AEPC
APPAREL EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

Apparel INDIA

YR 22 ISSUE 01

APPAREL EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL MAGAZINE I JANUARY 2022

₹ 100

PROTECTING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

Apparel exports bounce back to pre-pandemic levels





















EXPORTERS SEEK FISCAL HELP IN LOGISTICS



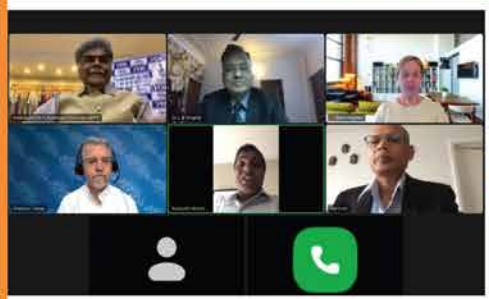

GOVERNMENT OF IN
MINISTRY OF TEXTIL


AEPC

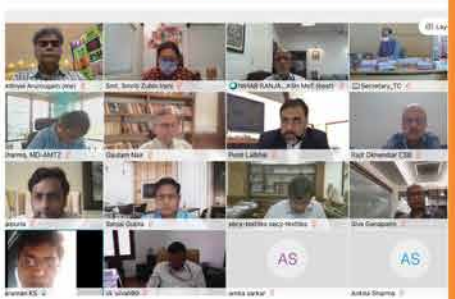

Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF TEXTILES
Speaking: Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, RATAN LAL KOLKHI


Hon Nitinji Gadkari
AT
AK
Abhishek Kumar








AS
AS






















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Webex
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Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
Districts as Export Hubs
FIEO
















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India - The Preferred Sourcing Partner























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SCAN QR FOR BUYER /EXHIBITOR REGISTRATION

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Dear Friends,

As we step into 2022 looking forward to the hope of a new year and getting ready with the right solutions, especially in the backdrop of the worst pandemic for a century, we need to pause for a moment to look in the rear-view mirror.

Year 2021 was a mixed bag for the apparel sector. We were still recovering in the first quadrimester this fiscal compared to pre-pandemic levels, but the four month period of August-November saw apparel exports grow 8% as against the same in 2019-20.

I sincerely thank our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and his government for the firm commitment they showed in supporting the apparel sector with timely measures that will go a long way in protecting lives and livelihoods of people in the sector.

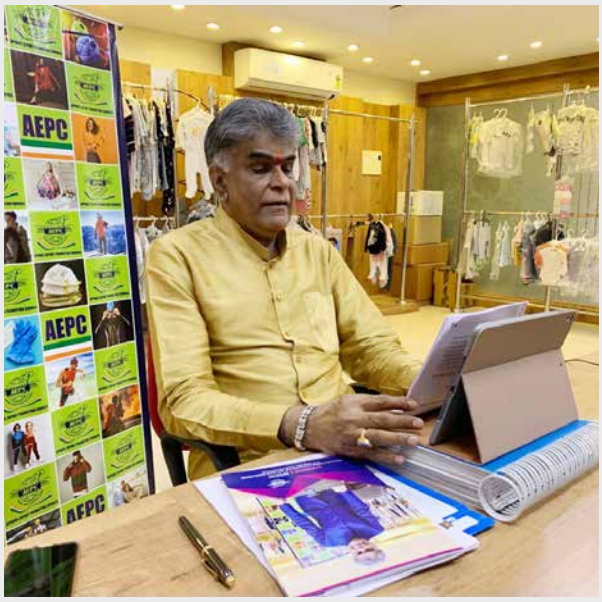
Backed by a very supportive government and the positive sentiment towards India in the new international scenario, I am extremely confident that our enterprising exporters will grab even bigger orders outshining the pre-Covid numbers in the current fiscal.

For the first in independent India, the Prime Minister held an exclusive meeting with the exporting community and overseas Indian missions to launch an export-driven growth strategy for the Indian economy with a target to achieve $2 trillion exports by 2030.

I express my deep gratitude to Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri M Venkaiah Naidu for inaugurating AEPC's Virtual Platform that helped Indian apparel exporters continue showcasing their products to potential global buyers and get orders sitting in India.

We are equally grateful to Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Minister of Finance Smt Nirmala Sitharaman and former Hon'ble Minister of Textiles Smt Smriti Zubin Irani for laying down a fertile ground for India to soon reclaim its leading position in global trade of textiles and apparels.

The initiatives that promise to propel Indian apparels to more destinations are PLI for MMF segment and PM-MITRA mega integrated parks. Efforts to improve



the logistics scene in India and relief in terms of fiscal support and regulatory compliances are also helping Indian apparel players gain foothold as global champions.

For AEPC, it was a year of complete changeover. The Council embraced digitalization and now it functions seamlessly across both physical and virtual worlds. Apart from the 24x7x365 virtual exhibition platform, we have been conducting online B2B meetings and webinars to attract foreign buyers and apprise apparel exporters on opportunities.

In December, I raised the issue of spiraling prices of cotton yarn and other raw materials with Shri Piyush Goyal and Commerce Secretary Mr BVR Subrahmanyam. At the pre-budget meeting called by Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, I shared the recommendations for our sector and for all the exporters in general.

Going forward, I am confident that the strong foundation laid in 2021 will help realize the government's ambitious $100 billion export target for apparels and textiles in the next few years. Please share your valuable suggestions at chairman@aepcindia.com.

Wishing you a Cheerful New Year 2022! May the new year bring health, happiness and success in all you do!

Dr A Sakthivel
Chairman, AEPC

EVENTS CALENDAR

DETAILS OF EVENTS FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2021-22

13-16 Feb 2022



SOURCING AT MAGIC, LAS VEGAS, USA

14-16 Feb 2022



INDIA TEX TREND FAIR(ITTF), TOKYO, JAPAN



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RMG EXPORTS GROW 3% IN NOVEMBER 2021

India's Ready-Made Garment (RMG) Export Update for the month of November of the FY 2021-22

RMG exports were to the tune of USD 1072.2 million in November, 2021 showing a positive growth of 2.7% against the corresponding month of November, 2020 and a growth of 1.3% against November, 2019. Cumulative RMG exports for the period Apr-Nov, 2021-22 is USD 9656.5 mn. showing a positive growth of 37.8% against the period Apr-Nov, 2020-21 and a decline of 3.9% against the period Apr-Nov, 2019-20.

In rupee terms, RMG exports were to the tune of INR 7987.3 crore in November, 2021 showing a positive growth of 3.1% against the corresponding month of November, 2020 and a positive growth of 5.9% against November, 2019.

India's RMG Export to World

Month	(In US$ Mn.)			MoM Growth (%)			
	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2019-20 Over 2018-19	2020-21 Over 2019-20	2021-22 Over 2019-20	2021-22 Over 2020-21
April	1408.8	126.3	1297.3	4.2	-91.0	-7.9	927.2
May	1530.1	516.6	1106.7	14.2	-66.2	-27.7	114.2
June	1233.5	803.3	1001.6	-9.2	-34.9	-18.8	24.7
July	1365.8	1065.7	1388.4	7.1	-22.0	1.7	30.3
August	1261.9	1083.5	1236.9	-2.4	-14.1	-2.0	14.2
September	1080.6	1190.4	1300.4	-2.2	10.2	20.3	9.2
October	1108.9	1177.6	1253.1	-2.0	6.2	13.0	6.4
November	1058.5	1043.8	1072.2	-6.4	-1.4	1.3	2.7
December	1409.5	1196.9		2.4	-15.1		
January	1453.5	1296.2		-4.9	-10.8		
February	1477.9	1349.1		-4.4	-8.7		
March	1120.5	1425.6		-34.8	27.2		
Total	15509.5	12274.9	9656.5	-4.0	-20.9	-3.9	37.8

Source: DGCI&S, Kolkata, 2021

Note- 1) Data for the month of November, 2021 are provisional data released by Ministry of Commerce on 14.12.2021.

2) Sum of the value from (Apr-Nov), 2019-2020 is USD 10048.1 mn and (Apr-Nov), 2020-21 is USD 7007.1 mn.

