

India now leader on Chinese market

India's share of China's yarn import market had previously surged, while Pakistan's share was retreating.

In January-July, China's yarn imports from India nearly doubled at 6.13 million metric tons, while imports from Pakistan were rising 30% at 5.75 million metric tons.

As a result, India became the largest supplier of China's market with Pakistan now ranking second.

Imports from Vietnam surged 61.5% at 2.5 million MT. Shipments from Indonesia and Thailand respectively gained 161% and 267%, however from much lower levels.

India got 31% of the market with its share rising 8% from the same period a year earlier, while Pakistan was losing 3% down to 29%. Vietnam had 13%, Indonesia 4% and Thailand 2%.

Bullish Indian sales were actually boosted by the dramatic fall of the rupee while the Pakistani rupee less declined.

The sharp drop of the rupiah also helped Indonesian exporters selling more yarns to China.

HOME

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****

China looks forward to early FTZ with Sri Lanka: Official

Mr. Rajapaksa (L) and Mr. Yunshan (R)

China is looking forward to the establishment of a China-Sri Lanka Free Trade Zone (FTZ) as soon as possible, senior Communist Party of China official Liu Yunshan told Sri Lankan Economic Development Minister Basil Rajapaksa during the former's visit to Colombo last week, according to a statement from the Chinese Embassy in Colombo.

In response, Mr. Rajapaksa said Sri Lanka is confident of an early signing of a free trade deal with China, given the positive progress in the negotiations over the past six months.

While China is the world's largest exporter of textiles and apparel, Sri Lanka is a manufacturing hub for lingerie, T-shirts and blouses.

In fact, the garment sector accounts for nearly half of the entire Sri Lankan industrial output.

At present, Sri Lankan exports of textiles and apparel attract duty ranging from 14 percent to 25 percent in China, and if the free-trade deal fructifies, all textile and clothing items from Sri Lanka would be able to enter the Chinese market duty-free.

This would also help some of the global apparel brands that have their manufacturing facilities in Sri Lanka, according to industry analysts.

HOME

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****

Cotton Fiber & Yarn Price Comparison: China vs. India and Pakistan

Gross margin of Indian spinners were significantly reduced on the local domestic market in August, while Pakistani yarn makers enjoyed larger profits in the meantime. Our monthly report compares cotton fiber and cotton yarn prices in China, India and Pakistan, with latest margin trends at domestic yarn plants. Historical data back to 2007 are available for download.

Cotton prices surged in August in India, in local currency terms, while staying flat in China and slightly rising in Pakistan.

Benchmark indicator gained 8.2% in India in rupee terms, on average, while Pakistan's indicator was up 2.1%, and Chinese benchmark price was losing 0.5%, in local currency terms.

Yarn prices less rising in India

Cotton yarn prices did not follow the surge in cotton fiber prices in India, with our benchmark 30S carded in Bhiwandi rising only 2%.

In China, prices did not move while they gained 3.7% in Pakistan.

As a result, margins of Indian spinners strongly fell over the past month, losing 6.8% in rupee terms, while gross margin of Pakistani spinners was rising 5.6%.

From a year earlier, margins rose 9.5% in Pakistan, losing 10% in India.

Quite different results in US$ terms

If however considering prices in US$ terms, cotton prices only rose 3% in India while yarn prices were not moving, after the rupee dramatically fell.

As a result, margins of Indian spinners are unchanged in US$ terms.

Indian spinners selling on their domestic market have suffered from the surge of cotton prices in rupee terms, while exporters were able competing with rivals from Pakistan on the Chinese market.

The fall of the Indian rupee is actually behind the surge of cotton prices on the domestic market, which can be explained by tight supply and stronger demand from yarn exporters.

HOME

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****

US: Cotton Markets Waiting for New Harvest

Cotton prices slightly recovered in the last week in New York, after experiencing a very sharp correction. Demand will remain very weak on physical market, until the new US and Indian harvests will be available in a few weeks. Our weekly cotton report covers the latest price trends of international spot and futures markets through a large number of tables and charts, with also domestic markets in India, China and Pakistan being reviewed. Historical data back to 6 years are available for download.

Cotton prices rose to higher levels on the New York market last week, after experiencing a sharp correction in preceding weeks.

Key December contract rose nearly 1 cents per Lb or 1.16%. The nearby contract October even jumped by 2.4%.

Prices are still much lower than four weeks earlier in New York, having dropped about 9% in the meantime.

