

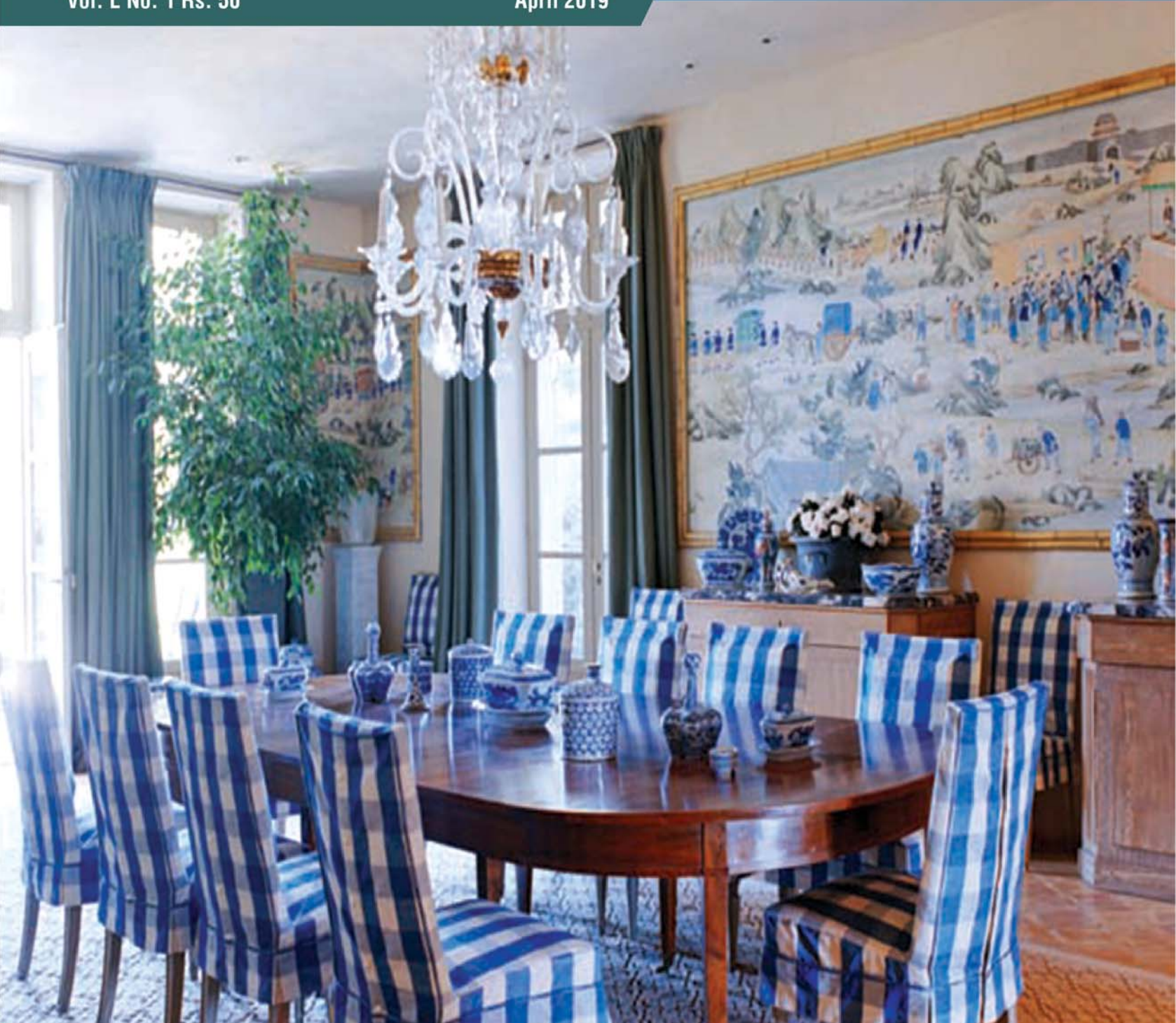


Monthly Newsletter

HANDLOOM EXPORT

Vol. I No. 1 Rs. 50

April 2019



THE HANDLOOM EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

Proposed Calendar of Events 2019 - 2020

Sl. No.	Date / Month	Name of the Event proposed	Product profile / Focus product
1	20-23 April 2019	Hong Kong International Home textiles & Furnishing Fair, Hong Kong	Home textiles and Clothing Accessories
2	1-9 June 2019	Global Indian Festival, Kuala Lumpur	IHB products
3	17-19, July 2019	30 th India Home Furnishing Fair/40 th India Garment Fair	Hometextiles / Clothing accessories, Garments
4	22-24 July 2019	Hometextile Sourcing / Apparel Sourcing Expo, New York, USA	Home textiles
5	24-26 July 2019	India Trend Fair , Tokyo	Hometextiles / Clothing accessories, Garments
6	11-14, Aug' 2019	Sourcing at Magic, Las Vegas, USA	Clothing Accessories
7	28-31. August 2019	Inter textile SHANGHAI home textiles, Shanghai, China	Home textiles
8	6-9, Sep 2019	WHO's NEXT , Paris	Clothing Accessories
9	6-10, September 2019	Maison & Objet, Paris, France	Home textiles, Clothing Accessories.
10	10-12, Sep 2019	GOTEX, Brazil	Home Textiles
11	15-18, Sep 2019	MIPEL, Milan Italy	Fashion Accessories and leather
12	17 -19 Sep 2019	Heimtextil Russia	Home Textiles, Floor Coverings
13	17-19 Sep 2019	INDEX Design Series Dubai International Fair	Blinds and curtains, carpets & Rugs, soft furnishings and textiles, art, accessories & Décor
14	Oct 2019	India Textile Sourcing Fair, Delhi	All textile products
15	27-30, October 2019	Global Sources Life Style, Hong Kong	Hometextiles / clothing accessories
16	October 2019	IndoMalaysia Trade Expo (Deepavali Carnival)	All handloom products
17	31 st Oct- 4 th Nov 2019	125 th China Import and Export Fair, Phase 3, Guangzhou	Hometextiles and multiproduct
18	12-14, November 2019	International Sourcing Expo, Melbourne, Australia	Home textiles, Clothing Accessories
19	07-10. Jan 2020	Heimtextil 2020	Hometextiles
20	10-13, January 2020	Domotex, Hannover, Germany	Floor Coverings
21	January 2020	WHO's NEXT, Paris, France	Clothing Accessories
22	January 2020	Intermoda, Mexico	Fashion and clothing accessories
23	11-14, February 2020	Texworld, Paris	Fabrics and fashion
24	7-11, February 2020	Ambiente, Frankfurt, Germany	Home Textiles and Fashion accessories
25	February 2020	Spring Fair, Birmingham	Hometextiles
26	5-7, February 2020	Domotex Atlanta	Floor coverings
