LETTER

CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN TEXTILE INDUSTRY

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News Highlights

NATIONAL

CITI & ILO to promote fundamental rights in India's cotton sector

In its continued effort to uplift India's cotton farming community, the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) in association with the International Labor Organization (ILO) has launched an ambitious project aimed at promoting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW) among the cotton growing community. The project's inaugural phase will focus on the major cotton-producing districts of Madhya Pradesh.
The initiative, unveiled yesterday at the Indian Habitat Centre, New Delhi, marks a pivotal step toward ensuring fair labour practices, social protection, and sustainable livelihoods for about 6.5 million cotton farmers, about 40 per cent of which are women. During the project, special emphasis will be given on small and marginal farmers and migrant labour engaged as cotton farmers with leased land.

Targeting the cotton-rich districts of Madhya Pradesh, this project seeks to empower small and marginal farmers by enhancing their awareness of worker rights, providing technical support for policy implementation, and improving access to crucial social protection schemes. A comprehensive booklet detailing government schemes available to farmers was also released during the launch. The programme will see such informative booklets and tutorials being provided to farmers, thus offering a vital resource for the cotton farming community.

India's cotton supply chain is vast and complex, involving formal and informal sectors. The ILO's "Promoting Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (FPRW) in the cotton supply chain – Rise for Impact" project, which now enters its next phase in Madhya Pradesh, builds on the successes and lessons learned from its initial rollout in Telangana (2019-2022). This phase aligns with CITI-CDRA's ongoing efforts under the special project on cotton, ensuring that FPRW basic principles are woven into the fabric of daily agricultural practices, CITI said in a press release.

Key Initiatives and Impact

The CITI-ILO collaboration will drive several key initiatives with the below-given objectives:

-Cotton growing communities are better aware and empowered to realize FPRW

-Responsible institutions/constituents and stakeholders able to ensure FPRW

-Stakeholders have better access to knowledge and tools to promote FPRW

The launch event in Delhi was attended by senior government officials, industry leaders, trade unions, agriculture scientists, etc. The project marked the beginning of the Training of Trainers programmes held at Indore with the participation of about 30 trainers who will be imparting training on FPRW for the next 1 year of the project.

During the event, *secretary general CITI, Chandrima Chatterjee,* said in her opening remarks, “This collaboration between CITI and the ILO is a significant stride towards creating a fair and equitable environment for our cotton farmers. By promoting FPRW, we aim to ensure that these hardworking individuals are recognised, respected, and able to thrive within the global supply chain.”

Executive director, TEXPROCIL, Dr. Siddhartha Rajagopal shared the need and strategies for strengthening cotton value chain through a strong farm sector while *Insaf Nizam, FPRW specialist, ILO DWT for South Asia and CO for India*, stressed the importance of grassroots empowerment: “Empowering smallholders with knowledge of their rights is essential to achieving decent work in the cotton sector. This project is designed to bring these principles to life, impacting thousands of farmers across Madhya Pradesh.”

Speaking on the collaboration, *chairman-CITI, Rakesh Mehra* cited, “The cotton we cultivate not only supports our domestic industry but also feeds into the global textile industry, influencing markets and economies worldwide. By ensuring that our cotton is produced under fair and dignified conditions, we not only uplift our farmers but also enhance the reputation of Indian cotton on the global stage.”

“For last 54 years, CITI through its extension arm, Cotton Development and Research Association (CDRA), has been working for improving yield and quality of cotton by creating awareness on the best agronomics practices as also equipping farmers with the latest technologies on production, plant protection and nutrient management. Throughout its journey, CITI-CDRA has been able to positively impact cotton productivity, farmer income, soil health and better market linkage,” said *T Rajkumar, chairman - CITI Standing Committee on Cotton*.

This partnership between CITI and ILO represents a significant milestone in pursuing decent work and sustainable livelihoods for India’s cotton farmers and has come at a critical time when the industry is facing various challenges. Key stakeholders applauded the efforts of CITI and ILO in this direction.

By focusing on Madhya Pradesh—a critical region for cotton production—the project will set a new standard for national and global efforts to promote Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work not in just cotton cultivation but across the entire agricultural sector.

Home

India's WPI inflation falls to 2.04% in July 2024

The annual rate of inflation based on all India Wholesale Price Index (WPI) number is 2.04 per cent (provisional) for the month of July 2024 (over July 2023), a decrease over 3.36 per cent registered in the previous month, according to the ministry of commerce and industry.
The month over month (MoM) change in WPI index for the month of July 2024 stood at 0.84 per cent as compared to June 2024.

“Positive rate of inflation in July 2024 is primarily due to increase in prices of food articles, manufacture of food products, mineral oils, crude petroleum and natural gas, other manufacturing etc,” the Office of the Economic Adviser, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), under the ministry of commerce and industry, said.

The official WPI for all commodities (Base: 2011-12 = 100) for the month of July 2024 increased to 155.2 from the previous month’s 153.9.

The index for manufactured products (weight 64.23 per cent) for July 2024 dropped slightly to 141.7 from 141.9 in June 2024. The index for ‘Manufacture of Textiles’ sub-group increased slightly to 136.7 in July from 136.4 in June, while the index for ‘Manufacture of Wearing Apparel’ decreased slightly to 152.1 from 152.2 in June.

Home

Indian consumer sentiment on economy, income, jobs dips for year ahead

India’s consumer confidence in July declined for the second consecutive round in the Reserve Bank of India’s (RBI) bi-monthly consumer confidence survey after a prolonged rising trend in the post-COVID period.
Their sentiments on major parameters, except spending, moderated and, as a result, the current situation index (CSI) declined to 93.9 in July from 97.1 two months back.

Households’ optimism on economic conditions for the year ahead remained in positive terrain, though it came down from the previous survey round, RBI said in a release.

Lower optimism on general economic situation, employment and prices led to a 4.1-point moderation in the future expectations index (FEI) to 120.7 in July this year.

Sentiments on current employment situation and own income deteriorated for the second consecutive survey round. The outlook for both these parameters also moderated within the zone of optimism.

The survey collects current perceptions (vis-à-vis a year ago) and one year ahead expectations of households on general economic situation, employment scenario, overall price situation, own income and spending across 19 major cities. Female respondents accounted for 54.4 per cent of the sample comprising 6,062.

Home

Reduce GST on digital news subscriptions: MIB to revenue department

The ministry of information and broadcasting (MIB), in a letter dated July 22, requested the department of revenue to either exempt digital news subscriptions from goods and services tax (GST) or to reduce it from 18% to 5%.

In the letter, addressed to revenue secretary Sanjay Malhotra, information and broadcasting (I&B) secretary Sanjay Jaju said that newspapers were exempted from GST because the significance of giving "correct and factual information" to Indian citizens was recognised.