Demand for fine fibers

The international market is now waiting from new US and Indian crops to be available.

High quality fibers are still requested by Indian and Chinese importers, with African cotton still available at consigned warehouses.

The volatility of the Indian rupee continues affecting the market.

On China's import market, mot origins fell about 1 cent in last week, with only Indian cotton prices rising in US$terms, as a result of a rebound in the rupee.

More details are available on our daily price database.

Falling prices in India

On India's domestic market, cotton prices began receding in rupee terms in the last two weeks.

The benchmark Shankar 6 further lost 800 rupees per candy in past week or 1.65%. In US$ terms however, S-6 rose 2.44 cents per pound or 2.7%.

India expects a much larger production this year, and prices could sharply fall when the new crop will be available in coming weeks, especially with a rebounding rupee.

The government considers imposing a 10% tax on cotton exports. This should however only affect a very small part of sales to foreign countries.

Demand from China is sharply falling this year. Chinese total cotton imports are expected plunging from 4.43 million metric tons in 2012-13 down to 2.39 million in 2013-14 (August-July), according to the US Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Rising prices in Pakistan

In Pakistan by contrast, domestic prices are being pushed up to higher levels in local currency terms.

Benchmark KCA spot rate was Saturday raised to 6,900 rupees per maund of 37.32 kilos, a jump of 3.8% from prior week.

This is mostly due to tight supply, as demand remains strong. Larger daily arrivals are expected from the new harvest which should result in lower prices.

HOME

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****

NATIONAL NEWS

SRTEPC calls for reduction in MMF excise duties to 4%

The Synthetic & Rayon Textiles Export Promotion Council (SRTEPC) has called upon the government for reduction in excise duty from 12% to 4% for man-made fibres which will ensure fibre neutrality and play a major role in reviving MMF textile tndustry and thus exports.

Addressing the 59th annual general meeting of the council, Mr. Rakesh Mehra, Chairman, SRTEPC informed that globally MMF textiles constitute 68% of total textile production. However, in India it is only 41% and leaves scope for tremendous growth.

Since global fibre consumption trend in future is likely to further tilt in favour of man-made fibres, it is imperative to reduce the existing excise duty of Man-Made Fibres to 4% to revive growth of industry and trigger growth in exports.A level playing field is necessary to allow the consumer make a fair choice. Government need to stop protecting agriculture sector, he stressed.

Mr. Mehra also urged the government to provide lending for exports at 7%. The cost of Rupee Credit for exports in India is estimated to be about 11 to 15 % per cent, as against less than 2 per cent in the US and Europe and below 5 per cent in much of the ASEAN bloc.

Given the long time in order execution this excessive rate impacts our costs substantially, SRTEPC Chairman suggested that RBI and Government take adequate measures so that the Rupee Credit available to Indian exporters is in line with its competitors which will go a long way in enabling our exporters to compete globally.

On interest rate subvention, Mr. Mehra said that it was heartening to note that interest rate subvention has been enhanced from 2 to 3% across the tariff lines for MSMEs and some select tariff lines in made-ups.

Nevertheless, he requested the government to allow subvention benefit to all the tariff lines of MMF textiles. This will reduce interest burden on exporters during these difficult times, Mr. Mehra pointed out.

While advocating expansion of Focus Market Scheme, SRTEPC Chief request the Government to include countries like Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Turkey, South Africa, Tanzania, Kenya, Nigeria, Iran, Japan, Russia as exports to these Countries are adversely affected due to certain disabilities including anti dumping duties.

Mr. Mehra also pleaded for inclusion of all MMF textile items including made-ups falling under Chapter 54, 55 & 63 to be included under the Focus Product Scheme instead of limiting to select HS codes. There is a huge export potential for these products and they deserve encouragement, he observed.

HOME

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****

Cut in duty refunds to negate rupee effect EEPC for refixing of drawback rates to make exports competitive

The EEPC India today expressed a strong resentment and disappointment over the government's decision to effect a steep cut of 26-30 per cent in the duty drawback rates –a shocking development that will make negate the positive impact of rupee depreciation.

The EEPC India which represents the engineering exports contributing the second largest share to the country's total export basket said unfortunately, the drawback rates have been cut at a time when the export sector holds the most critical key to India's vulnerable current account deficit. It said the government should immediately refix the duty drawback rates on the basis of 33 per cent value addition in case of engineering goods. "The average rate reduction on engineering goods has been to the tune of 26 to 30 per cent and such a sharp reduction in the present time will have a serious impact on engineering exports, particularly, at a time when Engineering Exports during April-August 2013 were negative -4.19 per cent," EEPC India Chairman Mr. Aman Chadha said .