27	21-23, Mar 2020	Seoul International Sourcing Fair, South Korea	Fashion, houseware, Life Style products, multi products



HANDLOOM EXPORT

Newsletter of Handloom
Export Promotion Council
April 2019 Vol.L No.1

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Chairman's Column

Dear Members,

I take this opportunity to thank both Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ministry of Textiles for the approval given for market promotion activities during the current financial year 2019-20.

The provisional figures of handloom export made during the year April-March' 19 witnessed declining trend around 2.65% in USD mn. which signals more efforts to be taken during the current financial year 2019-20. I hope, the exporters have come out from GST issues and with the existing export incentives viz. RoSCTL scrips, MEIS, DBK, etc. exporters have to work out strategy to increase exports and it is equally important that industry should provide cost data to the Council to find out the actual /embedded tax component on goods exported in order to get higher drawback rates.

Commerce ministers of RCEP countries (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) including India and china, which are negotiating a mega trade deal, concluded 7th RCEP Intersessional Ministerial Meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia on 2nd March 2019. To ensure that progress is made towards meeting the Leaders' target for conclusion in 2019, the Ministers agreed to intensify engagement for the remaining of the year, including by convening more intersessional meetings. The 16-member RCEP (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, China, India, Japan, Korea and New Zealand) bloc aims to cover among the issues related to goods, services, investments, economic and technical cooperation, competition and intellectual property rights. Members exporters are requested to workout strategy to increase handloom export and this is an opportunity for the Indian textile companies to grow and increase the share of textile exports to RCEP countries.

Council has sent a draft ITC (HS) based comprehensive export policy 2019 released by Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce to all stakeholders for their comments and suggestions. I request all member exporters to send their suggestion/views and strategy to be adopted to augment the handloom export.