A brief note annexed to the letter said that a higher tax burden could skew the growth of the online news sector towards the advertising model, which could affect the quality and credibility of the news content.

"With the growing internet penetration in India and the nascent stage of the online news industry, it is requested that the disparity between GST on printed newspapers and digital/online news subscriptions may be addressed by either exempting the GST on the latter or rationalizing it from 18% to 5% at par with that on e-books," the letter read.

The MIB mentioned a September 29, 2023, office memorandum in which it had recommended exempting online news subscriptions from GST to bring parity between printed newspapers and digital/online news subscriptions. The revenue department, however, in an office memo dated June 5, 2024, said that the proposal to exempt digital news subscriptions was discussed by the GST Council in its meeting on July 11, 2023, but the proposal was not recommended by the Council.

The MIB cited how a similar disparity between printed books and e-books was addressed in 2018 when the GST Council reduced the GST rate on e-books from 18% to 5% through a notification dated July 26, 2018.

The 54th GST Council meeting is scheduled to be held on September 9, and the last meeting was held on June 22.
In the attached background note, the MIB noted that very few internet users in India pay for online news. Thus, a higher rate of GST on digital news subscriptions could encourage the online news sector to adopt an advertising model “which may impact the quality and credibility of the news content on the internet through practices such as use of clickbait and sensational headlines, and fake and misleading news, etc.”
It also noted that the 18% GST on online news subscriptions brings a tax revenue of about Rs. 21.6 crore from a total revenue of Rs. 120 crore. The MIB argued that reducing it to nil or five percent “may not lead to substantial revenue forgone by the government exchequer.”
Currently, printed newspapers, journals, and periodicals are exempted from the GST.
Under the IGST Act, online news subscriptions are taxed at 18% as Online Information Database Access and Retrieval (OIDAR) services, that is, an internet service that has no physical interface between the supplier and recipient of the service.
Online news subscriptions are included in the sub-category of services for “supply of images, text, and information and making available of databases.”.
The MIB noted that providing “credible and factual information in the nature of news” is different from other online content services as it “empowers the citizens to take informed decisions and be aware of their rights and responsibilities.”
HT has reached out to the finance ministry for more information.

Home

GST Council to meet on September 9, rate rationalisation talks likely to be on table

Rate rationalisation, covering the future course for tax slabs and correction of inverted duty structure, under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime, notices being sent to companies for their overseas operations, and the recent debate over tax rate on insurance premium are likely to be discussed in the GST Council meeting to be held next month. In an official statement on Tuesday, the Council said the next meeting would be held on September 9.

“The 54th Meeting of the GST Council will be held on 9th September, 2024 at New Delhi,” GST Council said in a post on social media platform X.

Before the Council meet, officers from states and Centre will meet on September 8. “There is the unfinished agenda of rate rationalisation. A move towards it would require initial steps in the form of discussions within the ministerial committee. The committee would be asked to present the work done so far for a wide ranging discussion in the Council. It also needs to be looked into whether a timeline has to be fixed for the ministerial committee to submit its recommendations on rate rationalisation and changes in the slabs,” an official said.

The Council is also expected to take up the notices being sent to companies, especially for their overseas operations even after having issued a clarificatory circular earlier. GST authorities had earlier this month made a partial reversal from their earlier position by withdrawing notice of Rs 3,898 crore to tech major Infosys out of the total tax demand of Rs 32,403 crore raised earlier in July-end for the five-year period starting 2017-18.

In its previous meeting held in June, the GST Council, which had met for the first time since the formation of the new Union government, tweaked tax rates on some items, and took a series of steps to bring down litigation and ease compliance for taxpayers. The overall GST rate rationalisation and streamlining of the slab structure, which falls into four broad categories of 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent, has been a long pending issue.

After the previous Council meeting on June 23, Sitharaman had said the next meeting of the GST Council the Group of Ministers (GoM) on rate rationalisation under Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Sumant Chaudhary, will give a presentation on the status of the work and aspects covered by the panel and work pending before the panel. “There will be a presentation by the GoM irrespective of whether the report is draft… and then Council will start the discussion on rate rationalisation in the next meeting,” Sitharaman had said.

In September 2021, the GST Council had set up a GoM to examine rate rationalisation. The committee had submitted an interim report in June 2022. While there have been internal discussions about merger of slabs or creation of a new slab in between 12 per cent and 18 per cent, the concerns have centred around whether it would create any revenue losses for the states and the Centre. The concern of maintaining revenue neutrality has weighed on such discussions earlier. Revenue neutrality is seen as a crucial factor as a study by the RBI had earlier shown that while the Chief Economic Advisor’s report had pegged the revenue neutral rate at 15.3 per cent, the weighted average GST rate stood at 14.4 per cent in May 2017, and subsequently dropped to 11.6 per cent by September 2019.

Rate rationalisation is a crucial step towards simplifying India's GST regime, Saurabh Agarwal, Tax Partner, EY said. "To ensure the process is effective, it is imperative to consider the overall tax burden on end consumers when reassessing tax slabs. Prioritising sunrise sectors, such as new energy, is essential to drive down final product prices, including those in business-to-business transactions. Additionally, addressing classification ambiguities is vital during this exercise. Wide-ranging industry consultations before implementing new rates will help align stakeholder expectations and facilitate a smooth transition," he said.

Home

India's Jul exports of handicrafts, RMG, carpet, man-made yarn up YoY

India's total exports are estimated to have grown at 2.81 per cent year on year (YoY) in July this year to $62.42 billion, while the cumulative exports between April and July grew at 6.65 per cent YoY to $261.47 billion, according to the ministry of commerce and industry. Total imports for July were estimated at $72.03 billion, registering a positive growth of 7.14 per cent YoY, while the same between April and July were worth an estimated $292.64 billion—a growth of 7.30 per cent YoY.

Merchandise exports and imports during July were worth $33.98 billion and $57.48 billion compared to $34.49 billion and $53.49 billion respectively in the corresponding month last year.

Merchandise exports and imports during the April-July 2024 period were worth $144.12 billion and 229.70 billion compared to $138.39 billion and $213.53 billion respectively during the corresponding period last year.

Merchandise trade deficit during April-July 2024 was worth $85.58 billion compared to $75.15 billion during the same period last year, a release from the ministry said.

YoY growth was seen in July in exports of handicrafts excluding hand-made carpets (13.23 per cent); readymade garments (11.84 per cent); carpets (10.53 per cent); man-made yarn, fabrics, made-ups, etc. (3.91 per cent); and leather and leather products (2.29 per cent).

Imports of raw and waste cotton (minus 2.74 per cent) and textile yarn, fabric, made-up articles (minus 0.23 per cent) recorded negative YoY growth during July.