By substantially reducing the rates on different engineering items , the Government's objective of boosting exports may not be realised, he noted stating engineering exporters have been let down. The engineering exports are the second largest contributor to the country's total export basket.

Through a customs notification on September 14, the government has notified the new duty drawbacks rates for the exporters. They are based on the recommendations of an expert committee headed by Dr. Saumitra Chaudhuri, Member of the Planning Commission.

According to EEPC India (formerly Engineering Export Promotion Council, Duty Drawback Rates do not correctly measure the hidden taxes that exists on exported goods. Thus, many local levies like Octroi, Entry Tax, Electricity duties are not compensated by the present Drawback rates. Further, Indian exporters face high infrastructural costs and arbitrary freight increases. The Duty Drawback rate should take these hidden taxes/costs into account.

EEPC India had suggested that the drawback rates be increased by 25% across the board to offset such handicaps of exporters. Instead, the new rates have been lowered by more than a quarter; Further, it seems that while arriving at the rates , the expert Committee did not take into cognisance the inordinate delay the Government agencies take to credit the due DBK amount to bank accounts of exporters.

Exports made through various land customs station , it takes approximately 9-10 months for exporters to realise their Duty Drawback credit. The expert committee has not only failed to address this issue but also not factored these while arriving at the new reduced rates, Mr. Chadha said.

HOME

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****

Indian govt plans to boost Indore technical textile sector

The Indore regional office of the Indian Ministry of Textiles has devised a strategy to boost the technical textiles (non-woven fabric) sector on a large scale in the region, as the segment requires less investment and has more export potential.

Gaurav Gupta, deputy director from the regional office, said that recently a number of awareness initiatives have been undertaken by his office for encouraging entrepreneurs in the region to venture into production of non-woven fabric, reports DNA India.

Mr. Gupta said the establishment of a technical textile manufacturing unit is much easier as it requires capital input of only Rs 2 to 15 million.

Till date nearly two dozen units are producing such fabric in Indore and nearby areas, he added.

Mr. Gupta explained that non-woven fabric has immense export potential and the fabric is used in variety of articles such as bags, surgical masks and caps, seat covers, DVD covers, diapers, pillow covers, shoe covers and more.

The non-woven fabric manufacturing units would also be given financial support under the State and Central Government schemes, he added.

HOME

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Clothing exporters eyeing emerging economies

Faced with falling shipments to EU markets in 2012, many of the world's leading clothing exporting countries are looking towards emerging economies instead.

Indeed, exports to countries in the Middle East grew strongly - as did exports to a number of countries in Asia and South America, according to new research.

Reflecting continuing uncertain economic conditions in the EU region, exporting to EU countries was difficult also for EU exporters themselves.

So, whereas EU exports to countries outside the EU increased by 12.1%, exports from EU member states to other countries within the EU declined by 11.6%.

For clothing manufacturers based in China, exports to Germany fell by a sharp 22.4% and exports to France fell by 14.0%. In fact, Germany and France were the only two countries among China's ten largest markets to which exports declined.

Moreover, Italy, Spain and the Netherlands no longer ranked among China's ten largest markets, even though in 2011 they were, respectively, China's eighth, ninth and tenth biggest markets.

China's exports to Vietnam, by contrast, surged by 115.1%, exports to the UAE rose by 25.3% and exports to Russia went up by 14.0%.

One country which did manage to increase its exports to a number of EU countries was Turkey. However, Turkish exports to non-EU countries grew more strongly.

For clothing manufacturers based in Vietnam, the fastest growth among the country's ten largest markets was in exports to China (up by 33.0%), followed by those to South Korea (up by 32.3%) and Japan (up by 18.4%). In fact, China is expected to overtake the US to become Vietnam's largest trading partner by 2030.

Exports from Vietnam to other Asian countries are also forecast to grow significantly over the coming years, and exports from Vietnam to the whole of Asia (excluding Japan) are expected to rise by an average of 15% per annum between 2013 and 2020.

For manufacturers based in India, exports to eight of the country's ten largest markets declined in 2012.