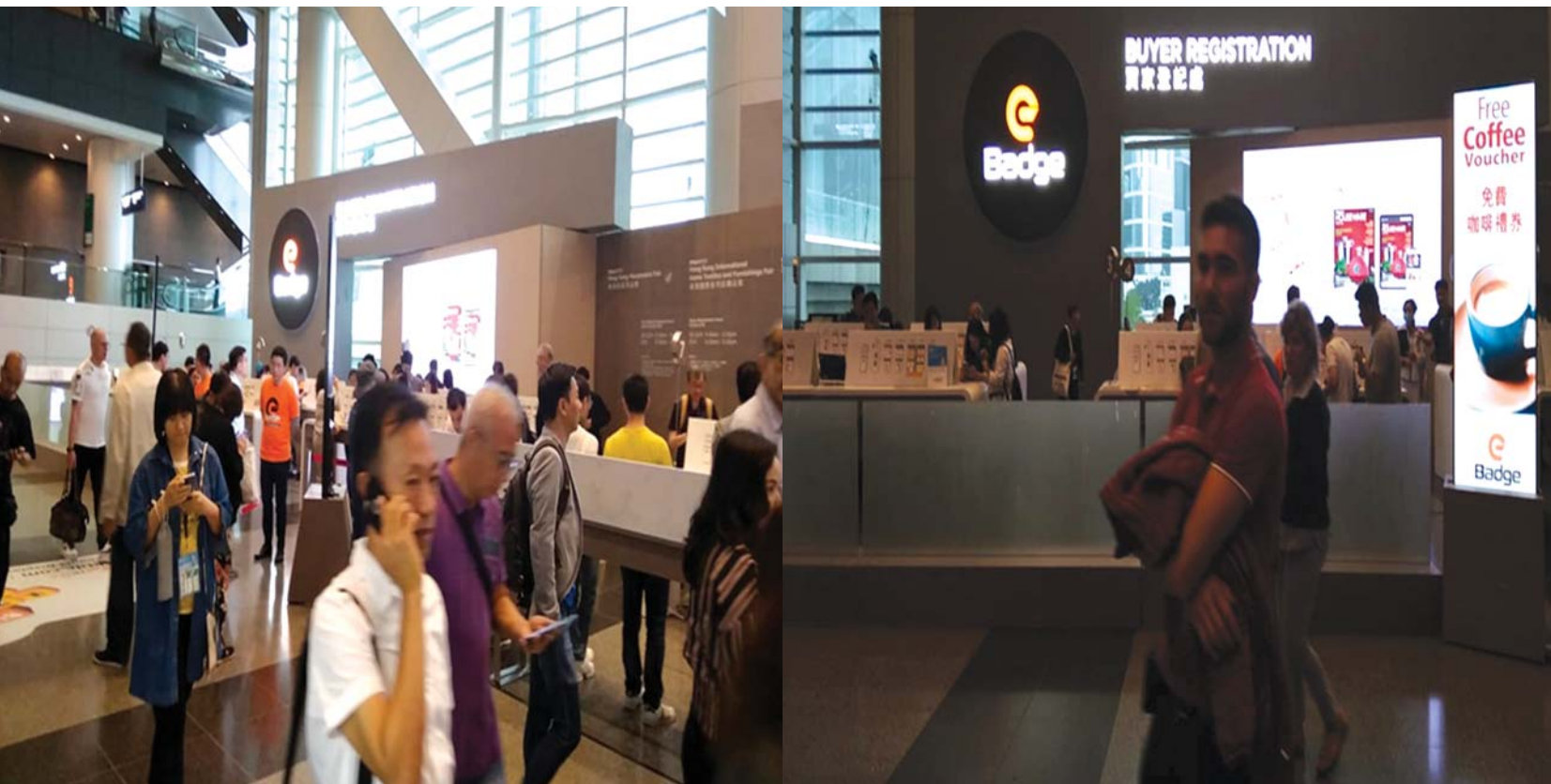
With warm regards,

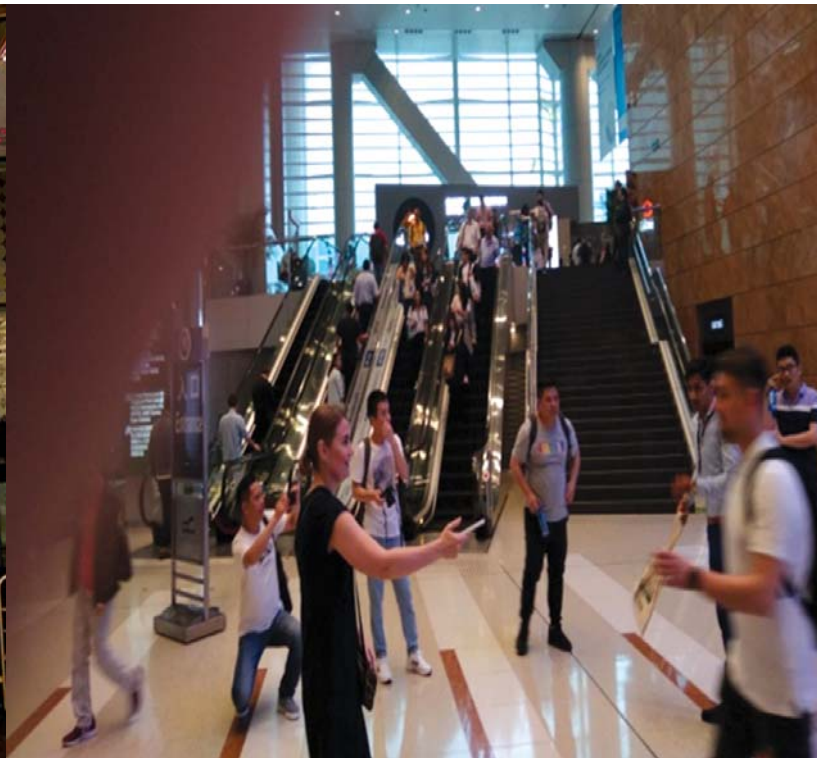


Dr. K.N. Prabhu,
Chairman

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL HOME TEXTILES AND FURNISHINGS FAIR HELD IN HONG KONG FROM 20TH TO 23RD APRIL 2019.