The top five export destinations in terms of change in value exhibiting positive YoY growth in July were the Netherlands (29.18 per cent), the United States (3.15 per cent), Tanzania (53.14 per cent), Singapore (14.28 per cent) and Mexico (25.91 per cent).

The top five export destinations showing positive YoY growth in April-July 2024 were the Netherlands (38.32 per cent), the United States (9.06 per cent), the United Arab Emirates (UAE, 13.48 per cent), Malaysia (51.86 per cent) and Singapore (24.4 per cent).

The top five import sources in terms of change in value exhibiting YoY growth in July were the UAE (84.87 per cent), China (13.05 per cent), Russia (22.56 per cent), Qatar (34.61 per cent) and Indonesia (15.05 per cent).

The top five import sources showing YoY growth in April-July 2024 were the UAE (47.07 per cent), Russia (20.33 per cent), China (9.66 per cent), Iraq (19.4 per cent) and Indonesia (17.19 per cent).

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Textiles, apparel exports rise 4.73% in July on improved demand: CITI

Read more at : https://m.economictimes.com/industry/cons-products/garments-/-textiles/textiles-apparel-exports-rise-4-73-in-july-on-improved-demand-citi/articleshow/112547930.cms

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Bangladesh turmoil: Govt, garment exporters weigh opportunities for India

Read more at : https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/bangladesh-turmoil-govt-garment-exporters-weigh-opportunities-for-india/article68529413.ece

Home

Independence Day Speech: PM Modi says world looking to invest in India as govt committed to big reforms

Prime Minister Narendra Modi reaffirmed his government's commitment to economic reforms aimed at boosting growth, stating the efforts arise from a deep conviction, not compulsion. On the 78th Independence Day, Modi highlighted reforms in various sectors, including banking and manufacturing, and stresed on the goal of transforming India into a developed nation by 2047.

He said the world is now looking to invest in India.

Addressing the nation from the Red Fort on Independence Day, Modi spoke of the transformation in the banking sector, which has facilitated easy credit access for entrepreneurs and businesses, as well as skill development initiatives that have shifted India from being a mobile phone importer to an exporter. He mentioned that these reforms, coupled with socio-political development policies, are pivotal to achieving a developed India by 2047.

"Developed India by 2047 is not just a slogan. There is sheer hard work that is going behind it," he said.

Modi committed to continuing the reform process, which has deregulated numerous sectors, eased credit facilities, and minimized governance interference, to meet the aspirations of the youth.

"I want to assure that our commitment to reforms is not limited to getting good editorial in pink papers (economic newspapers). This commitment is not to garner praise in the short term," he said.

Contrasting the current reforms with the crisis-driven 1991 economic reforms, Modi stressed, "Our reforms are not out of any compulsion. The reforms are to make India and its economy stronger. Reforms are our blueprint for growth. We are not doing anything because of political compulsions or due to any political arithmetics. Our commitment is Nation First with national interest being supreme."

Highlighting achievements from the last decade, Modi noted that an overhauled banking sector has strengthened the formal economy and addressed the banking needs of the poor and middle class. He added that the availability of easy credit has aided everyone from small business owners to individuals pursuing education.

"This has helped a wide range of people - from animal keepers to roadside vendors, to small and medium businesses and entrepreneurs," he said.

Modi expressed that the end of the 'mai-baap' culture, wherein the government acted as a master over the citizens, has empowered the Indian populace.

"Today the government itself goes to the beneficiaries, it reaches cooking gas connections to households, provides water, makes available electricity, and extends economic help," he said.

He assured that the government remains committed to "big reforms" aimed at accelerating growth and progress, though he did not delve into specifics. He termed it a 'Golden Era' for the country, opening up new employment opportunities.

Revisiting his previous Red Fort speeches, Modi mentioned the electrification of 18,000 villages and provision of electricity to more than two-and-a-half crores Indian homes, as well as the establishment of tap water connections for 12 crore families. He also acknowledged the opening up of the space sector, enabling startups to launch private satellites and rockets.

"Today I can say that when the policy is right, intentions are correct and welfare of the nation is supreme, definite results can be achieved," he said.

Underlining the importance of modern infrastructure for development, Modi pointed to extensive rail, road, port, and broadband connectivity initiatives that have spurred growth. The government remains committed to governance reforms, he said.

Reflecting on his government's achievements, Modi said, "per capita income has doubled, India's share in global growth increased, the number of airports has risen, foreign exchange reserves have doubled, and confidence of global institutions in the country has increased."

According to Modi, India’s transformation from a mobile phone importer to an exporter has also led to the creation of a manufacturing ecosystem within the country. As 5G telephony expands, work on the next generation, 6G, is already underway. Modi emphasized the significance of semiconductors, modern technologies, and Artificial Intelligence for the future.

"We have started working on the Indian Semiconductor mission," he said.

He urged for the realization of the dream where every piece of equipment features a 'Made In India' chip. He affirmed, "We have the talent and the means to provide the world with end-to-end solutions."

"Today, many big companies of the world want to invest in India," he said. "Most people who are seeking a meeting with me in my third term are investors. Investors from all over the world want to come and invest in India."

This golden opportunity, he said, should motivate states to attract investors by ensuring good governance and law and order. He advised states to adapt their policies accordingly.

"If land is required, states should create a land bank," he said.

Highlighting future opportunities, Modi suggested that the country's well-regarded IT professionals can lead in the gaming and AI markets. He reiterated the government's commitment to achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel energy capacity by 2030 and establishing India as a hub for green hydrogen production, a move aimed at meeting climate goals and creating green jobs.

The Prime Minister acknowledged the numerous suggestions from various quarters on achieving the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047. The proposals include developing India as a global skill capital, transforming it into a manufacturing hub, achieving economic self-reliance, and making Indian universities globally prominent.

These cumulative efforts reflect the government's strategy to carve a path for India's growth and development, ensuring reformative momentum in sectors ranging from banking to technology and infrastructure, paving the way for a progressive and sustainable future.