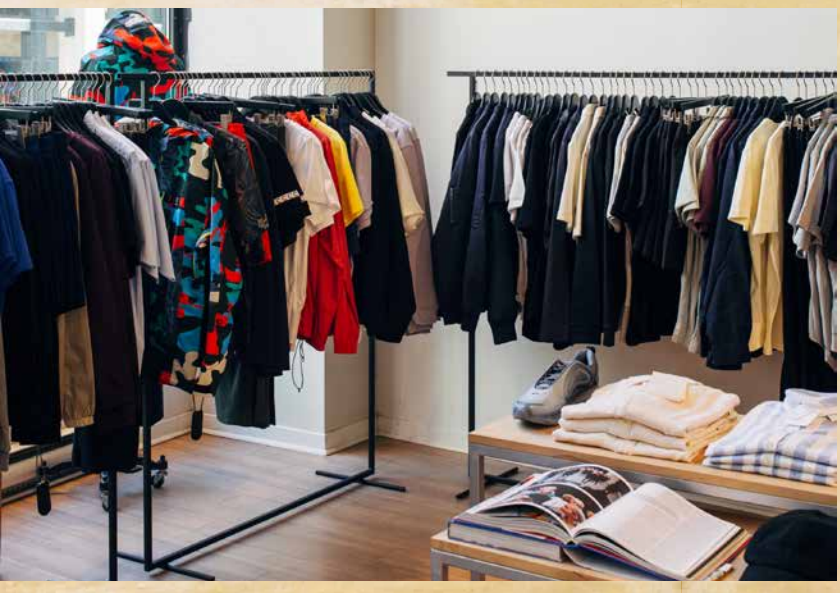
For more Details on India's RMG Exports data, please visit AEPC's website>Resource Section>-Export Statistics

TEXTILE MANUFACTURING UP 10% IN OCTOBER 2021

India's Textile & Ready-Made Garment (RMG) Update for Index for Industrial Production (IIP) for the month of October of the FY 2021-22

	Manufacture of Textiles		MoM Growth Rate (In %)	Manufacture of Wearing Apparel		MoM Growth Rate (In %)
Month	2020-21	2021-22	2021-22/2020-21	2020-21	2021-22	2021-22/2020-21
April	11.0	113.2	#	9.7	136.1	#
May	40.2	106.6	165.2	62.6	120.4	92.3
June	63.1	110.7	75.4	105.9	132.7	25.3
July	93.9	117.5	25.1	112.5	115.1	2.3
August	96.6	118.9	23.1	113.8	117.1	2.9
September	105.4	119.4	13.3	121.4	121.1	-0.2
October	110.7	122.2*	10.4*#	119.9	122.6*	2.3*#
Cumulative Index (Apr-Oct)	74.4	115.8	55.6	92.3	107.8	16.8

Source: CSO,2021
**** Figures for Oct 2021 are Quick Estimates***
 # The growth rates over corresponding period of previous year are to be interpreted considering the unusual circumstances on account of COVID 19 pandemic since March 2020



- Manufacturing of Textiles Index for the month of Oct, 2021 is 122.2 which has shown a positive growth of 10.4% as compared to Oct, 2020.
- Manufacturing of Textiles Index for the financial year Apr-Oct, 2021-22 is 115.8 which has shown a positive growth of 55.6 % as compared to the financial year Apr-Oct, 2020-21.
- Manufacturing of Wearing Apparel Index for the month of Oct, 2021 is 119.9 which has shown a growth of 2.3 % as compared to Oct, 2020.
- Manufacturing of Wearing Apparel Index for the financial year Apr- Oct, 2021-22 is 107.8 which has shown a positive growth of 16.8% as compared to the financial year Apr-Oct, 2020-21.



EXPORTERS SEEK FISCAL HELP IN LOGISTICS

Pre-Budget Meeting

- **FIEO shares its suggestions with Hon'ble Finance Minister**
- **AEPC seeks Apparel Package from the Ministry of Finance**

In a pre-budget meeting chaired by Hon'ble Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitharaman on 17 December 2021, Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) President and Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) Chairman Dr A Sakthivel submitted a list of suggestions for the upcoming Union Budget 2022-23. Some of these are:

Fiscal and tax support to address logistics challenges

Dr Sakthivel said that export sector is facing an acute shortage of containers as we are dependent on imported containers though coastal shipping is gradually gaining traction in India. The container manufacturing requires a special kind of steel where China, which manufactures over 80% of global containers, has a competitive edge. He requested to encourage domestic manufacturing of the containers by providing fiscal benefits. This is all the more required as we are looking to $1 trillion exports in the next 5 years.

Developing an Indian shipping line of global repute

The other challenge faced by the export sector is the rising freight cost and dependence on global shipping companies with very minor share of Indian shipping lines in India's global trade. India's outward remittance on account of transport services is increasing year after year. We remitted around $65 billion as transport services in 2020 and looking into abnormal increases in the freight in 2021, the figure is likely to cross $100 billion. When we are looking at increasing our international trade to $2 trillion in an economy of $5 trillion, the outgo on transport services will increase to $150-200

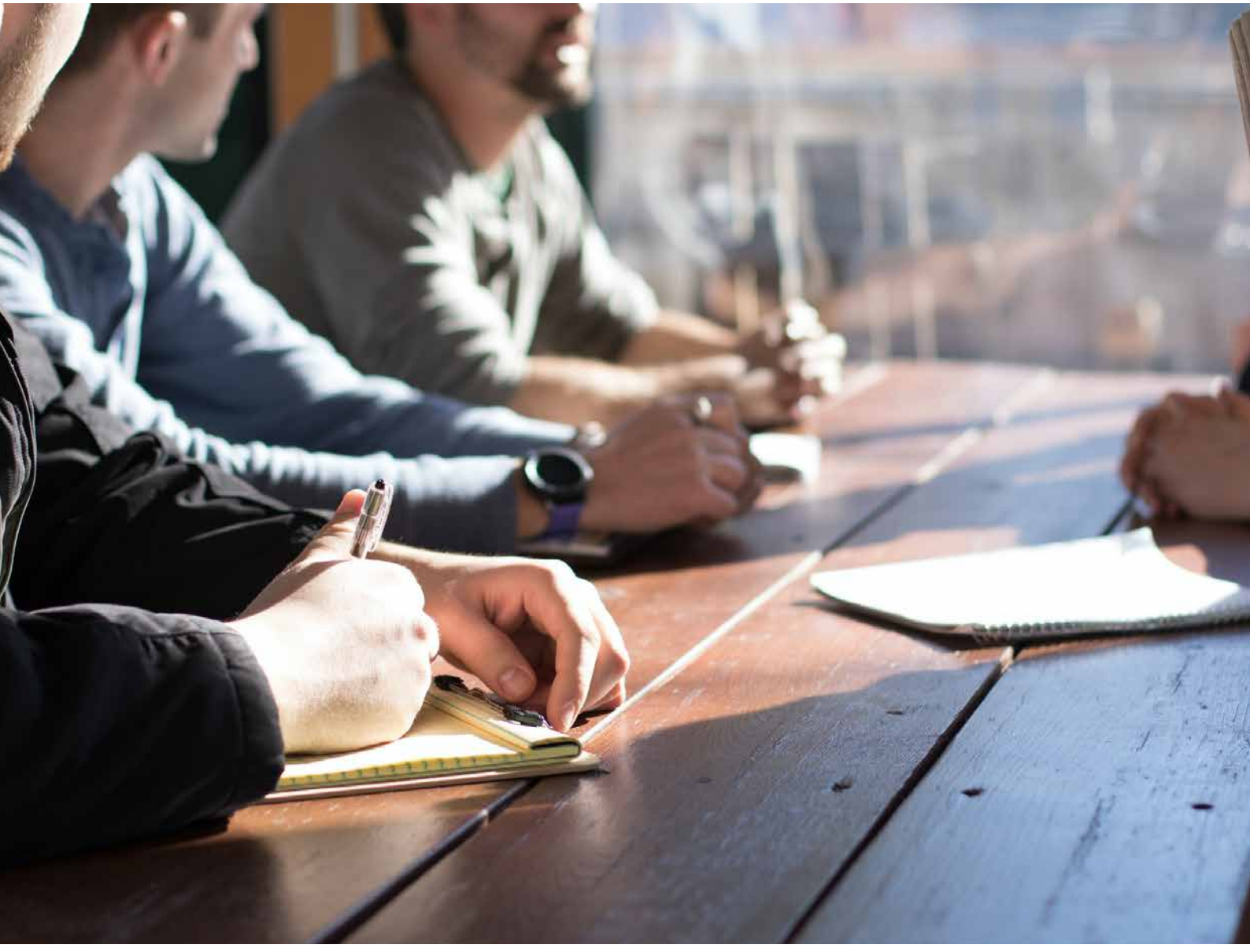
billion. Since the Shipping Corporation of India is being disinvested, Dr Sakthivel suggested to encourage large Indian entities to build an Indian shipping line of global repute. Such shipping lines, even if it gets 25% of the total business, can save $30-$40 billion annually and will also reduce our dependence on foreign shipping lines and their dictates. The tax advantage availed by shipping lines in some countries may be considered to encourage them to register such ships in India.

Encouragement to overseas marketing for exports

Overseas marketing is a big challenge for exporters, more so for MSMEs, as it entails a very high cost. Dr Sakthivel suggested to bring 'Double Tax Deduction Scheme for Internationalizations' to allow exporters to deduct against their taxable income, twice the qualifying expenses incurred for approved overseas activities including market preparation, market exploration, market promotion and market presence. A ceiling of $500,000 may be put under the Scheme so that the investment and tax deduction are limited.