Hong Kong International Home Textiles and Furnishing Fair being organized concurrently with Hong Kong Asia's biggest House ware fair. The 10th edition of Hong Kong International Home Textiles and Furnishing Fair has been organized in Hong Kong convention and Exhibition Centre from 20th to 23rd April 2019. The event has been organized by Hong Kong Trade Development Council (HKDTC), Hong Kong. The fair was divided into themed zones to make easy for buyers to find the best products of their needs. Top quality of products from famous brands including Casabalanca, COOC, Craftex, Fibre World, J-Text and Soft Modern Rug showcased in House ware section. Other including Baby & Bedroom Textiles, Bathroom & Kitchen Textiles, Carpet & Floor Coverings, Upholstery & Furnishings, Window Fashion & Accessories and Design Solutions & Trade Services displayed in Home Furnishing section. It is ascertained from the fair authority that 1660 exhibitors including 1560 exhibitors in House ware section participated in the fair in total gross area 42000 sqm (2000 sqm in home textiles and 40000 sqm in house ware section) at ground, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 5th floor of Hong Kong Exhibition and Convention centre.





The Handloom Export Promotion Council organized participation of 18 member exporters under National Handloom Development Programme (NHDP) of Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. HEPC participants from different regions of India have exhibited their wide range Home Textiles and floor coverings products in total area of 180 sqm which included Council's central promotion stand. The signage of all the exhibitors who participated through council had a common branding and all the exhibitors were under India Pavilion of Hall 3B at third floor. Apart from HEPC exhibitors of Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) and Carpet Export Promotion Council (CEPC) have represented India Pavilion.





Elaborate publicity was made for India Handloom Brand through product posters in Council's promotional stand & distribution of brochures, catalogues were also made to publicize uniqueness of Handloom. A hostess was hired in order to distribute the promotion materials and explain regarding IHB to buyers in local language.



On 22nd April Shri Ajith John Joshua, Consul (Political, Commerce & Press), Consulate General of India, Hong Kong visited the fair and interacted with the exhibitors. He visited Council participant's stalls and discussed various issues particularly regarding the problems faced by some exporters in getting Pre Arrival Registration (PAR) in Hong Kong. He advised the participants to apply PAR well in advance to get sufficient time for offline approval in case of rejection of VISA. During discussions with the participants the consul had assured full support from his office to resolve the issue. On 20th April Mr. C.F.Ng., Senior Exhibition Manager along with officials from Comnet Exhibitions have visited Council stand.



Shri Ajith John Joshua, Consul (Political, Commerce & Press), CGI, Hong Kong visit to participant stand.

Shri Ajith John Joshua, Consul (Political, Commerce & Press), CGI, Hong Kong visit to HEPC stand

Council official along with two participants & Executive members of HEPC Shri V. Ramesh and Shri P. Arjuna met with HKTDC officials Mr. C.F.Ng., Senior Exhibition Manager, Jeffrey Wong, Exhibition Project Manager on 22.04.19 to discuss about the event. The issues related to low buyers footfall, rentals and getting visa have been discussed. The HKTDC officials assured they will find out possibilities to attract more buyers and will get in touch with major 3 / 4 star hotels, freight forwarders, airlines to get accommodation, air ticket and freight in reasonable rates to reduce overall participation expenses.

As per feedback received from the participants 241 visitors visited the HEPC member stalls and total business generated INR 5,64,90,000/- including spot order worth of INR 49,00,000/- business enquiries worth of INR 5,15,90,000/- by 18 participants during the fair. Participants have reported that they have got spot orders/business enquired from new buyers from Denmark, Spain, Italy, Japan, Russia, Korea, Canada, Australia, New Zealand,, USA and Taiwan. Most of the participants satisfied with the participation and shown their interest to repeat the participation through the Council.

Shri Lakshmi Narayan, Assistant Director represented HEPC for participation in the above event.

- *Lakshminarayan,
Assistant Director.*

To be published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-I, Section (I)

Government of India
Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Department of Commerce
Udyog Bhawan, New Delhi

Public Notice No. 8 /2015-20

Dated the 14th May, 2019

Subject: Amendment in the Para 3.01(b) of the Handbook of Procedures

In exercise of powers conferred under paragraph 1.03 of the Foreign Trade Policy (2015-2020), the Director General of Foreign Trade hereby makes the following amendments in the Para 3.01(b) of the Handbook of Procedures, 2015-20.

Current Para 3.01 (b)	Amended Para 3.01 (b)
(b) An application for claiming rewards under MEIS on exports (other than Export of goods through courier or foreign post offices using e-commerce), shall be filed online, using digital signature, on DGFT website at http://dgft.gov.in with RA concerned in ANF 3A. The relevant shipping bills and e BRC shall be linked with the online application.	(b) An application for claiming rewards under MEIS on exports (other than Export of goods through courier or foreign post offices using e-Commerce) shall be filed online, using digital signature, on DGFT website at http://dgft.gov.in with RA concerned in ANF 3A. The relevant shipping bills and e BRC shall be linked with the online application. However, if i. E-BRC has been generated in INR and payment is under Para 2.52(b) of the FTP, a letter from the concerned bank is required to be submitted to the concerned RA confirming that the payment has been received through Vostro Mechanism, or ii. The shipment has been made to countries which are in OFAC list and e BRC could not be generated by the concerned bank, a declaration to that effect by the exporter along with a self attested copy of the proof of payment such as Foreign Inward Remittance Certificates/Statements etc is required to be submitted to the RA, The RAs would process the application under (i) and (ii) above, after the required documents are submitted in hard copy to the RAs.