Home

ACING THE FASHION GAME

When Abhisek Roy joined Visva-Bharati University in Santiniketan to study textile design in 2007, people often asked him what other subjects he was studying alongside it. At that time, fashion and textile design were not widely seen as serious career paths. But things have changed over the past decade. In the fiscal year 2022, India's textile exports reached an all-time high of 16 billion USD and are expected to exceed 45 billion USD by 2031. "Now, the scenario has completely changed. Today, studying fashion or textile design is a major career option. We've also seen major growth in the textile industry and its contribution to the Indian economy. Fashion and textile design have become one of the biggest hubs for economic growth and employment generation," said Roy, the fashion designer behind the homegrown label Bohurupi Santiniketan. Also Read - CEO speaks: Crafting Tomorrow's Fashion: Nurturing Future Style Leaders Kolkata-based fashion designer Debarun Mukherjee believes the focus on Indian textiles and craftsmanship has not only enriched the fashion industry culturally but also drives economic growth, sustainability, and global recognition. He also said how the Indian designers showcasing traditional textiles on international platforms have brought global attention to India's rich heritage. This has opened up markets worldwide and increased the global appeal of Indian fashion. "Collaborations with international brands and designers have been facilitated by the unique appeal of Indian textiles, leading to a cross-cultural exchange that further elevates Indian fashion on the global stage. The use of Indian textiles in modern designs has made these fabrics versatile, allowing them to be worn in various styles, from traditional wear to Western outfits, expanding their market appeal," said Mukherjee. Also Read - A HASHTAG OF CHANGE In fact, students from various academic backgrounds, including those with MSc or BCom degrees, are now joining fashion and textile institutes to pursue their passion and careers. With more students aspiring to build their future in fashion and textile design, a new opportunity will soon emerge in the serene landscape of North Bengal. Techno India Group (TIG) is set to establish Skill Knowledge and Fashion University (SKFU) in North Bengal, offering a diverse range of specialised modern courses in skill development, fashion design, mass communication, and animation. The university, located in Siliguri's Sukna, will begin classes in January 2025 and will accommodate up to 10,000 students. Also Read - Power of the loom Gone are the days when becoming a fashion designer was the only option. Today, the opportunities in the fashion industry are vast and varied. You can pursue careers as a fashion consultant, merchandiser, stylist, personal shopper, garment technologist, retail manager, fashion journalist, influencer, jewelry designer, or technical designer. Prof Ambika Magotra, professor, School of Fashion, World University of Design (WUD), Sonipat, explains how the fashion industry is a significant contributor to India's economic growth, offering numerous benefits such as employment generation, export earnings, and GDP contribution. "It provides jobs for millions in design, manufacturing, retail, and related sectors, accounting for around 5% of

India's GDP. The industry also plays a crucial role in women's empowerment, offering employment opportunities that promote financial independence and social mobility," she said. Also Read - Conscious design: Rise of vegan fashion Prof Magotra further added how the fashion industry is undergoing a rapid transformation, creating new and exciting career paths. However, she also has a word of advice for the aspiring professionals. To keep pace with fast-paced trends and quick turnarounds in the profession, one must stay updated. "A professional in the fashion industry needs to attend industry events, workshops and webinars. Also, today mastering digital tools like 3D design, data analytics, and digital marketing are important. The fashion industry is dynamic and constantly evolving. To succeed, professionals must be adaptable, curious, and committed to lifelong learning," she said. Ace designer Mukherjee also advocates for formal education in fashion, which exposes students to various design philosophies, cultural contexts, and global trends, fostering creativity and innovation. "Fashion programmes help students develop a professional portfolio, showcasing their skills and creativity to potential employers or clients. For those who may not pursue formal education, there are many online courses, workshops, and resources available that provide skills and knowledge in specific areas of fashion. While formal education in fashion can provide a solid foundation and open doors, success in the industry also depends on creativity, adaptability, and continuous learning. Aspiring professionals should focus on building a robust skill set tailored to their chosen roles, whether through formal education, self-learning, or practical experience," said the designer.

Home

Punjab seeks nod to BG-3 GM cotton seeds to check pest attacks

Owing to a drastic fall in the area under cotton in Punjab, growers and the state government have sought the next generation BG-3 (stage-III of genetically modified) cotton seeds to fight pink bollworm and whitefly, which are causing heavy losses to the crop over the past few years. (HT File)

The area under the cash crop has fallen drastically over 5 years from 3.35 lakh hectares in 2019 to 94,000 hectares in the current season.
Officials of the state agriculture department fear that in case timely corrective steps were not taken, growers might completely stop growing cotton and shift to water-guzzler paddy, which is an environmental hazard as it leads to fall in subsoil water level.

Almost 145 out 162 blocks in the state have already turned grey because of the average fall in subsoil water levels by one meter annually. The rate of charging of water levels is slower than its usage.

From last year's 1.73 lakh hectares, the current season has seen a fall in the area under cotton crop by 45% and farmers have started ploughing back the crop where pest attack is beyond control to catch up with the late paddy varieties. Cotton growers in some villages in Mansa, Fazilka and Bathinda are ploughing back cotton crop in their fields and opting for transplantation of PR 126 paddy variety which has a growing span of 110 days.

"The input cost for spraying pesticides to fight bollworm and whitefly leads to substantial increase in the input cost and the crop has become economically unviable," said an official in the state agriculture department. He added that cotton gives better earnings as compared to other crops in the season, but paddy gives assured income though its less than the cash crop.

Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, has given late varieties but it is worried that these varieties will take over the area under paddy. "We want the area under cotton to expand and farmers, particularly in the cotton belt of south-west Punjab, should not shift to paddy. They urgently need better seed varieties," said PAU vice-chancellor Dr SS Gosal.

According to the special principal secretary, head of the agriculture department, KAP Sinha, the Centre's agriculture and farmers' welfare ministry were apprised of the situation.

The Punjab government is pushing for diversification by moving farmers away from growing water-guzzler paddy. "We have been successful in increasing the area under maize, aromatic premium paddy basmati and direct seeded rice as steps towards diversification but the fall in the area under cotton is a big worry," said a senior official in the agriculture department.

Stage-II of the BG seed variety has become redundant, and stage-III of the seed is awaiting clearance from the genetic engineering appraisal committee (GEAC). "We have been told by the Union minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan to make BG-III cotton seed at the earliest, but it depends on how soon they are made available," said the state's director agriculture, Jaswant Singh.

Home

Welspun Living eyes ₹1,200 crore from domestic branded business by FY27

Read more at : https://www.livemint.com/companies/news/welspun-living-domestic-furnishing-business-dipali-goenka-bombay-dyeing-ddecor-christy-home-decor-textile-11723625815323.html

Home

India seeks review of trade pact with UAE

India is seeking a review of certain provisions of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to address the issues that have cropped up following a surge in imports of precious metals from the West Asian nation.

“As regards CEPA, there are two things — one is the value addition norms and second is reduction (of customs duties). So we are in discussion with them and there are various issues which are discussed under the review,” commerce secretary Sunil Barthwal told reporters. “Once we get it (the review), then we will look at all the issues holistically.”

Under the India-UAE CEPA, operationalised in 2022, gold and silver shipments from the UAE enjoy duty concession of 1% and 7%, respectively. However, 3% local value addition is a must for availing this concession. Before the Budget for FY25, presented last month, 15% duties on these products made imports from other countries less lucrative, shifting a large part of the trade to the UAE. The Budget reduced the duties on gold and silver to 6%, thereby levelling the field for other exporters. However, as per the CEPA, the preferential duties will come down further in the coming years and then settle at zero so the review becomes necessary.