In particular, there were sharp declines in Indian exports to a number of EU countries, including Belgium (down by 24.7%), Italy (down by 23.6%), Germany (down by 22.2%), France (down by 21.8%) and the Netherlands (down by 15.9%).

The only increases were in Indian exports to the UAE (up by 9.6%) and Saudi Arabia (up by 3.7%).

Manufacturers in Indonesia also suffered sharp declines in their exports to a number of EU countries, including the Netherlands (down by 24.8%), France (down by 23.1%) and Germany (down by 13.0%). By contrast, Indonesian exports to Japan rose by 42.6%, those to South Korea were up by 35.7% and those to the UAE increased by 15.4%.

For manufacturers in Malaysia, meanwhile, the fastest increase was in exports to Brazil (up by 20.4%) while the steepest declines were in exports to the UK (down by 14.9%), Italy (down by 11.8%), Belgium (down by 11.1%), Germany (down by 3.5%) and France (down by 2.8%).

Looking ahead, emerging economies will continue to provide exporters with growth opportunities. Also, the situation in the EU, and in the eurozone in particular, is expected to improve after the latter region officially climbed out of recession in the second quarter of 2013, following 18 months of contraction.

However, any growth in the EU economy in 2013 will be slow, and global trade growth - although up on the previous year - will continue to be much slower than in the years prior to the global economic crisis.

Furthermore, while this weakness persists, the threat of protectionism could build and have a negative impact on global trade - especially given the fact that other attempts to restore growth following the global economic crisis have failed.

"Trade and trade policy: the world's leading clothing exporters and key markets"
was published in the latest issue of Global Apparel Markets from Textiles Intelligence.

HOME

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Cementing ties with farmers to grow better cotton

Ambuja Cement may be known for the cement it produces but few are aware that it helps farmers grow better cotton under the Better Cotton Initiative. Ambuja Cement, part of Holcim Group, through its foundation intends to increase its reach to 9,866 cotton farmers this year from 7,116 last year for this. Similarly, the foundation wants to increase cotton coverage by 30 per cent to 16,827 hectares in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Punjab, and Rajasthan.

Better Cotton Initiative is a non-profit organisation formed in association by textile producer organisations, suppliers and manufacturers, retailers and brands and civil society. The better cotton initiative hopes to ensure improved livelihoods and economic development in cotton producing areas, use of less pesticides and leading brands' procurement commitment.

Each farmer who is part of better cotton initiative is issued a licence by the organisation to testify that the cotton grown on his farmers' field comply with the standards set out by the organisation.

Leading global brands such as Tesco, Lindax, Ikea, Adidas, Walmar, H&M, Stadium and Tommy and Hilfiger ensure that 20 per cent of their garment procurement is made from this initiative.

REVOLVING FUND

Growers Gandabhai Chauhan and Karshanbhai Parmar were the role model for scores of farmers who assembled at meet organised at Ambujanagar, Gujarat. Chauhan gave details of the benefits of drip irrigation on his cotton field, while Parmar explained how he managed to reduce use of chemicals through integrated pest management.

Sunil Kumar Rana, Project Coordinator, Ambuja Cement Foundation, said that farmers earnings improved by at least Rs 6,000/hectare, besides the benefit on cost savings by way of lower pesticides use and chemicals sprays.

“The farmer is assured of procurement at the door step at the prevalent market price. This leads to tremendous saving on logistics cost. We also ensure that there is transparency in wages paid to labour working on the field,” he said.

Ambuja hand-holds the farmers right from tilling the field to keeping close tab on the health of the crop. This results in better yield per hectare. It also helps farmers aggregate their seed purchase to get a better bargain on prices, he said.

The foundation has set aside Rs 2 crore as revolving fund to provide short term loan between Rs 50,000 and Rs 4 lakh to farmers. It receives about Rs 40 crore a year from the parent company with a mark up of 10-15 per cent depending on the need.

Having tasted success in cotton, the Foundation now plans to focus on other crops such as groundnut and sugarcane in Gujarat and paddy in West Bengal.

HOME

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AATCC to host two-day technical textiles seminar in India

The latest information on cutting-edge research in fibers, finishes, technical textiles, and nonwovens will be featured in an international conference held October 1-2, 2013, in Mumbai, India.

Hosted jointly by AATCC (**American Association of Textile Chemists and Colorists**), the Association of Textile, Apparel & Materials Professionals, and Bangalore-India based TecniTex Nonwovens Pvt Ltd, this important event will include 36 presentations as well as networking opportunities with industry leaders and innovators.