IGST/ ITC refund on free foreign currency for services to foreigner in India

Services exports are growing with good performance from IT and IT enabled services which accounts for two-third of India's services exports. Services sector is not getting any support as SEIS benefits are also no longer available. The travel and tourism sector has been hit heavily due to pandemic and needs to be given encouragement. Mode-2 of services (service provided to a foreign national in India paid in free foreign currency)



have neither been provided exemption from IGST nor refund of accumulated input tax credit. While we appreciate the new provision incorporated under Section-15 of IGST Act providing the refund of IGST on supply of goods to tourists leaving India at the international airports, it is equally necessary that no taxes are imposed on the services being provided to them during their stay in India. The travel and tourism sector including hotel and hospitality is already burdened with high taxation and tourists are preferring South East Asian countries. Tourism has one of the highest capital employment ratios and therefore, refund of IGST/ ITC facility to Mode-2 of services will go a long way in providing competitiveness to the sector and helping the country to take its tourism earning to $100 billion in next 5 years.

Restoration of facility for import of trimming and embellishments under Customs notification No. 2/2021 dated 1 February 2021

The MSME exporters source most of their raw material from the domestic market and import only small lots of trimmings and embellishments under the EPC Scheme. Most of the exporters import these items because of the buyer's nomination. Hence need to be sourced from defined sources and within sharp timelines. This facility provided required flexibility to the smaller exporters to import such items just in time to meet the delivery schedule. The total duty foregone under the scheme in 2020-21 has been less than Rs 300 crore as the duty foregone value against the utilised entitlements from various EPCs such as AEPC, CLE and Handicraft was Rs 66.40 crore, Rs 66.22 crore and Rs 88 crore, respectively.

"Such entitlement certificates should only be issued for import purposes and in case, any domestic unit including SEZ is able to meet such requirement of exporters, the entitlement certificates may be surrendered to the concerned EPC and invalidation letter in lieu of the same may be issued so that the apprehension that the certificates may be utilised both for imports and procurement from domestic sources can be addressed," Dr Sakthivel suggested.

AEPC SEEKS APPAREL PACKAGE

The Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) has requested for apparel package in its budget suggestions to the Ministry of Finance. The major recommendations are:

Providing cash refund of RoSCTL or allowing payment of IGST as well

The Council has requested to provide cash refund of the RoSCTL so that the refund is instant at 100% of the value without procedural complication wherein the cost to exchequer remains the same. Both the drawback and RoSCTL may be credited to exporters' account directly





in one go and a message containing the bifurcated value of the two may be sent to exporters to do cross verification at their end.

IGST paid route for procurement of inputs by Advance Authorization holders while taking goods from SEZ

IGST paid option for imports under advance authorization is available for imports undertaken through the seaports, airports, ICD or through a Special Economic Zone (SEZ). The above proposed facility under advance authorization through IGST paid route should be available for inputs taken from SEZs also.

Uniform GST rate of 8% for fibre, yarn, fabric and garments of all fibre types

Inversion in duties with lower duty on fibre and fabric and higher duty on garment is detrimental to the interest of apparel manufacturers. The Council has requested to have a uniform GST rate of 8% across the textile value chain.

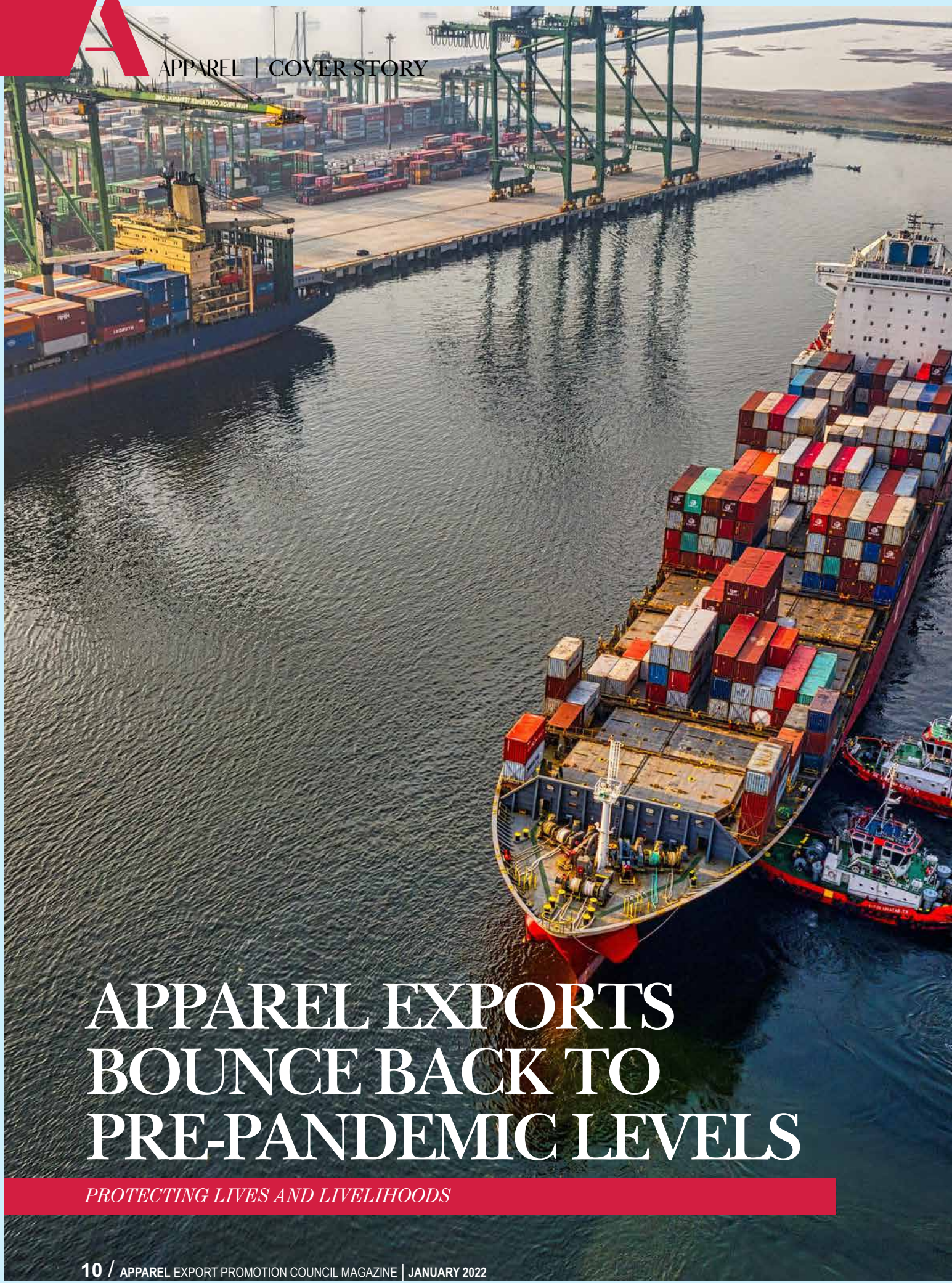
Longer window for interest equalization

Interest equalisation scheme was available up to 30 September 2021. AEPC has requested for extension of the scheme for a 5-year period to encourage more investment in the sector and to extend the 5% interest equalisation scheme, so far available to MSMEs only, to all the apparel exporters.

Fast tracked FTAs with important apparel destinations

India has been facing duty disadvantages against competitors in the major overseas destination. India's exports face a duty disadvantage of 9.6% for exports to EU and UK vis-à-vis exports from other countries like Bangladesh, Cambodia, Turkey, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc. Fast tracked FTAs can give India a level playing field in these markets. For the ongoing UAE FTA, apparel lines should be included in the Early Harvest negotiations.

Other requests made by the Council are clarification in respect of procurements made under advance authorization after payment of IGST, 15% Concessional Tax Regime (CTR) for expansion to boost the investment may be extended to new units, set-up in existing manufacturing companies, allowing self declaration where SION does not exist for apparel products, allowing palletisation of apparel cargo for custom clearance, and amnesty scheme for non-realisation of export proceeds due to pandemic.



APPAREL EXPORTS BOUNCE BACK TO PRE-PANDEMIC LEVELS

PROTECTING LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS



The Indian apparel sector had a steep learning experience in a short span of year 2021. With exports of $9.7 billion in the first eight months this fiscal, merely 4% short of the pre-pandemic level, it has come a long way after declining 30% in April-November 2020.

This is despite the more devastating second wave of Covid pandemic early this financial year. The labour intensive sector has shown great resilience and agility in learning to live with uncertainties while working around the restrictions through use of technologies.