Currently, gold can be imported from Dubai at 5% duty, but this will drop to zero in three years if the alloy contains 2% platinum.

This will lead to significant annual revenue losses, move import business from banks to a few private traders, and replace top suppliers with Dubai-based firms, a Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) report said.

The report had also noted that many imports do not meet rules of origin conditions, hence do not qualify for concessions.

The UAE is the third largest trading partner of India with $83.65 billion bilateral trade in 2023-24.

On whether the government is looking at reviewing the new authorisation regime for monitoring imports of certain IT hardware products, Barthwal said, "When the appropriate time will come, we will take the call."

On October 19 last year, the government put curbs on imports of laptops and computers. It allowed imports of the IT hardware products on a mere 'authorisation' upon detailing quantity and value.

The import authorisation is valid till September.

On India-Australia CECA (comprehensive economic cooperation agreement) negotiations, the commerce ministry informed that the 10th round of talks are expected to start from August 19-22 in Sydney.

The two countries have already implemented an interim pact and are in discussions to expand its scope.

On the India-UK trade pact, it said that a virtual meeting between commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal and UK secretary of state for business and trade Jonathan Reynolds was held in July to discuss the next steps on the pact.
The India-UK talks for the proposed free trade agreement (FTA) began in January 2022. The 14th round of talks stalled as the two nations stepped into their general election cycles.

Informing about the free trade agreement between India and the European Union (EU), the ministry said that the ninth round of talks is planned from September 23-27 in New Delhi.

Negotiations on two chapters — sustainable food systems and small and medium enterprises — have been concluded.

"During this (9th) round, both sides will discuss core tarde issues covering goods, services, investments and government procurement along with necessary rules such as rules of origin, sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures, technical barriers to trade," it added.

The concerns of Indian stakeholders with regard to the EU's measures such as CBAM (carbon border adjustment mechanism) will also be discussed.

Home

Monitoring situation in Bangladesh, taking steps to improve trade: Govt

ndia is monitoring the situation in Bangladesh and taking steps to improve the cross-border trade between the two nations, Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said on Wednesday.

Domestic exporters have expressed concerns over the political crisis in Bangladesh and said developments in the neighbouring country would have implications on bilateral trade.

Barthwal said that the situation in Bangladesh is improving fast and "we are monitoring the trade which is happening across the borders and what we feel that is whatever disruptions were there, they have been largely addressed".

"We also believe that between India and Bangladesh, there should be improvement in trade. So we feel that whatever best efforts, we can make for improving the trade, we should do that and we are doing that".

On August 8, Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus returned to Bangladesh from Paris to take oath as the head of Bangladesh's interim government, three days after Sheikh Hasina resigned as Prime Minister and fled the country following widespread protests against her regime.

India's exports to Bangladesh in July rose by 11.13 per cent to $803.52 million. During April-July, exports increased by 10.76 per cent to $3.58 billion.

Bangladesh is India's biggest trade partner in South Asia and India is the second biggest trade partner of the neighbouring country in Asia.

India's exports to Bangladesh dipped to $11 billion in 2023-24 from $12.21 billion in 2022-23. Imports too declined to $1.84 billion in the last fiscal from $2 billion in 2022-23.

India's main exports include vegetables, coffee, tea, spices, sugar, confectionary, refined petroleum oil, chemicals, cotton, iron, steel and vehicles. The main import items are fish, plastic, leather and apparel, among others.

"We are monitoring things. We want that trade relations to be restored...we are watching the situation. It will be premature to say how things will change and happen," he added.

Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) President Ashwani Kumar said that returning of normalcy of trade between India and Bangladesh will not only further give a boost to the overall order bookings but also to the labour-intensive sectors of exports.

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Indian textile firms reboot operations in Bangladesh

Textile factories in Bangladesh owned by Indian firms have restarted operations, following the recent unrest in the country, even as the movement of trucks between the neighbouring countries has revived across the Petrapole border, a senior Commerce Ministry official said.

“There was a lot of disruption and uncertainty for a few days, but now these units have reopened and have indicated to us that there is no problem in operations as of now,” the official said. The development assumes significance as Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had flagged concerns about Indian firms’ investments in the country, particularly in the textiles sector, last Saturday.

Many of these investments, she had noted, had come from players based in Tamil Nadu. “The investments were made in good faith because they thought textiles and garments could do well and they did do well,” Ms. Sitharaman had said, adding that she hoped those investments would be safe.

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Commerce ministry seeks extension of interest equalisation scheme for exporters

The commerce ministry has sought further extension of the interest equalisation scheme on pre- and post-shipment rupee export credit to promote the country's outbound shipments, an official said on Wednesday. The scheme will end this month.

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal said that some schemes, including interest equalisation, are in different stages of their completion, so their renewal has to take place.

"Those discussions are still on with (department of) expenditure," he told reporters here.

Explaining further, Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) Santosh Kumar Sarangi for the interest equalisation scheme, "There is a proposal for extending it and we are hopeful that it should come through in the next one month or so".

In June, the government extended the scheme on pre- and post-shipment rupee export credit for two months only for MSMEs.

Now the commerce ministry is seeking an extension for other exporters also.

The scheme helps exporters from identified sectors and all MSME manufacturer exporters to avail of rupee export credit at competitive rates at a time when the global economy is facing headwinds.

Exporters get subsidies under the Interest Equalisation Scheme for pre- and post-shipment rupee export credit.

The scheme is fund-limited, and benefits to individual exporters are capped at Rs 10 crore per annum per IEC (Import Export Code).

The scheme was started on April 1, 2015, and was initially valid for five years up to March 31, 2020. It has been continued thereafter, including a one-year extension during COVID-19, and with further extensions and fund allocations.

The scheme is implemented by the RBI through various public and non-public sector banks that provide pre- and post-shipment credit to exporters. It is jointly monitored by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) and RBI through a consultative mechanism.

From April 2023 - November 30, 2024, the government has disbursed Rs 2,641.28 crore against the allocated budget of Rs 2,932 crore under the scheme. Rs 3,118 crore was disbursed in 2022-23 and Rs 3,488 crore in 2021-22.

On the review of the Remission of Duties and Taxes on Export Products (RoDTEP), Saranagi said it is there till September.

"We will do a review in the meantime. The review takes place under the chairmanship of the finance secretary," he added.