Effect of this Public Notice: Procedure for claiming MEIS benefits for exports realized under Para 2.52 (b) of the FTP and for exports in which e BRC is not generated by banks has been notified.



(Alok Vardhan Chaturvedi)

Director General of Foreign Trade

Ex-Officio Additional Secretary to the Government of India

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(Issued from File No. 01/61/180/84/AM19/PC-3)

Fabrics - Trading Futures

By: Subir Ghosh

Many of the factors that shaped the global fabric trade at the turn of the millennium, and even over the last decade, are fast yielding to new age trends. Subir Ghosh writes.

If one were to contract the value chain of the global textiles-apparel-fashion industry- for the sake of convenience and debate, the fate of much of the industry would depend considerably on the way fabrics are manufactured and traded. And, if one were to look at the big picture, it would be all about trade.

Sure, the global fabrics trade has seen a swathe of changes in this millennium, but the very nature of trade is such that it is fluid. Trade wars and geo-political complexities make it unpredictable.

So, to make informed decisions, it is important to see in what ways trade, or even sourcing, has changed in the recent past, and to understand certain key industry trends that will have an overbearing impact on the unforeseeable winds of trade.

Defining Trends

Major international fabric events are a good place to start if one is fishing for trends. These are bustling hubs, and business deals struck here set both the pace and direction of trade. One such must-visit event is the Munich Fabric Start (MFS). It is a leading international trade fair that every year opens the new season twice and has fabrics at the core. More than 1,000 international suppliers from 40 countries, including many renowned fabric and accessories manufacturers, present over 1,800 collections in Munich, Germany.



Pic: Munich Fabric Start

MFS managing director Sebastian Klinder, who has seen the event evolve over the years, observes, "Over the past ten years both the textiles and apparel industries have undergone a revolution. Globalisation, digitalisation, artificial intelligence (AI), sourcing, resource efficiency, sustainability-have all redefined one of the world's most important branches of industry. And we are still in the early days of novel process and product solutions.

"There is still so much more scope for further development. Being one of the most important international fabric trade fairs, MFS has already initiated expert conferences with acknowledged experts on these topics in the most recent past; and very successfully so. At Keyhouse, the innovation and competence centre of MFS, we flag up new features and innovations in this area and provide an outlook for future-proof materials and manufacturing processes."

Far away, on a different continent, Texworld USA hosts fabric suppliers and mills from all over the world specialising in a wide range of product groups. Show director Jennifer Bacon points out, "Over the last 12 years at Texworld USA, we've seen many crucial factors such as duty rates, tariffs, legislations, and the ever-changing processes of how we manufacture materials affect the way we trade fabric globally.

"Recently, we've seen a shift in how we trade, especially when it comes to developing countries and the practices that are being used. Textile imports are becoming more diversified, and this is causing a shifting pattern of world apparel manufacturing. There is a huge movement in sustainable practices for mills and manufacturers. A new generation of buyers are more concerned of where and how their materials are being produced and the consumer is becoming conscious of what they are wearing."



Pic: Texprocil USA

Back across the Atlantic, Pure London is the United Kingdom's leading fashion trade show which takes place twice a year. Held alongside is Pure Origin, that brings together all aspects of fashion sourcing and manufacturing under one roof. Key account manager Matteo Perrone remarks, "With online fashion sales increasing by almost 300 per cent in the last six years, retailers are facing the big challenge of remaining unique and competitive, while being more

transparent. As a result, we have seen a rapid increase in the number of private labels launched by medium and big retailers to create uniqueness and increase customers' loyalty. Launching their own brands means becoming more sensible and thoughtful about raw materials and fabric sourced which needs to be unique and, in most cases, customised and bespoke to each retailer. Fabric suppliers have been asked to be more flexible in terms of design, production and minimum orders to meet the needs of European retailers."

Also over the last decade, Ricardo Silva, head of operations at Portugal's Tintex Textiles, has seen the textiles industry together with fabric trade being reshaped through a global scale evolution. He explains, "Being a particularly easy industry to change (geographically and technologically) compared to other models, like heavy chemical or automotive industries, change and development must be taken for granted in textiles. With globalisation, we've seen first Europe and then America suffering under the onslaught of Eastern Asia business competitiveness, which has been a boost (for industry) and a clear sign of the need to modernise and evolve.

"This evolution has not only been technological (with adoption of new equipment and processes), but specially with the new ways of doing business, it has also been one of communicating and synergising. This is, today, the way to innovate and add value to our companies and business models-through technical specialisation and synergies."

Moreover, in the last 10 years, according to Furio Annovazzi, chief executive of Italy's Iluna Group, "the market has always sought the price even at the expense of quality, but lately the trend has been changing. The request for eco-sustainability is felt in all sectors of industry, and also in the textiles industry the search for green and the traceability of raw materials is becoming increasingly important."

Perrone continues, "Proximity too is key. Fast fashion is still driving growth for both online and high street retailers who are looking for shorter lead times, which means having not only suppliers in Asia, but also an additional supplier closer to home, and therefore growth in areas such as East Europe and North Africa. The market compared to 10 years ago is now more fluid and dynamic with buyers always looking for new suppliers, and loyalty is threatened by the need to be fast, unique and flexible."