Supporting the sector in its journey from the debilitating effects of the pandemic in 2020 to the strong revival in 2021 has been an alert, attentive and responsive government that took timely measures to protect the thousands of apparel factories and lakhs of jobs.

While the apparel exports were still down 13% in April-July period this fiscal as compared to the same period two years ago, the second quadrimester of August-November 2021-22 saw a growth of nearly 8% in apparel exports as against the same in fiscal 2019-20.

With the dynamic leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's government and the enterprising spirit of the exporters led by the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC), the growth is likely to continue in 2022 in spite of coronavirus's omicron variant.

Strong business confidence has been instilled by the government with the announcement of Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for the manmade fibre (MMF) segment and Prime Minister Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Parks (PM MITRA) scheme.

Apart from timely apprising the government about the challenges and opportunities faced by the apparel exporters, the AEPC has completely transformed itself into an organization that functions seamlessly across both physical and virtual world with great efficiency.

The new global scenario where countries are looking to diversify their sources of supply beyond China and see India as a reliable partner, too, supports this positive outlook. The Indian government is working to convert this positive sentiment into trade agreements.

LEADERSHIP THAT PROTECTED LIVES, LIVELIHOODS

In India's 74 years of independence, the Hon'ble Prime Minister convened the first-ever exclusive meeting with the exporting community in online presence of Indian Missions abroad on 6 August 2021 to make India an exporting giant within the next few years.

Setting an export target of $2 trillion worth of goods and services, in equal proportion, by 2030, the Prime Minister launched an export-led growth strategy for the Indian economy and called upon exporters to raise their share in global trade for an 'Aatmnirbhar Bharat'.

Continuing the commitment shown in 2020, the government came out with a series of relief measures including fiscal and regulatory in 2021 both on its own accord and based on the recommendations of the apparel industry to safeguard lives and livelihoods.

Both former and current Hon'ble Ministers of Textiles Smt Smriti Zubin Irani and Shri Piyush Goyal, who is also the Minister of Commerce and Industry, took steps to protect the apparel industry and reclaim India's leading position in global textiles trade.

PLI SCHEME

The PLI scheme for MMF and technical textile segments, approved on 8 September 2021, will prove to be a game changer for the Indian textile industry and will transform India's growth story. The investment-oriented scheme of Rs 10,683 crore for MMF and technical textiles will help enhance the scale and competitiveness of India's apparel manufacturing with global quality and efficiency. It will attract large scale investment with cutting-edge technology and make India an integral part of the global supply chain.

MMF is the future. India has an abundant supply of MMF fibre and yarn but it does not have enough production of quality MMF fabric. Indian apparel industry has long been stuck with natural fibres such as cotton. MMF dominates global textile fibre consumption with 72:28 ratio as against natural fibres. While in India, the ratio of fibre consumption is 40:60 between MMF and natural fibres. Besides, MMF apparels account for only 10% of Indian apparel exports. From the current share of $1.6 billion in the $200 billion global MMF apparel trade, a measly 0.8%,





the Indian MMF sector can aspire to garner 10% of this market, as per industry experts. PLI scheme will give a major push to the high value MMF segment.

The AEPC has identified HS code wise MMF products, potential markets, competitors, sources for MMF fabrics and investors to leverage the opportunity. The Council has also provided details of the machinery manufacturers and MMF HS Codes for identifying investment opportunities and investors to improve MMF garment base in India.

PM MITRA SCHEME

On 21 October 2021, the government announced Rs 4,445 crore Prime Minister Mega Integrated Textile Region and Apparel Parks (PM MITRA) scheme under which seven world class integrated textile parks would be set up across the country.

It seeks to help Indian companies emerge as global champions and boost textile and apparel exports. The seven integrated MITRA parks in the country will attract both foreign and domestic investments in the sector and make it globally competitive. It will help India regain its global leadership position in the textile industry while creating lakhs of jobs.

The country has all the players from farm to fashion but has still been lagging behind in the global apparel trade due to the fragmented nature of the Indian apparel sector that now seems to be addressed. The MITRA Parks, which will bring together all players of the textile value chain in one place, will reduce both logistics costs and delivery time.

REFORMS IN LOGISTICS

The year 2021 saw severe logistics challenges as the system of buy-back by shipping companies traveling from Asia to Europe did not happen. With the majority of EU ports closed, the vessels had to return empty, after delivering goods at these ports, leading to escalation in freight cost. While the challenge is universal, the government logistics department has taken it seriously and is holding regular meetings with key stakeholders to resolve the issue. It is expected to be resolved by the first half of 2022.

At home, the government is planning to cut logistics costs by five percentage points over the next five years from the current about 14% of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). High logistics costs have been severely impacting the competitiveness of India's exports. The AEPC has sought policy intervention and infrastructure creation to resolve the issue.

The government has taken many initiatives including infrastructure and regulatory reforms to improve the logistics ecosystem in the country. Sagarmala, Bharatmala and Dedicated Freight Corridors are some of these. They are at different stages of execution. Process reforms such as paperless EXIM trade process through E-Sanchit, faceless assessment through Turant Customs and introduction of mandatory electronic toll collection system (FASTag) have contributed to increasing the efficiency of the logistics sector.

Gati Shakti programme, launched on 13 October 2021, is an ambitious Rs 100 lakh crore master plan to provide integrated and seamless multimodal connectivity for movement of people, goods and services from one mode of transport to another. It aims to improve the supply chain and cut down logistics costs. It will also connect more than 1,200 industrial clusters across the country.

RoSCTL AND RoDTEP

On 14 July 2021, the Cabinet approved the extension of the Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) till 31 March 2024 providing relief to exporters of apparels, garments and made-ups. RoSCTL rebates all embedded taxes/ levies that are currently not being rebated under any other mechanism. Its continuation will ensure that Indian apparels are globally competitive. For all other export items, the government notified the Remission of



Duties and Taxes on Exported Products (RoDTEP) scheme rates and guidelines on 17 August 2021. This reform is based on the globally accepted principle that taxes and duties should not be exported, and taxes and levies borne on the exported products should be either exempted or remitted to exporters.

FOREIGN TRADE POLICY

The Government of India is working on a new Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) with an aim to make India a leader in international trade. The existing FTP 2015-20, which was extended by a year following the outbreak of Covid-19, has been further extended till 31 March 2022. The policy provides guidelines for increasing exports for boosting economic growth and job creation, and for incentives under different schemes.

Free Trade Agreements (FTA) and Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) strategy is also being revamped in a bid to ensure that treaties provide economic and strategic benefits. Government has fast tracked these with several countries including UAE, Israel, Eurasian Economic Union, UK, EU, Canada, Australia and South African Customs Union (SACU). India-Mauritius Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) was signed on 22 February 2021. FTAs with the UK and the EU will remove duty disadvantages faced by Indian apparels in those markets.

OTHER KEY INITIATIVES

The government brought many other significant initiatives in 2021 to protect and support the development of the textile and apparel industry. On 30 May 2021, it expanded the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) by Rs 1.5 lakh crore from Rs 3 lakh crore to Rs 4.5 lakh crore to provide much needed relief to the MSMEs. On 2 July 2021, the government included retail and wholesale trades as MSMEs in a bid to benefit the traders with priority sector lending under RBI guidelines. Anti-dumping duty on Viscose Staple Fibre (VSF) was removed from 12 August 2021 to benefit the MSME segment.

After a long pause due to pandemic, mega physical fairs are coming back in fashion. The Indian government organized Vanijya Saptah across the country to celebrate the glorious past of Indian textiles during 20-26 September 2021. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry organized a slew of programmes and events highlighting Aatmanirbhar Bharat, showcasing India as a Rising Economic Force and Green & Swachh SEZs besides handholding sessions focusing on 'From Farm to Foreign Lands' and exporter conclaves. AEPC conducted this event for the state of Haryana.

Further, the Indian government is also actively participating in the ongoing six-month long Dubai Expo 2020. Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated the India Pavilion at the Expo on 1 October 2021. AEPC Chairman Dr A Sakthivel was also present on the occasion. Dubai Expo is expected to propel India as the most preferred sourcing partner for textiles and clothing, and make it the hot favourite for investments in the textiles sector. The Textile Week at India Pavilion in the Expo 2020, during 26 November to 2 December 2021, is likely to fetch fresh investment of Rs 19,000 crore ($2.5 billion) in the Indian textile sector. The Textile Week, which showcased India's strength and potential in the sector, will contribute towards achieving the target of $100 billion textiles exports in the next five years.