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GLOBAL

Global cotton market sees price decline over past month

All major cotton benchmarks experienced a decline over the past month. The December NY/ICE futures contract fell below 70 cents per pound in mid-July, marking the first time it has dropped below this level since November 2020. The A Index also decreased, dipping below 80 cents per pound for the first time since December 2020.
China's Cotton Index (CC Index 3128B) fell below 100 cents per pound in June and continued declining in July, reaching 93 cents per pound. Domestic prices in China dropped to 14,700 RMB per ton, with the RMB strengthening against the dollar from 7.28 to 7.17 RMB/USD, Cotton Incorporated said in its Monthly Economic Letter- Cotton Market Fundamentals & Price Outlook - August 2024.

In India, spot prices for Shankar-6 quality cotton decreased slightly from 88 to 86 cents per pound, with domestic prices falling from ₹58,000 to ₹56,500 per candy. The INR remained stable at around ₹84 per USD.

Pakistani spot prices declined from 80 to 76 cents per pound, with domestic prices dropping from 18,300 to 17,400 PKR per maund. The PKR held steady at around 279 PKR/USD.

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Turkiye & South Korea renew bilateral currency swap agreement

The Central Bank of the Republic of Turkiye and the Bank of Korea have renewed their bilateral swap arrangement involving the Turkish lira (TRY) and the Korean won (KRW). The agreement was signed by Governor Fatih Karahan of the Central Bank of Turkiye and Governor Chang Yong Rhee of the Bank of Korea.

Under this renewed swap arrangement, the two central banks will be able to exchange local currencies up to TRY 56 billion (approximately $1.66 billion) or KRW 2.3 trillion (approximately $1.69 billion), based on recent exchange rates between the Turkish lira and the Korean won. The agreement is set to remain in effect for three years, with the possibility of extension by mutual consent, the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkiye said in a press release.

The primary purpose of this arrangement is to promote bilateral trade through a swap-financed trade settlement facility, as well as to enhance financial cooperation between Turkiye and South Korea. Both sides anticipate that this renewed arrangement will further strengthen collaboration between the two central banks, fostering closer economic ties between the two nations.

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Global textile sector to convene in Uzbekistan for ITMF-IAF conference

On September 8-10, 2024, Samarkand, Uzbekistan, will host a joint conference of two major international textile federations: the International Textile Manufacturers Federation (ITMF) Annual Conference and the International Apparel Federation (IAF) World Fashion Convention. The event, titled "Innovation, Cooperation & Regulation - Drivers of the Textile & Apparel Industry," will focus on the key factors shaping the future of the industry, and is the first time the two federations have held their conference jointly.
The conference, which will officially open on September 7 with the ITMF board meeting, will gather over 500 high-level representatives from international organizations, textile companies, brands, financial institutions, and retailers to discuss and address issues critical to the continued development and sustainability of the global textile and apparel industry.

Participants will hear from the President of the American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) Stephen Lamar, General Director of the European Apparel and Textile Confederation (EURATEX) Dirk Vantyghem and representatives of numerous industry leaders, including Cotton Analytics (USA) and Indorama Corporation (Singapore). Participants will discuss topics including artificial intelligence, regulation, digitalization, ESG and supply chains.

Additionally, the conference will feature the ITMF Awards Session, where the winners of the ITMF Innovation & Sustainability Award 2024 and the ITMF International Cooperation Award 2024 will be announced.

This landmark event, organized in cooperation with Uzbekistan Textile and Garment Industry Association (Uztextileprom), marks a significant milestone for Uzbekistan, the historic center of the ‘Silk Road’. Last year, the country’s textile industry exported around $3.5bn to over 75 countries and is seeing significant growth today. By the end of 2026, the plan is to increase the amount of exports to $6.5 bn. This event affirms Uzbekistan's growing role in the global textile supply chain and underscores the importance of international cooperation and dialogue in driving the industry's future.

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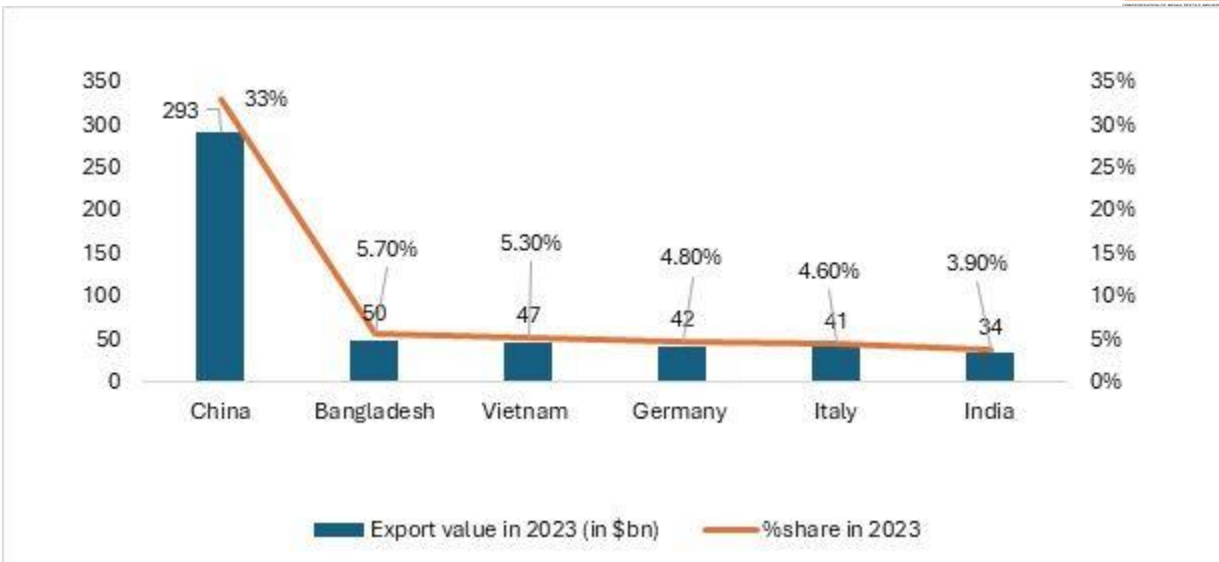
Crisis in Bangladesh: A turning point for global apparel supply chains

The gas crisis, along with the political turmoil in Bangladesh, including the stepping down of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, has created uncertainty that is further straining the industry and economy. This instability has disrupted not only the overall industry but also the textiles and apparel sector, and it is likely to push international buyers to consider alternative sourcing destinations, potentially adopting a 'Bangladesh-plus-one' strategy. This shift could lead to a significant loss of market share for Bangladesh's ready-made garments (RMG) sector. The countries that are major import partners of Bangladesh include the US, the UK, Germany, Canada, France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Denmark, and Australia. Many of these countries are also investors in Bangladesh's apparel industry. The countries that have heavily invested in Bangladesh's apparel industry, such as the US, Germany, the UK, and Canada, are seriously considering sourcing products from other Asian nations, such as Vietnam, India, and Sri Lanka.
The ready-made garment (RMG) sector of Bangladesh has been the cornerstone of the country's economy. The industry's contribution to Bangladesh's GDP is significant, with estimates suggesting that it accounts for around 18 per cent of the country's total GDP and was growing at a rate of about 6 per cent, according to IMF data. The official estimate for Bangladesh's GDP was $1.429 trillion at the end of 2023 in purchasing power parity terms.