The Deciding Factors

Trends are far too many and change from one geography to another. But all trends are not equal- some trends are more impactful than others.

Wolfgang Klinder, managing director at MFS, points out, "The digitalisation of production workflows and product innovations has definitely had the strongest measurable impact on the global textiles market, thereby fundamentally changing and modernising it. The largely very specific know-how required in many areas of this sector calls for in-depth networking and, hence, strong, reliable cooperations. This means that the approach to sourcing also has to be thought afresh.

"Due to the ever-stronger dovetailing of markets, but also to digitised processes, reliable sourcing management is as important as ever. With its sourcing showrooms, MFS offers optimal pre-requisites for gaining a comprehensive insight into the complete textiles chain across all stages of production. This is a segment we will develop further in the future." For this reason, MFS remains a dynamic platform.



But for Bacon, fast fashion has changed the way the consumers shop, which in turn has affected how manufacturers produce, how buyers source at their show, and how countries export. She explains, "Over the last five years, we've seen companies like H&M, Zara and Asos, and even Amazon disrupt the apparel industry by meeting a once unmet consumer need. These companies have a quick turnaround on trendy clothing and accessories at a more affordable and desirable price. This innovation has forced other brands to try and keep up by staying competitive and providing the same offerings.

"Manufacturers have upped their productivity by changing their supply chain, countries are not exporting to less developed countries to increase their manufacturing, and buyers want a quick return time from conception to shelf. This ever-growing competition has forced the entire industry to shift along with it or be left behind." In short, many don't want to be slow in catching up with fast fashion.

Silva, however, has been seeing more action on the sustainability front. Therefore, Tintex's department of sustainability optimises fashion solutions that not only provide high performance nature-based textiles, but enable the company to arise as global leaders striving toward superior responsible fashion systems that are transparent and fully traceable throughout the supply chain. He elaborates, "We have established a framework for the entire complex supply chain, products, processes and suppliers. Strategic sourcing and ongoing research and development ensures the use of highly advanced, natural materials that are plant-based or use the less impactful dye techniques." So, its collections boast at least 90 per cent usage of sustainable materials including Tencel, new generation of cotton, and recycled materials-all supported with original or brand supplier certifications.



Annovazzi goes a step ahead and asserts that responsible innovation represents the core interest in the fashion industry in 2019: "As the fashion world's main players are becoming acquainted with concepts like circular economy, design waste and sustainability, they understand that technological innovations help create smart materials that take us towards a path of responsible fashion collections.

"Experts in the production of stretch lace since 1985, today we proudly are the largest European lace producer. Thanks to the effectiveness of our approach and to our solid and continued commitment, we are proud to share the fact that we have been the very first lace producer to have gained the GRS (Global Recycled Standard) for transformed products, together with the company certification STeP (Sustainable Textile Production by Oeko-Tex). Indeed, we always try to match the expectations of brands and retailers by keeping as a priority both modern design and a responsible and fully traceable supply chain in order to guarantee that good quality."

Trending Tomorrow

Many of the trends that define trade today could well disappear tomorrow. How well-gearred one is for the future would depend on ascertaining which ones will continue-and which will make an advent.

Predicts Sebastian Klinder, "Developments in digitalisation, the optimisation of AI will continue. They will be employed even more specifically in individual sectors such as automotive, aerospace, and also in the medical field. In terms of the textiles and fashion markets, there is a clearly growing trend towards the personalisation of products. At present, this is highly popular in the sportswear segment for sneakers. A batch size of one is possible without any additional expenses.

"This very successful example shows that production flexibly and personally targets shoppers' wishes-both in terms of smaller order volumes, markedly shorter throughput times, and design. In future, reaching the consumer faster and more directly will be a critical success factor. At the interface of this type of production and distribution, social media channels will play an increasingly crucial role as must-have communication platforms. There is a new dynamism developing across the entire pipeline in a strongly growing market."

Bacon's take continues from her understanding of fast fashion, as she argues, "Sustainable fashion is changing the conversation and will shift how brands continue to operate. At Texworld USA, we hear more demand from our buyers-they want sustainable offerings, which is why we've implemented so much of that focus into our show this year. It is difficult to single out one factor for future fabric trade, but any factor that does not show a clear price-value ratio is an issue. The consumer wants transparency and it is a key to fabric trade success in the future. As the consumer becomes more aware of the manufacturing supply chain and has more visibility on where their clothes are coming from, they are going to only purchase from brands they know and trust."

Agrees Perrone, "As awareness of environmental and sociological issues grows, the trend for sustainability in the fashion industry will only grow with it. Elsewhere in the industry, though, data is the most compelling business model; the companies that will thrive in the coming years are those that can reinvent and innovate to keep up with changes in technology and society."



Ditto from Silva: "In 10 years' time, we strongly believe that everything will have the responsible factor integrated, and we will surely be in the era of the circular economy. So, we will be in an industry that will not debate only about ingredients and better production, but will be in a technological shape where production is not what we are used to thinking about."