GAME CHANGERS OF 2021

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability, technology and post Covid new world order transformed the global apparel industry in 2021. The pandemic accentuated the demand for sustainable and eco-friendly fashion worldwide. Sustainability is making steady inroads in the Indian fashion industry with many micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) partnering big fashion brands to launch collections made from ethical materials. However, these MSMEs need better technologies and materials to introduce responsible collections at par with their global counterparts in adopting sustainability. While the 'work from home' culture kept up the demand for comfort wear, genderless and smart apparels, too, picked up in 2021.

TECHNOLOGY

Application of new technologies took the industry to a different level in 2021. Now the industry has acclimated itself to sustain with the ongoing challenges. Pandemic-led restrictions changed the business environment and consumer behavior completely. The apparel industry switched to high-end digitalization tools to increase efficiency in their organisation and to cater to consumers. Key tools of digitalization being used in the industry are

artificial intelligence, augmented and virtual reality, cloud computing, Internet of Things, robotics, voice-assisted shopping, data and analytics, smart and modern future ready stores (online and offline both), payment gateways, RFID tags, and QR codes in logistics and delivery of goods. Indian apparel sector, too, took to organising virtual buyer-seller meets and virtual fairs and exhibitions to bag global orders.

The revolutionary blockchain technology made inroads in the apparel industry in 2021 with global luxury giants LMVH, Prada Group and Cartier jointly forming Aura Blockchain Consortium (ABC). It will promote the use of a single global blockchain solution and will be open to all luxury brands throughout the globe. They have created a single solution to address the shared challenges of communicating authenticity, responsible sourcing and sustainability in a secure digital format. This step will help regain the trust of consumers through additional transparency and traceability. Indian apparel sector has also welcomed blockchain initiative. In India, the Social Accountability International (SAI) launched blockchain-enabled FairCapacity platform on 10 December 2021. It seeks to strengthen buyer-supplier relationship and improve consumer confidence in Indian apparels. The FairCapacity platform, which aims to improve working conditions in supply chain, gives buyers greater visibility into their supply chains and rewards responsible suppliers with access to buyers. It helps suppliers in capacity measurement and planning. Garment makers in India can access the platform at no cost.

POST COVID NEW WORLD ORDER

While much of the post Covid new world order will depend on the growing might of China and the mounting rivalry between Washington and Beijing, the ongoing US-China trade war and the growing disenchantment among several countries with doing business with China, particularly after the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, throw up huge opportunities for India and its companies to fill the space vacated by China in major markets. Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has also emphasized that this is an opportune time to envisage a pivotal role for India in the post Covid new world order.

The US banned import of cotton and cotton products from the Xinjiang region of China on human rights concerns early 2021. Later on 23 December 2021, US President Mr Joe Biden signed a law banning all imports from the region on grounds of forced labour. As per an estimate, 20% of the garments imported into the US include cotton from Xinjiang. To get the best out of the emerging scenario, the AEPC identified the top 20 cotton garment products exported by China to the US and shared the list with Indian apparel exporters. It is hoped that demand for cotton products from India will rise in 2022.

Consumer purchase of textiles and apparels was badly hit due to the lockdowns and economic recession. Global apparel consumption is estimated to have shrunk 22% in 2020. However, 2021 was better given the onset of vaccination drives, growth in e-commerce sales of apparel, and resumption of global supply chains. Yet, Indian apparel exporters could not take full advantage of the resumption in global orders in 2021 due to regional lockdowns and restrictions after the devastating second wave. India is the sixth largest exporter of textiles and apparels. Share of textile and apparel exports in India's overall exports was 11% in 2019-20. With 40% of the Indian population fully vaccinated and 60% having received at least one dose coupled with fast-paced digitalization of the business, Indian apparel exports are set for unprecedented growth this fiscal.



AEPC IN YEAR 2021

Acting on the changing requirements in the apparel sector, the AEPC had a complete changeover in 2021 under the dynamic leadership of AEPC Chairman Dr A Sakthivel. Despite hiccups created by the pandemic, the Council continued to provide excellent services round the clock to member exporters from resolving their urgent issues to taking up crucial bottlenecks with the government for favourable interventions. The Council conducted a series of online B2B meetings, webinars and video conferencing to attract foreign buyers, and educate exporters about various government schemes and policy initiatives. Be it the routine function of issuing export-import certificates and finding new markets for Indian apparels or hosting exhibitions and participating in international fairs, the Council embraced digitalization to overcome the



restrictions on physical movements.

On 21 January 2021, Hon'ble Vice President of India Shri Venkaiah Naidu, in presence of then Hon'ble Textiles Minister Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, inaugurated AEPC's Virtual Platform that aims to help exhibitors showcase their products and connect with global buyers. The platform offers round the year exhibition and two way communication between buyers and exhibitors through video call and WhatsApp chat facilities. To help apparel exporters get connected with international buyers in existing and new markets, the Council has been hosting virtual B2B meetings in collaboration with Indian embassies abroad one by one. It conducted virtual B2B meetings with buyers in Canada and Spain in January, Colombia in March, and Poland in June. The Council also conducted a B2B meeting on improving MMF fabric options for exporters in March and with Darlington Fabrics Crop, USA, in June.

To keep the government abreast about the industry and submit recommendations, many of which eventually got accepted during the year, the Council conducted and participated in various meetings with Union and State Ministers including former Hon'ble Minister of Textiles Smt Smriti Zubin Irani, Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal, Hon'ble Minister of Finance Smt Nirmala Sitharaman, and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Shri MK Stalin. Apart from PLI scheme for MMF, clearance of pending export incentives, extension of RoSCTL and ECLGS, relaxation in regulatory compliances, removal of anti-dumping duties on various inputs, and getting the 'Town of Export Excellence' tag for Noida for apparel exports, the Council had its calendar full of events and initiatives.



• On 22 June, AEPC held a webinar on sourcing of viscose fabric in association with Birla Cellulose with an aim to fill the supply gap of viscose fabric in India

• On 14 July, Textiles Secretary Mr Upendra Prasad Singh released a Compendium on MMF Garments during the AEPC's Executive Committee meeting

• On 15 July, AEPC conducted a webinar with Reliance Industries Ltd on sourcing of polyester fabric

• On 14 August, AEPC held its 42nd Annual General Meeting

• On 16 October, Chairman Dr Sakthivel called Extraordinary General Meeting and urged member exporters to achieve $20 billion apparel export target this fiscal

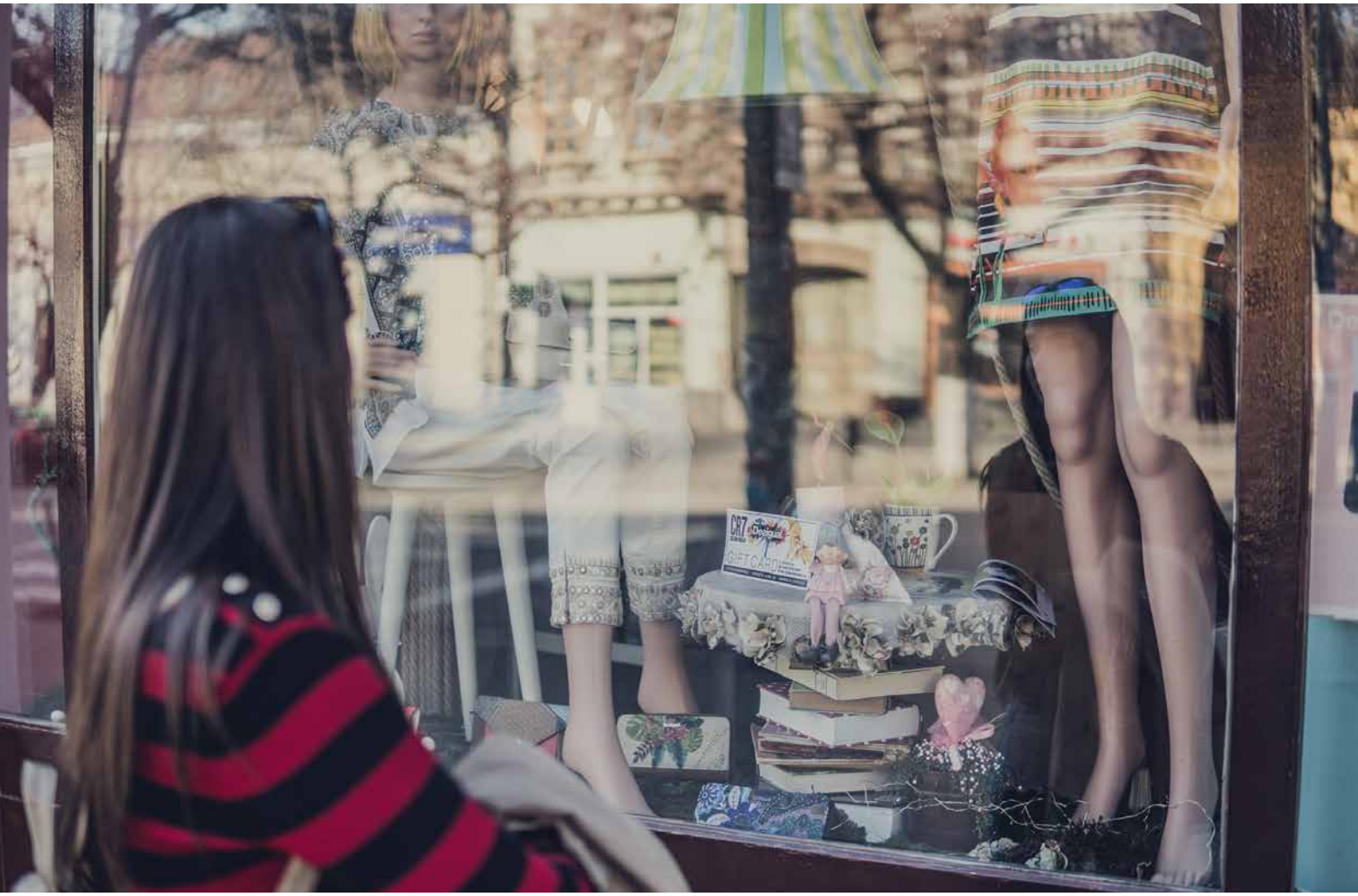
• On 10 November, Dr Sakthivel convened a brainstorming session in Jaipur on 'Achieving Set Export Target of $20 billion in 2021-22'