The industry that has made a crucial contribution to rebuilding the country and its economy is none other than the RMG industry, which is now the single biggest export earner for Bangladesh. The country's apparel exports in 2023 reached a staggering figure of $47.5 billion, accounting for over 86 per cent of the total export earnings from the textiles and apparel industry combined. More than 290,000 registered manufacturing units employ 4.22 million workers in the RMG industry, with strong female participation (41 per cent), according to estimates, which has grown at a rate of about 7 per cent over the years.

Bangladesh remains the second-largest RMG supplier to the world after China. The countries that are lagging include Vietnam, Germany, Italy, and India.

Figure 1: Top apparel supplying countries



Source: ITC TradeMap

Political turmoil: Is it the end of the road for Bangladesh's RMG industry?

Despite remarkable growth, Bangladesh's ready-made garment (RMG) industry is facing significant challenges. These include internal issues and increasing competition from countries like Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and India. The current political turmoil, following the resignation and departure of Sheikh Hasina, has led to the closure of the garment industry across Bangladesh, further exacerbating the situation.

Supply chain disruptions due to reduced production: LNG crisis and its repercussions

This disruption is likely to have serious consequences for global fashion and apparel brands like H&M and Zara, which heavily rely on Bangladesh for their manufacturing. Previously, Bangladesh maintained its market share in the RMG sector by leveraging the China-plus-one strategy. However, due to current uncertainties, international buyers might consider a Bangladesh-plus-one strategy, potentially shifting some of their sourcing to other countries. This shift could particularly benefit India's textile and apparel sector, which may emerge as an alternative manufacturing hub.

The textile industry has been heavily affected by a severe gas shortage since June 2024, leading to a significant drop in production. The gas crisis in Bangladesh has caused a drastic reduction in textile production, with some factories operating at less than 30 per cent capacity and others closing down temporarily. As Bangladesh is one of the world's largest suppliers of textiles and garments, this reduction has created bottlenecks in the global supply chain. This disruption is largely due to damage sustained by one of the two floating LNG terminals in the Bay of Bengal, exacerbated by Cyclone Remal.

The recent crisis in Bangladesh has significantly disrupted the global supply chain of textiles and apparels, impacting various facets of international trade and industry. See the top 10 countries that are affected on account of instability and production loss in Bangladesh.

Increased costs and delays

Many international retail chains rely heavily on Bangladesh for their garment supplies. However, the recent unrest in the country has caused significant delays in garment exports, resulting in massive demurrage charges—a loss for exporters. The internet blackout has also hampered the tracking of garment production. This is not the first time that Bangladesh's textile industry has been affected by such disruptions; last year, protests by garment workers also impacted manufacturing and delivery times for garment exports.

Additionally, with factories operating at reduced capacity or shutting down temporarily due to the gas crisis, the reduced output is leading to further delays in fulfilling orders. Buyers are now forced to either wait longer for their products or seek alternative suppliers, both of which increase costs and complicate logistics.

Major global brands like H&M and Zara, which source a significant portion of their products from Bangladesh, are directly affected. The uncertainty in Bangladesh could force these brands to increase their sourcing costs or delay product launches, thereby impacting their global operations and profitability.

Impact on global apparel markets

The ongoing disruptions in Bangladesh's textile and apparel industry could trigger a significant ripple effect across global markets. Bangladesh is one of the world's largest producers and exporters of ready-made garments, supplying major international retailers with affordable clothing. Any disruption in this supply chain—whether due to political instability, labour strikes, natural disasters, or other unforeseen events—can have far-reaching consequences.

Firstly, reduced output from Bangladesh would lead to a decrease in the global supply of textiles and apparel. Retailers who rely heavily on Bangladeshi manufacturers may face difficulties sourcing their usual volume of goods, forcing them to seek alternative suppliers. However, these alternatives may not be able to match Bangladesh's cost efficiency, leading to increased production costs.

As a result, retailers may be compelled to pass these higher costs onto consumers. This would likely manifest in the form of increased prices for clothing and related products in markets worldwide. Consumers, particularly in countries where affordable fashion is a staple, could feel the impact as they find themselves paying more for the same goods.

Moreover, the ripple effect could extend beyond just price increases. Retailers might also experience delays in product availability, leading to empty shelves or reduced variety in stores. This could, in turn, affect consumer behaviour, as shoppers might reduce discretionary spending or seek out alternative, potentially lower-quality products.

In the long term, if disruptions in Bangladesh persist, the global apparel industry might undergo structural changes. Companies could look to diversify their supply chains, reducing reliance on any single country. While this might mitigate future risks, it could also result in higher costs as manufacturers invest in new production facilities in different regions.

Ultimately, the impact of these disruptions will depend on their duration and severity. A brief disturbance might lead to temporary price hikes and supply shortages, while prolonged disruptions could catalyse significant shifts in the global apparel market, affecting retailers and consumers alike.

Potential shift to alternative suppliers

The ongoing political instability and energy crises in Bangladesh have prompted international buyers to reevaluate their heavy reliance on the country for textile and apparel production. In response to these challenges, some buyers are actively exploring alternative sourcing options in other nations, such as India, Vietnam and Sri Lanka. This strategic shift could potentially lead to a reconfiguration of the global supply chain, with significant implications for Bangladesh's role in the global market.

As international buyers diversify their sourcing strategies, Bangladesh's market share in the global apparel industry could face a decline. Countries like India, Vietnam, and Sri Lanka, which offer competitive production capabilities and a more stable environment, stand to benefit from the diverted demand. These nations could see an influx of new orders, investments in their manufacturing sectors, and overall growth in their share of the global apparel market.

For Bangladesh, this shift could be particularly challenging. The country has long been a dominant player in the industry, thanks to its cost-effective labour force and extensive manufacturing infrastructure. However, the current crises threaten to undermine these advantages, making it less attractive to global buyers who prioritise reliability and consistency in their supply chains.

The reconfiguration of the supply chain could also have broader implications for the global apparel industry. As production becomes more dispersed across multiple countries, the dynamics of competition may shift. Nations that succeed in capturing a larger share of the market could see increased economic growth, while Bangladesh may need to adapt to maintain its position or risk losing its competitive edge.