The understanding of Annovazzi is similar. He details his interpretation, "Euromonitor International's 2017 survey on global consumer trends confirmed that 65 per cent of respondents state they try to have a positive impact on the environment through everyday actions-this to reinforce what was already declared in a 2016 Morgan Stanley research survey, done in the UK, which underlined that when choosing among retailers, more than half of young consumers find ethical credentials somewhat or very important.

"Additional studies in the past few years have confirmed that upwards of 65-70 per cent of consumers under 35 years from around the world will choose brands or retailers based on their ethical practices. Regarding sustainable fabric sales, it is for sure one of the fastest

growing areas. Consumers are changing the rules of the game for brands, they are asking more about what is behind a product, and this commitment is expected to grow in the next decade." The verdict is clear: the keywords would be circularity, sustainability and transparency.

Factoring Blockchain

A related trend is blockchain. In many ways, blockchain and issues of sustainability and transparency in the days to come would considerably change the ways fabric sourcing is done.

MFS creative director Frank Junker says, "There is a substantially rising awareness for resourcesaving material and product manufacturing. As the organiser of MFS, we have already been committed to these issues for quite some time and offer a variety of platforms for education and information that invite visitors to enter into a debate. With Keyhouse, we have developed a thinktank for progressive fashion technology including an extended Sustainable Innovations Forum.

With ReSource, we have installed a platform that highlights new sustainability dimensions by showcasing over 500 responsibly produced or certified articles.



Pic: Munich Fabric Start

"From numerous conversations with experts, designers and fabric producers we have learnt that there are more questions asked about the origin of products. So far, our considerations have started with the end of the chain, the finished product; now we are going back to the origin and roots, and how products started. This creates increasing mindfulness and a new awareness for handling textiles and fashion."

Blockchain, feels Bacon, will give sourcing teams an insight into the supply chain, allowing them to meet the requirements of whatever their brand may want to market to consumers. "By providing this transparency, a brand that is sourcing the fabrics can see how each specific fabric is developed and if those meet the requirements they want to communicate to their own consumers. Seeing certifications provided through blockchain will give brands the ability to pick and choose certain sustainable attributes based on the data."

An interesting angle to the subject comes from Perrone: "Brexit could be the trigger that the UK needs to unlock the potential of blockchain. Major business leaders have long pushed for more transparency, price-efficiency and data insight, starting at the creation of a product to its final destination. Huge leaps in accountability have come about as a result of this technology. This means that consumers can know exactly what their food or clothing contains, how it is made, whether it is organic and fair trade, whether their goods are genuine or produced with respect to workers' rights.

"As well as obvious benefits to the consumer, transparency helps maintain the integrity of a company, potentially reduce costs, helps pinpoint human error and offers greater insight into the manufacturing process as well as time efficiencies. Supply chains of the future will be more responsive, efficient and flexible than their contemporaries." And this could happen faster than you know.

Yet, responsible innovation to Silva means integrating, adding a new dimension of quality/performance/value to a product that is beautiful and innovative. Sharing these values through the entire supply chain could be of extreme import for all the industry and, overall, for consumers. He highlights, "We believe that the transparency of the supply chain together with a stronger and, first of all, clearer communication about new smart certified values (for example: use of water, chemicals, energy, ethical policies, etc) could be really fundamental for consumers to judge and value products while buying."

Tintex, so, aims to be at the forefront of materials technology and innovation, and thus be able to include responsibility, "We are committed to design responsibility starting with hangtags, promotional material, direct information from our commercial team. We need to use this new generation of values coming from smart innovation in a way that consumers can quickly read and delve deep (for example, a QR code linked to the website for transparency) to be able to make a better choice. We are not just talking about sustainability, but about adding a new generation of values that speaks to the consumer."



Pic: Iluna Group

Silva provides an example. For the last two seasons, at the company booths in textile fairs, "we started using an e-totem with two key functions. First, it delivers to users all info about Tintex, our corporate profile, commitment to responsible innovation, and the concept behind our seasonal collection. Second, through RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology, the process of making fabric sampling has been made more efficient, quicker and autonomous."

Annovazzi too believes that the blockchain element will change things: "Guaranteeing transparency and traceability of the products through blockchain will help the consumer to get a clearer understanding of the story behind (the products). The advantage of the blockchain as a database is independent, decentralised, and gives access to the public without giving up on security." For now, Iluna's newest digital programs include a brand new e-shop that offers its exclusive materials to smaller companies looking for added values such as creativity, innovation, 'Made in Italy' tag and responsibility. The whole collection is visible online, and orders can be made directly.

To cut a long prediction short, the future of the global fabric trade is going to be as exciting as it might be unpredictable.

- Courtesy : **FF** | **FIBRE2FASHION.COM**
WORLD OF GARMENT - TEXTILE - FASHION

Fibre from **corn**



By: L. Renuka Tejaswini

Fibre from corn

By: L. Renuka Tejaswini

Corn fibres have emerged as an eco-friendly substitute for synthetic fabrics and are being used for making not just clothes, but also in geotextiles and home textiles. Renuka Tejaswini explains the processes involved in extracting corn fibres from corn starch and its many benefits and applications in the textile industry.