• On 22 November, AEPC held exporters' interaction meeting with Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Shri MK Stalin

• On 23 November, AEPC in association with the Chief Commissioner of Customs, Bengaluru, organized an outreach programme for garment manufacturers

BUY LESS, WEAR MORE

Big brands enter clothing rental market



With fast changing fashion trends and increasing awareness about sustainable and ecofriendly apparels, global clothing rental market is seeing a surge in demand.

High-end and fast fashion brands have made their debut in the thriving rental market, which got a boost in recent times due to the increase in e-commerce and ease of online shopping. These brands are offering specific clothing items for specific period on certain rent. The clothing rental service is also benefiting the consumers with apparels of their choice that they cannot afford.

On 16 November 2021, British fashion brand Marks & Spencer (M&S) launched its first clothing rental trial – following its latest Founders Factory Joint Venture investment in the Zoa Group, the operator of leading clothing rental website Hirestreet.

M&S's first rental edit is made up of over 40 womenswear pieces from its elegant Autograph range, with a focus on premium fabrics such as leather and silk, and the very latest dresses from its popular M&S X Ghost collaboration.

M&S Chief Operating Officer Katie Bickerstaffe said, "Clothing rental is a growing market and working with Hirestreet through our Founders Factory joint venture gives us a huge opportunity to learn from the leading start-up in this space, operate in an agile way and better understand what our customers want from rental services."

According to clothing market experts, the rental service has picked up due to rising participation of people



in social occasions such as wedding parties, theme and corporate parties, photoshoots, filmmaking, besides easy availability of rental clothes on e-commerce platforms.

Recent researches suggest that the global online clothing rental market is likely to grow by around 8% at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR).

According to Verified Market Research, the global online clothing rental market was valued at $1.19 billion in 2020 and is projected to reach $2.29 billion by 2028, growing at a CAGR of 8.51% from 2021 to 2028.

Similarly, as per a report published in Business Wire in May 2020, the online clothing rental market reached a value of $1.26 billion in 2019. Looking forward, the market is expected to reach a value of $2.08 billion by 2025, exhibiting a CAGR of 8.7% during 2020-2025.

Global clothing company Ralph Lauren (RL) is another fine example of global players showing up in the field of rental clothing. The brand announced the introduction of 'The Lauren Look', company's first subscription apparel rental initiative that was launched in North America on 2 March 2021.

The new initiative would work in such a way that members would also receive suggestions from expert stylists on how to get along with the outfits. Further, the subscription costing $125 per month, would allow them to curate their closet with the recent Ralph Lauren collections.

"Consumers today are taking a different approach to experiencing brands and building their wardrobes. The closet of the future will include a mix of new seasonal fashion, unique customized pieces and wardrobe staples, alongside pre-owned and rental clothing," said Patrice Louvet, President and Chief Executive Officer of Lauren.

Through the initiative, the company is aiming to reduce clothing waste. The company has also planned to donate the used clothes to a non-profit organization and the clothes would end up in the hands of the deprived and needy people.

Rent the Runway, an e-commerce platform where designer clothes are rented, subscribed on and sold, is one of the first clothing rental services to emerge from the clothing rental market boom. It has been in operation since 2009 and has over 2.5 million lifetime customers with 750+ designer brands available.

"By creating the world's largest shared closet, we've built a more sustainable solution that helps consumers buy less and wear more – effectively transforming a broken system and turning the fashion industry on its head. Using the data from our life cycle analysis, we estimate that our rental model has displaced production of 1.3 million new garments since 2010," says Rent the Runway Co-founder and CEO Jennifer Y Hyman.

The new idea is also seeing linkups with big names like the Milan based fashion label 'Off-White' to the journalist Lauren Goode. Back in 2019, Lauren tweeted, "Embrace the end of ownership and rent your clothes."

Even though fashion brands are looking at great strength in global online clothing rental market, apparel think-tanks believe that it would take some time to make it a normal trend for all. However, they believe penetration of internet and growing e-commerce fashion industry would help clothing rental market to thrive.

BRAZIL'S GROWTH PROJECTED AT 5% IN 2021

Brazil's Economy Ministry has projected country's GDP growth by 5.1% in 2021. World's sixth most populous country has returned to its pre-pandemic levels, supported by booming terms of trade and robust private sector credit growth, and one of the biggest stimulus packages in emerging markets, according to a IMF report. The Economy Ministry, however, cuts its GDP growth outlook from 2.5% to 2.1% for 2022 due to higher interest rate and inflation.





ECONOMIC OVERVIEW

Brazil is the eighth-largest economy in the world, but is recovering from a recession in 2015 and 2016 that ranks as the worst in the country's history. In 2017, Brazil`s GDP grew 1%, inflation fell to historic lows of 2.9%, and the Central Bank lowered benchmark interest rates from 13.75% in 2016 to 7%. Brazil is a member of the Common Market of the South (Mercosur), a trade bloc that includes Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay - Venezuela's membership in the organization was suspended In August 2017. After the Asian and Russian financial crises, Mercosur adopted a protectionist stance to guard against exposure to volatile foreign markets and it currently is negotiating Free Trade Agreements with the European Union and Canada.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS:

INDICATORS	VALUE (IN USD)
Real GDP (Purchasing Power Parity), 2020 est.	2989.43 Bn.
GDP (Official Exchange Rate), 2019 est.	1,877.94 Bn.
Real GDP (Per Capita), 2020 est.	14,100 note
Real GDP (Growth Rate), 2019 est.	1.13%
Inflation Rate, 2019 est.	3.7%
Exchange Rate - Reals (BRL) per US Dollar, 2020 est.	5.12745
Industries	textiles, shoes, chemicals, cement, lumber, iron ore, tin, steel, aircraft, motor vehicles and parts, other machinery and equipment
Source: The World Factbook - CIA	

LOCATION: Eastern South America, bordering the Atlantic Ocean

CLIMATE: Mostly tropical, but temperate in south

AGE STRUCTURE:

0-14 years: 21.11% (male 22,790,634/female 21,907,018)

15-24 years: 16.06% (male 17,254,363/female 16,750,581)

25-54 years: 43.83% (male 46,070,240/female 46,729,640)

55-64 years: 9.78% (male 9,802,995/female 10,911,140)

65 years and over: 9.21% (male 8,323,344/female 11,176,018) (2020 est.)



BRAZIL'S APPAREL TRADE:

BRAZIL'S RMG IMPORT FROM WORLD AND INDIA				
	2018	2019	2020	% Change
Brazil's RMG imports from World, (In USD Mn.)	1794.0	1657.2	1114.1	-32.8
Brazil's RMG imports from India, (In USD Mn.)	60.8	53.2	28.0	-47.4
India's Share in Brazil's RMG imports from world, %	3.4	3.2	2.5	-21.8
Source: UN Comtrade, 2021				

The above table shows that Brazil's RMG import from the World were to the tune of USD 1114.1 mn in 2020 showing a decline of 32.8 % as compared to 2019. RMG import from India has remained USD 28.0 mn. Registering a decline of 47.4% as compared to 2019. India's percentage share in Brazil's RMG import from the World has remained 2.5% in 2020.