In the long term, this diversification of sourcing could lead to a more resilient global supply chain, less vulnerable to disruptions in any single country. However, for Bangladesh, the immediate challenge lies in stabilising its political and energy situations to retain the confidence of international buyers and preserve its crucial role in the global apparel market.

Long-term strategic shifts

The ongoing crisis could accelerate a broader trend towards diversifying supply chains, prompting companies to adopt a ‘Bangladesh-plus-one’ strategy, similar to the ‘China-plus-one’ approach seen in previous years. This strategic shift aims to mitigate the risks of over-reliance on a single country by encouraging businesses to source from multiple locations. As a result, supply chains in the textile industry could become more fragmented and geographically dispersed.

These disruptions not only impact the global availability of textiles but also drive-up costs for manufacturers and retailers. Companies may face higher expenses as they invest in new supply chains, while consumers could experience rising prices for apparel and related products.

In the long term, this crisis could lead to a significant reshaping of global supply chains, with greater emphasis on diversification. While this might reduce Bangladesh's dominance in the textile sector, it could also create new opportunities for other countries to gain market share and strengthen their roles in the industry.

The way forward

To address the challenges posed by the current crisis and secure a stable future for Bangladesh's apparel industry, several strategic actions can be considered:

Strengthening political stability and energy infrastructure

Political stability and energy infrastructure: The government and key stakeholders must work towards ensuring a stable political environment, as uncertainty can deter international buyers. Transparent governance, consistent policies, and effective conflict-resolution mechanisms are essential. Additionally, investing in reliable and sustainable energy sources is crucial. Addressing energy shortages through infrastructure improvements, renewable energy projects, and efficient energy management can reduce production disruptions and restore buyer confidence.

Enhancing supply chain resilience

Diversification and technology: Bangladesh should explore diversifying its supply chains by sourcing raw materials from multiple countries, reducing vulnerability to global disruptions. Collaborating with neighbouring countries for shared resources might also be beneficial. Embracing new technologies such as automation, AI, and advanced logistics could help optimise supply chains, improve efficiency, and reduce costs. This would make the industry more competitive and less susceptible to disruptions.

Strengthening industry relations and market diversification

Buyer relations and market diversification: Strengthening relationships with international buyers through transparency, communication, and flexibility can help maintain long-term partnerships, even in times of crisis. Offering competitive pricing, quality assurance, and sustainability initiatives can make Bangladesh an attractive choice despite the current challenges. Expanding into new markets beyond traditional buyers can reduce dependence on specific regions. Exploring opportunities in emerging markets or less saturated regions could open new avenues for growth.

Government and industry collaboration

Public-private partnerships and policy support: The government and industry leaders should collaborate closely to address the crisis. Public-private partnerships can foster innovation, infrastructure development, and policy support, ensuring the industry remains competitive. The government could introduce policies that incentivise innovation, investment in infrastructure, and the adoption of sustainable practices. Providing financial assistance to struggling manufacturers and offering tax benefits for technology adoption could be key initiatives.

E-commerce and digital transformation: The rise of e-commerce requires adaptation. Bangladesh could support manufacturers in developing digital capabilities, enhancing online sales platforms, and integrating with global e-commerce networks.

Reinvigorating trade agreements

Trade Agreements: Bangladesh has signed bilateral trade agreements with 29 countries, including major partners like the US, China, India, and the UK. Additionally, the country participates in several regional trade agreements, such as South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA), Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA), and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC). Once the government stabilises, there will be a need to reinvigorate these treaties to restore and enhance the focus on Bangladesh's RMG sector.

Conclusion

The future of Bangladesh's textile industry hinges on the ability of the caretaker government, led by Mohammed Yunus, to stabilise the current unrest and restore confidence across all segments of the population. Creating a stable and inclusive environment is essential for fostering trust and cooperation. The government's efforts to embrace diversification, enhance resilience, and drive innovation will be crucial for the industry's long-term success.

By effectively addressing political and energy challenges, strengthening relationships within the industry, and adopting sustainable practices, Bangladesh can secure its position in the global textile market. These measures will not only help the country navigate the present crisis but also enable it to thrive as the industry undergoes significant transformation.

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BGMEA meets with Bangladesh army to address industry security

Under the initiative of BGMEA, a meeting was organised recently to address the issue of ensuring the smooth operation of all industrial factories in Bangladesh, including the garment sector. Bangladesh army's GOC 9th Infantry division and area commander, Savar area held the meeting with the representatives of BGMEA, FBCCI, BTMA, and other business organisations and representatives of law enforcement agencies. The meeting took place at the BGMEA Complex in Uttara, Dhaka.
Concerns were raised about criminal activities regarding establishing dominance over jhut trade in garment-dominated industrial areas. These groups, which are involved in the jhut sector, have created young gangs that disrupt the working environment, harass factory owners and workers, and hold the garment industry hostage. The garment traders called for the army's assistance in overcoming these challenges, BGMEA said in a press release.

Additionally, the businessmen requested security for goods-carrying vehicles on roads and highways, citing unnecessary delays in the loading and unloading of goods at Chittagong port, which impacts industry competitiveness. They also highlighted delays in clearing goods at Dhaka airport and requested that the army step in to expedite these processes. The traders urged the army-led joint task force to visit recently vandalised factories to restore confidence among entrepreneurs and workers.

Major general Moin Khan assured that the army's priority is to support the industry's recovery as it is the backbone of the economy. He mentioned that the task force has already been deployed to ensure security in Savar and Ashulia and is responding quickly to incidents. Through the deployment of a quick reaction force, teams are able to reach incidents swiftly and provide assistance as needed. As a result, the number of complaints in these areas decreased on the second day compared to the first, the release added.

Khan requested BGMEA leaders to provide information on active criminals involved in jhut business operations. He assured the business leaders of addressing issues at Chittagong port and Dhaka airport to improve cargo handling efficiency. He assured that the Bangladesh army stands ready to support the industry against any threats that may damage factories.

Home

UK, Turkiye agree to start FTA upgrade talks in Ankara

Turkiye has agreed to start talks with the United Kingdom in Ankara to revise their free trade agreement (FTA) as both sides want to strengthen economic ties, the former announced yesterday.
Trade talks were paused during the election. The updates are expected to extend the FTA's scope to include services and investments.

The announcement followed a virtual discussion between Turkish trade minister Omer Bolat and UK business and trade minister and president of the Board of Trade Jonathan Reynolds.

Bolat described the discussion with Reynolds as productive, highlighting specific steps aimed at raising trade volumes, encouraging investment and deepening bilateral cooperation, according to domestic media reports.

He said both sides discussed ways to surpass $20 billion in bilateral trade this year.

The first round of negotiations is expected to take place in the autumn and would include fresh talks with South Korea, Israel, Switzerland and Turkiye.

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