For many years, enzymes like amylase from malt extracts have been used to degrade starch-based sizes for cheap and effective desizing, which are also economical.

A low-cost and effective biotechnology solution in textile processing has been found and new fabrics have been discovered. To produce those fabrics, yarn and fibre manufacturing are necessary. Experiments are done to extract from various bio-based products which are derived from natural renewable resources (i.e., eco-friendly), which are less dependent on petroleum-based ingredients. The product which acts as an alternative to the synthetic is derived from corn.

By fermenting corn starch, which generates lactic acid (i.e., polymer) corn fibres originate. Just corn fibres are made using fermentation of plant sugar. It is not naturally available since it involves chemical transformation. It is renewable because it does not come from a fossil product.

Corn fibre description:

Corn fibre is a manmade fibre which has all the advantages of synthetic materials and various properties of natural products such as cotton and wool.

The manufacturing of polymer in corn fibre involves process of fermentation, distillation and polymerisation of simple plant sugar (maize dextrose) on an industrial scale. First, the sugars are fermented. After fermentation, products are transformed into a high performance polymer called polylactide, which can be spun or processed into corn fibre.

The production and use of corn fibre create less pollution and fewer greenhouse gases.



Fig: Eco Corn Fibre Small Ball

Conversion of starch:

Corn starch contains about 27 per cent amylase. Starch cannot be metabolised directly by yeast. It should be first broken down into simple six carbon sugars prior to fermentation. For this conversion, the pH of the mash is adjusted to 6.0, followed by the alpha-amylase.

The mash is heated above 100c using a jet cooker. The corn mash is kept at the elevated temperature for several minutes by pumping it through a holding tube equipped with a back pressure valve. The mash flows from the holding tube into a flash tank and the temperature is allowed to fall to 80-90c. Now alpha amylase is added and the mash is liquefied for at least 30 minutes. Then, the mash is cooled and glucoamylase enzyme is added. It converts starch into glucose.

Fermentation process:

After cooking, the mash is cooled to 32oc. With the addition of yeast, it is transferred to fermenters. For the growth of yeast, urea is added. Ethanol and dry grind mills are also added to break down the corn protein to free amino acids, which is an additional source of nitrogen for the yeast. Fermentation requires 48 to 72 hours and has a final ethanol concentration of 10 to 12 per cent, pH value decreases to 4, this decrease in pH is important for increasing the activity of glucoamylase and inhibiting the growth of contaminating bacteria.

Distillation process:

Distillation is the process of separating ethanol from solids and water in the mash. Alcohol vaporises at 78oc and water at 100oc. Therefore, this difference allows water to be separated from ethanol by heating in a distillation column.

Conventional process can produce 95 per cent pure ethanol. At this point, further separation of alcohol and water cannot occur by heat. To blend with gasoline, the remaining 5 per cent water must be removed by other methods. One of the methods is by molecular sieve system with the help of modern dry grind ethanol plants. By this method 100 per cent pure ethanol can be produced.

The anhydrous ethanol is then blended with approximately 5 per cent gasoline to make it undrinkable and thus there will not be beverage alcohol tax.

Processing stillage:

The solid and liquid fractions remaining after distillation are referred as Whole Stillage. This includes fibre, oil, and protein components of grain and non-fermented starch. First, the thin stillage is separated from the insoluble solid fraction using extruders. Then, the beer column in which ethanol is centrifuged with a stoppered bottle. Between 15 per cent and 30 per cent of the liquid fraction is recycled as backset, remaining is concentrated by evaporation and mixed with the residual solids from the fermentation, finally a thick syrup is mixed with the solids to make a feed product known as Wet Distillers Grains with Solubles (WDGS).

PROPERTIES:

- It is a natural flame-retardant fibre.
- It has strength and provides comfort, softness and drape.
- It can be in spun and filament form and in a wide variety of counts.
- It has moisture management property and low odour retention.
- Corn fibre filaments have a subtle lustre.
- It is resistant to UV light, retains strength, colour etc properties overtime.
- Garments in corn fibre have quick drying and show excellent after-wash appearance etc.

- It is completely biodegradable, compostable, burnable (without producing dangerous fumes) and recyclable.



Fig: Corn PLA Fibre



Fig: Corn Fibre Silver

Applications:

Corn fibre can be used both with woven and non-woven fabrics.

- Apparel: Sports, casual wear t-shirts, fleece, jeans, shirting's, trousers, duvet, jackets, jersey dressing, hosiery etc.



Fig: A Corn based fibre made apparel fibre



Fig: Textile Made from Eco-friendly Corn Extract

- Home textiles: Blankets, carpets, pillows, duvets, mattresses, draperies etc.



Fig: Corn fibre made carpets

- Non Woven's: Used in cosmetics and diapers.



Fig: Corn fibre made diapers

- Industrial applications: Geo textiles, agro textiles etc.



Fig: Corn fibre made agrotexiles

Other corn fibre products



Fig: Corn Fibre Socks

- Courtesy : 



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