TOP RMG SUPPLIER TO BRAZIL:

Top RMG Supplier to Brazil and India's Position			
S. No.	Countries	Imported value in 2020 (in USD mn)	% Share
	World	1114.1	100
1	China	604.1	54.2
2	Bangladesh	112.0	10.1
3	Viet Nam	56.4	5.1
4	Paraguay	48.7	4.4
5	Peru	35.7	3.2
6	India	28.0	2.5
7	Turkey	26.0	2.3
8	Cambodia	25.9	2.3
9	Pakistan	21.2	1.9
10	Sri Lanka	20.7	1.9
Source: UN Comtrade, 2021			

The above table shows that China has remained a top supplier of RMG to Brazil with 54.2% share in 2020. India is the 6th largest supplier of RMG to Brazil with 2.5% share. Bangladesh and Vietnam has a share of 10.1% and 5.1% respectively.



BRAZIL'S TOP 10 RMG PRODUCTS IMPORT FROM WORLD VS INDIA'S SHARE:

Top 10 RMG products imported by Brazil from World					
S. No.	HS Code	Product label	Imported from World in 2020 (in USD mn)	Imported from India in 2020 (in USD mn)	India's Share in %
		Total RMG	1114.1	28.0	2.5
		Sum of Top 10	392.8	6.9	1.8
1	'610910	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted	52.6	1.1	2.0
2	'611030	Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of man-made fibres, knitted ...	47.6	0.0	0.1
3	'620640	Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of man-made fibres (excluding knitted or ...	39.6	4.7	11.8
4	'620293	Women's or girls' anoraks, wind-cheaters, wind jackets and similar articles, of man-made fibres ...	38.1	0.1	0.2
5	'620342	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton (excluding ...	38.0	0.5	1.2
6	'620343	Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of synthetic fibres (excluding ...	36.8	0.4	1.2
7	'620193	Men's or boys' anoraks, wind-cheaters, wind jackets and similar articles, of man-made fibres ...	36.7	0.0	0.0
8	'610990	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of textile materials, knitted or crocheted (excluding cotton)	35.8	0.2	0.5
9	'621010	Garments made up of felt or non-wovens, whether or not impregnated, coated, covered or laminated ...	35.0	0.0	0.0
10	'611610	Gloves, mittens and mitts, impregnated, coated or covered with plastics or rubber, knitted ...	32.6	0.0	0.0
Source: UN Comtrade, 2021					

The above table shows Brazil's top 10 RMG products imported from the World vis-à-vis from India and India's % share in those top 10 products. The top 10 products imported from the World were to the tune of USD 392.8 mn. in 2020 and import from India of these top 10 products were to the tune of USD 6.9 mn. India has 1.8% share in Brazil's top 10 products import from the World.

The top products imported by Brazil from the World includes T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted; Jerseys, pullovers, cardigans, waistcoats and similar articles, of man-made fibres, knitted; Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of man-made fibres; Women's or girls' anoraks, windcheaters, wind jackets and similar articles, of man-made fibres and Men's or boys' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts, of cotton.

BRAZIL'S TOP 10 RMG PRODUCTS IMPORT FROM INDIA:

Top 10 RMG Products Imported by Brazil from India				
S. No.	HS Code	Product label	Brazil's Import from India, 2020 (in USD mn)	% Share in 2020
		Total RMG	28.0	100.0
		Sum of Top 10	19.2	68.6
1	'620640	Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of man-made fibres (excluding knitted or ...	4.7	16.7
2	'620444	Women's or girls' dresses of artificial fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted and petti-coats)	3.7	13.4
3	'620442	Women's or girls' dresses of cotton (exclud-ing knitted or crocheted and petticoats)	2.3	8.1
4	'620630	Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted ...	1.8	6.3
5	'620443	Women's or girls' dresses of synthetic fibres (excluding knitted or crocheted and petti-coats)	1.3	4.8
6	'620520	Men's or boys' shirts of cotton (excluding knitted or crocheted, nightshirts, singlets and ...	1.2	4.3
7	'611120	Babies' garments and clothing accessories of cotton, knitted or crocheted (excluding hats)	1.2	4.2
8	'610910	T-shirts, singlets and other vests of cotton, knitted or crocheted	1.1	3.8
9	'621143	Women's or girls' tracksuits and other gar-ments, n.e.s. of man-made fibres (excluding knitted ...	1.1	3.8
10	'620469	Women's or girls' trousers, bib and brace overalls, breeches and shorts of textile mate-rials ...	0.9	3.3
Source: UN Comtrade, 2021				

The above table shows Brazil's top 10 RMG products imported from India. Brazil's top 10 products imported from India were to the tune of USD 19.2 mn with 68.6% share in Brazil's total RMG import from India.

The top products imported by Brazil from India includes Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of man-made fibres; Women's or girls' dresses of artificial fibres; Women's or girls' dresses of cotton; Women's or girls' blouses, shirts and shirt-blouses of cotton and Women's or girls' dresses of synthetic fibres.

AEPC, UZBEKISTAN EXPLORE TRADE OPPORTUNITY IN APPAREL SECTOR



In a bid to explore possibilities of enhancing trade and investment in textile and apparel sector, a meeting between the AEPC officials and high level trade delegation from Uzbekistan held on 22 December 2021.

The meeting was attended by Chairman - EP, AEPC, Mr Sudhir Sekhri and AEPC ex-Chairman and Executive Committee Member Mr HKL Magu. Trade delegation from Uzbekistan was represented by Uzbekistan Textile and Garment Industry Association. Officials from the association who attended the meeting included their first Deputy Chairman Mr Davron Vakhabov and Head of Foreign Relations Mr Murodjon Kodirov.

The discussions revolved around exploring possibilities to boost trade and investment in the textile and apparel sector. Uzbekistan is good at raw cotton and cotton products. The sourcing opportunities for Indian apparel exporters lied in the RMG in MMF, medical textiles and technical textile categories.

The meeting also brought forth the possibilities of Indian apparel companies to invest in the garment manufacturing units in Uzbekistan appreciating 100% FDI policy, huge subsidy and investments across textile parks, huge raw material availability and cheaper labour rates as compared to India. Besides, advantage of lower tariffs for Uzbekistan RMG across CIS against CISFTA and against GSP across European markets along with logistics subsidy extended by Uzbekistan Government towards exporting to EU were also discussed.

In addition, Uzbekistan has shown interest to source home furnishings and embellished apparels, fabrics, garment accessories and dyed products from India.

The next trade delegation from Uzbekistan apparel industry is expected during January 2022.

DR SAKTHIVEL INAUGURATES AEPC'S VASTRA BHAWAN AT HYDERABAD











Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) Chairman Dr A Sakthivel inaugurated Council's new building, Vastra Bhawan, at Hyderabad on 13 December 2021. The building comprises two blocks.

Council's Executive Members Mr Virender Uppal and Mr Vijay Kumar Agarwal were present during the occasion. The inauguration of Vastra Bhawan was augmented by performing hawan by the AEPC Chairman and lighting of lamp by Mr Uppal.

Bhoomi Poojan and stone laying ceremony of Vastra Bhawan at Hyderabad had been done by the then AEPC Chairman Mr Ashok G Rajani in December 2017 in presence of Mr Uppal.

EXPORTERS' ISSUES DISCUSSED AT TRADE FACILITATION MEETING





The Principal Commissioner of GST and Central Excise, Coimbatore, organized a meeting on trade facilitation at Tirupur on 8 December 2021. AEPC Joint Director Mr C Eswarasundar and office bearers of various associations and exporters took part in the meeting.

Joint Commissioner of GST and Central Excise Mr K Vijayakrishnavelan delivered welcome address.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal Commissioner Mr ARS Kumar highlighted the role of GST in the new regime in his address. He appreciated that the exporters are utilizing the government schemes well.

However, some exporters had wrongly filed/ claimed the GST which put them under risky status, he said.

Kumar further added, during the last three months his office has resolved nearly 100 risky exporter cases. Moreover, exporters are now facing hurdles such as container shortage, yarn price hike etc. But certainly they would overcome those challenges and successfully run their export business, he assured.

