

Kerkhof exhorts MMF industry leaders to become highly functional & responsible

By Rakesh Kumar & Mohit Sharma

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Global textile industry leaders must not be tarnished by bad players, but rather leave them behind and show a different way forward by making the fiber industry a highly functional, functional, exciting and responsible industry, asserted Robert van de Kerkhof, president of the Austrian Fibers Institute and Chief Commercial Officer, Lenzing AG, here today.

Addressing the 56th Manmade Fibers Congress, Mr. Kerkhof observed that the textile industry after petroleum was the most polluting industry in the world.

Speaking about the dark side of the industry, he said that manufacturing of viscose

which could be sustainable, but is often not due to its prevalent production methods. The emission of the Indian, Chinese and Indonesian viscose fibre manufacturers was very high and was adversely affecting the rivers flowing close to these manufacturing plants, he said.

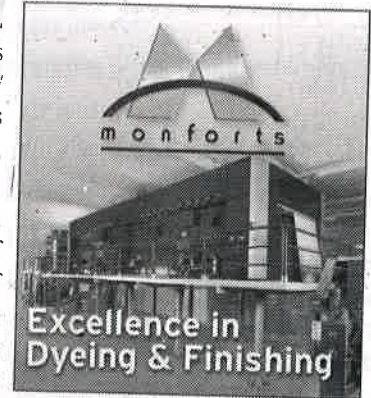
While quoting the 'Dirty Fashion Report' of the Changing Markets Foundation, Mr. Kerkhof informed the report has highlighted the environmental and social impact of 'dirty' viscose production and shines light on the global supply chains.

Raising the question whether viscose can be the 'green fibre', Lenzing COO said that the answer was 'yes'. Viscose can be a sustainable fibre

if the industry buys the wood in a responsible way and follows sustainable manufacturing/production process and pursues global norms of emissions, energy and water.

Stating that "if there is a will there is way", Mr. Kerkhof said that 'Detox 2020 Plan' of Green Peace is a fine example wherein global Corporations under their corporate responsibility programs are complying with local laws rather than applying the strictest standards.

The Detox 2020 plan, he said includes the system for eliminating hazardous chemicals that is proactive and precautionary. PFC elimination - substituting hazardous PFCs



with safer alternatives and Transparency - disclosing information on suppliers and the hazardous chemicals they discharge are also part of the plan, informed Mr. Kerkhof.

Dwelling upon Carbon fiber, he raised the question whether today's trends are
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Rupee ends at 64 a dollar

MUMBAI, SEPT. 13—

The rupee today snapped its two-session losing streak against the US dollar by recovering four paise to close at 64 on fresh selling of the American currency by exporters amid heavy foreign capital outflows.

Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) sold shares worth a net Rs 1,230.74 crore yesterday, as per provisional data released by stock exchanges.

The domestic currency resumed higher at 63.98 per dollar against the yesterday's closing level of 64.04 at the forex market and hovered in a range of 63.9625 and 64.0250 before finishing at 64, a gain of 4 paise or 0.06 per cent.

The rupee had dropped by 26 paise or 0.41 per cent, in previous two days.

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Sustainability is the key to future

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tomorrow's trash? Carbon fiber, he said is celebrated as a wonder material for the clean economy. It is used in lightweight fuel-saving constructions for automotive and aerospace. However, carbon fibre is wasteful to produce and difficult to recycle. The Green Alliance has listed carbon fiber: "as one of several novel materials that could create waste problems in the future unless swift action is taken to make it ready for recycling and reuse," he informed.

There are more and more questions being raised about the lasting impacts of the innovations which are being introduced in the global market, Mr. Kerkhof said and listed out concerns of today which included: Hazards of Pollution/ Chemicals; Emissions; Waste; Growing water scarcity;

Accelerating climate change; Reducing biodiversity; Cotton: competing uses of land - food vs fiber; Increasing income inequality; Unsafe and unhealthy environment for community and employees and Value chain transparency.

Considering the above concerns and risks, are we shooting in the foot and making a situation worse for ourselves, he questioned and went on to opine that there were options for the industry. All along the value chain, we have the opportunity to avoid wasteful products and applying polluting processed, Mr. Kerkhof emphasised.

Giving example of sustainability, he informed that the Lenzing EcoVero fibers are the innovative and unique answer to the increasing demand for sustainable products along the textile value chain.

Lenzing has set-up a special manufacturing system which empowers the brands and retailers to identify EcoVero fibers in their final product. Thus, retailers and brands are fully assured that they are indeed incorporating eco-friendly viscose and not a generic market viscose, Mr. Kerkhof informed.

While concluding the Lenzing COO stressed that that the industry needs to raise the bar together.

"We, as an industry, need to close the loop to actively and collectively engage on these challenges. We need to set high standards, carve out a space for the best companies to be recognized as the leaders and finally show consumers that responsible production is possible in the fiber industry," he said.

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