The organizers hope the conference will enable the transfer of research ideas and spearhead growth in the value-added textiles sector.

The conference will begin with a plenary talk on the latest trends in technical textiles, market information, and technological developments. In addition, three keynote presentations from leaders in the field will be made covering the following topics: multi-functional textiles for military, biax fiberfilm meltblown technology, and functional mosquito repellent finishes.

In addition to the plenary talk and keynotes, the conference will include 28 oral presentations delivered in sessions that will deal with new developments in natural fibers, composites, functional finishes, sustainable textiles, dyeing and finishing, sports textiles, technical textiles, and quality control.

Peter Hauser, president of AATCC, and Seshadri Ramkumar, chair of AATCC's Materials Interest group, are serving as co-chairs of this international event.

The conference will take place at The Orchid, Nehru Road, Vile Parle East in Mumbai, India.

HOME

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Government to aid textle start-ups via equity fund model

NEW DELHI: In a move that aims to replicate the success of India's IT entrepreneurs, the government is planning to fund and provide workspace to start-ups in labour intensive sectors.

The idea is to give a boost to manufacturing and ensure steady supply of skilled workforce in sectors that have huge export potential, a senior government official told ET on condition of anonymity. The official said the start-ups will be funded through a dedicated equity fund on pure venture capital model. The project will be tested in the textile sector where space will be provided to entrepreneurs at textile parks while funds will be given through the state-supported Textile Equity Fund.

"The textile ministry is working with SIDBI to launch the first state-supported, dedicated Textile Equity Fund in the next three months, which will ensure easy availability of equity for start-ups as well as expansion for smaller enterprises," the official said. "Going by the experience of the IT sector, the expectation is that after the initial success, markets will provide adequate financing for the equity needs of the textile sector."

If successful, the model will be replicated in leather and toys industries. A decision to this effect was taken at a recently held meeting of the Committee on Manufacturing, chaired by Manmohan Singh.

Although apparel exports from India clocked double-digit growth in the current fiscal and production grew 45% in the first five months, Indian textile exports are facing tough competition from Bangladesh in the US and the EU markets.

"However, this would require textile ministry to tweak their guidelines for textile parks as well as finance the development of flatted factories in textile parks where workspaces would be made readily available to entrepreneurs on rent, hire purchase as well as sale," said the official, who was present at the meeting of the high-level committee. India imported toys worth over Rs 1,200 crore during 2012-13.

"Most of the toys come from other countries, mainly China. We can very well produce these in the country. So we are looking at a similar policy for toys and leather", said the official. An inter-ministerial group under the textiles secretary is working on a time-bound action plan to implement the decision. The other members of the group include representative of the Planning Commission and the Department of Expenditure and Financial Services.

The National Manufacturing Competitiveness Council along with Planning Commission member (industry) and the chief economic advisor will act as a steering group to facilitate the implementation of the action plan. The textile ministry will commence work on five pilot projects for development of flatted factories in existing textile parks this year. It will shortly finalise the quantum of equity fund as well as additional financing for setting up the flatted factories.

About 40 textile parks have already been set up in the country, while another 20 were announced last year to enhance the competitiveness of the sector. Textile contributes about 14% to industrial production, 4% to the GDP and 17% to the export earnings. The sector is the second-largest employment provider after agriculture.

HOME

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Higher cotton output likely

Cotton production in the 2013-14 season, which starts next month, is likely to be one of the highest with the trade and industry expecting the output to be more than 350 lakh bales.

At its meeting in April this year, the Cotton Advisory Board estimated cotton production in 2012-13 (October-September) to be 340 lakh bales.

For the 2013-14 season, the Cotton Association of India has estimated the production at 375 lakh bales. Its president Dhiren N. Sheth has said in a release that this is its second estimate for the 2013-14 season. Crop conditions have improved since last month, and, hence, it is expecting a higher crop.

The Southern India Mills Association expects production to be 360 lakh bales.

According to the Indian Cotton Federation, production in 2013-14 is likely to be 370 lakh bales. Though the area under cotton has not increased much, good rains are expected to increase the yield. Its vice-president K. N. Viswanathan said that the crop was good in Gujarat. Hence, we are expecting higher yield in Gujarat. Production in the State might by 120 lakh bales, he said. At present, the demand for cotton from textile mills was limited and the export market was also dull, he said.

HOME

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