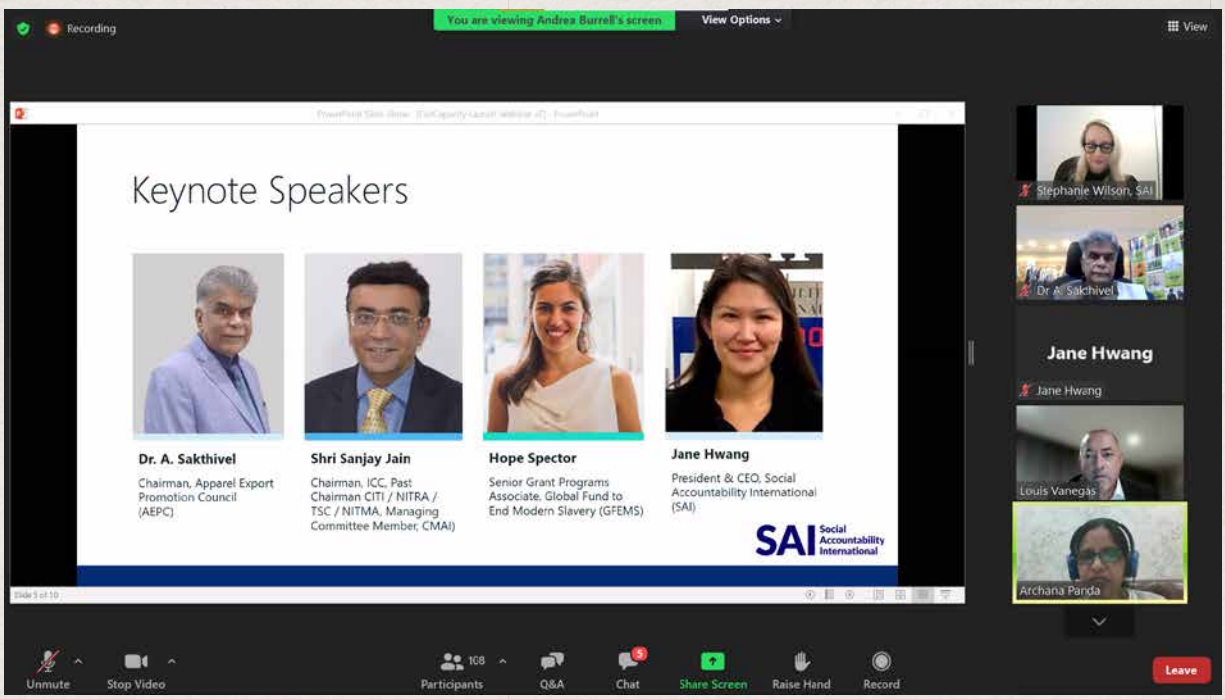
To sort out the exporters' issues, Principal Commissioner GST and Central Excise, Coimbatore, conducted anti-evasion–special fortnightly drive from 6 December to 17 December 2021 and a trade facilitation meeting for risky exporters refund verification cases.

He informed the participants that whatever the issue pertains to GST and risky status, exporters can go and meet the GST officials in their jurisdictional office or Headquarters at Coimbatore on every Wednesday without any prior appointment.

Principal Commissioner urged the exporters to make use of this opportunity and submit their grievances for resolving the issues. During the question and answer session, participants raised GST related issues. He assured that the exporters' issues will be taken on priority.

Mr Eswarasundar, on behalf of the AEPC, addressed the issues raised by Council members/ exporters before the Principal Commissioner and said their office will do the needful. He said exporters' risky cases brought to the notice of Joint Commissioner. The Joint Commissioner replied that at the instruction of the Principal Commissioner, the scrutiny is going on in a fast manner and orders to the eligible exporters will be issued soon. Deputy Commissioner Mr Siddharthan delivered a vote of thanks.

FAIRCAPACITY PLATFORM TO IMPROVE BUYER-SUPPLIER RELATIONSHIP



Blockchain-enabled FairCapacity platform, launched by Social Accountability International (SAI) in India on 10 December 2021, is set to strengthen buyer-supplier relationship and improve consumer confidence in Indian apparels.

"Indian apparel sector has come a long way in improving the working conditions for the garment workers. We at the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) consistently inform and encourage our members to meet the highest standards of social compliance.

"The launch of FairCapacity platform is a welcome step as it will further showcase our commitment towards delivering international quality apparels while safeguarding the health and safety of our workers," said AEPC Chairman Dr A Sakthivel.

The FairCapacity platform, which seeks to improve working conditions in supply chain, gives buyers greater visibility into their supply chains and rewards responsible suppliers with access to buyers. It helps suppliers in capacity measurement and planning.

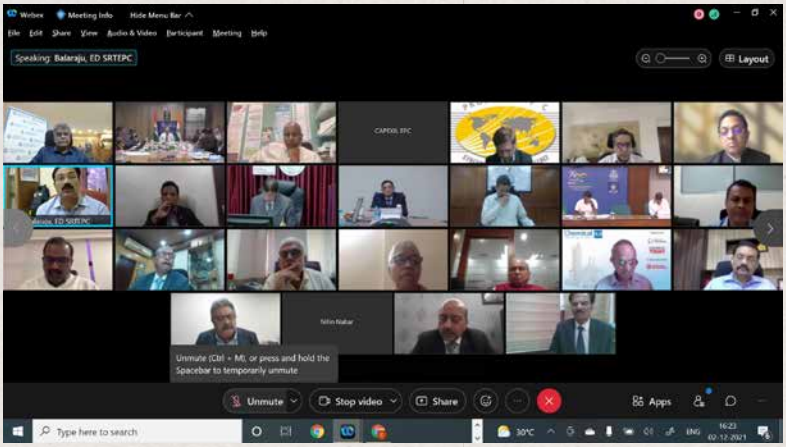
"Companies that proactively make sustainability a part of their strategy will drive innovation. With help of this platform, industries can effectively manage the risks and demonstrate good compliance mechanisms that are in place," DrSakthivel said.

The platform includes a production capacity calculator and a mechanism for improving capacity measurement and forecasting practices. Apparel manufacturers face various business pressures. At times, they take on more last-minute orders and find themselves at increased risk of excessive overtime and unauthorized subcontracting.

"FairCapacity platform is expected to address these problems. It will add transparency, forge better buyer-supplier relationships, increase consumer confidence, generate more responsible business and benefit the bottom line," the Chairman added.

Buyers and suppliers can now register for the platform, which was launched last Friday by SAI along with co-host AEPC. Garment makers in India can access the platform at no cost and gain prioritized access to digital tools and free training.

GLIMPSES OF KEY MEETINGS



AEPC Chairman Dr A Sakthivel participates in a meeting chaired by Commerce Secretary Mr BVR Subrahmanyam on 2 December 2021. The meeting was called to review and discuss export related issues.



AEPC Chairman Dr A Sakthivel addressed a Customs outreach programme organized by the Chief Commissioner of Customs, Bangalore, on 20 December 2021. The programme was conducted for the trade and officers of textile imports under faceless assessment NAC 3 and 3A. The Chief Commissioner of Customs Mr M Srinivasan and Chief Commissioner of Customs (Preventive), Trichy, Dr Uma Shankar were also present on the occasion.



AEPC Chairman Dr A Sakthivel meets Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs (CBIC) Chairman Mr Vivek Johri.

ATDC B-VOC STUDENT WINS 'CERTIFICATE OF MERIT' AWARD FROM MSD&E





Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSD&E) and National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) gave away 'Certificate of Merit' award to ATDC B-voc (Bachelor in Vocational Education) student Ms Aparna MJ for her performance in a Regional Competition named 'South in Fashion Technology'.

NSDC organized the India Skills 2021 Regional Competition on 1-4 December 2021. Ms Aparna bagged 2nd position in the competition and was awarded a Silver Medal and Certificate of Merit by MSD&E Additional Secretary Mr Atul Kumar Tiwari and Chief Operating Officer and Officiating CEO of NSDC Mr Ved Mani Tiwari.

Ms Aparna is a Graduate in ATDC Flagship B-voc 'Fashion Designing and Retail' Degree Programme from ATDC Chennai. She entered into India Skill Competition in April 2020 through district level competition and emerged a winner amongst the candidates from 12 institutes. Technical assistance by ATDC through its Head Quarters and trainers at ATDC Guindy guided Ms Aparna for this competition.

The competition had participation of 400 youngsters from 5 States in 51 Skills. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Youth Affairs, Government of Andhra Pradesh gave a cash award to Ms Aparna.

M&S INDIA, ATDC JOIN HANDS FOR WOMEN WORKFORCE PROGRESSION

Marks & Spencer (M&S) India has tied up with Apparel Training and Design Centre (ATDC) to explore and avail opportunities for both ATDC and M&S to work for the next extension of Providing Opportunities to Women with Equal Rights (POWER) -1 together.

In this regard, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between ATDC Vice Chairman Mr Rakesh Vaid and M&S India's Country Manager Ms Nidhi Dua on 21 December 2021.

The initiative is aimed at maximizing benefits for the apparel and textile industry in India by encouraging factories/ mills to voluntarily join a programme on enabling a roadmap to further strengthen women at workplace and to be confident in decision making through respectful workplace training.

Project POWER that has been completed successfully would form the basis of the intervention. The project shall be implemented by ATDC from time to time, who shall liaise with the interested garment factories desirous to be part of the programme.

This MoU has been possible due to intense working by Head of Compliance, CSR M&S India, Ranjeeb Sarma and Director General & CEO (Officiating) and ED, ATDC, Mr Vijay Mathur.

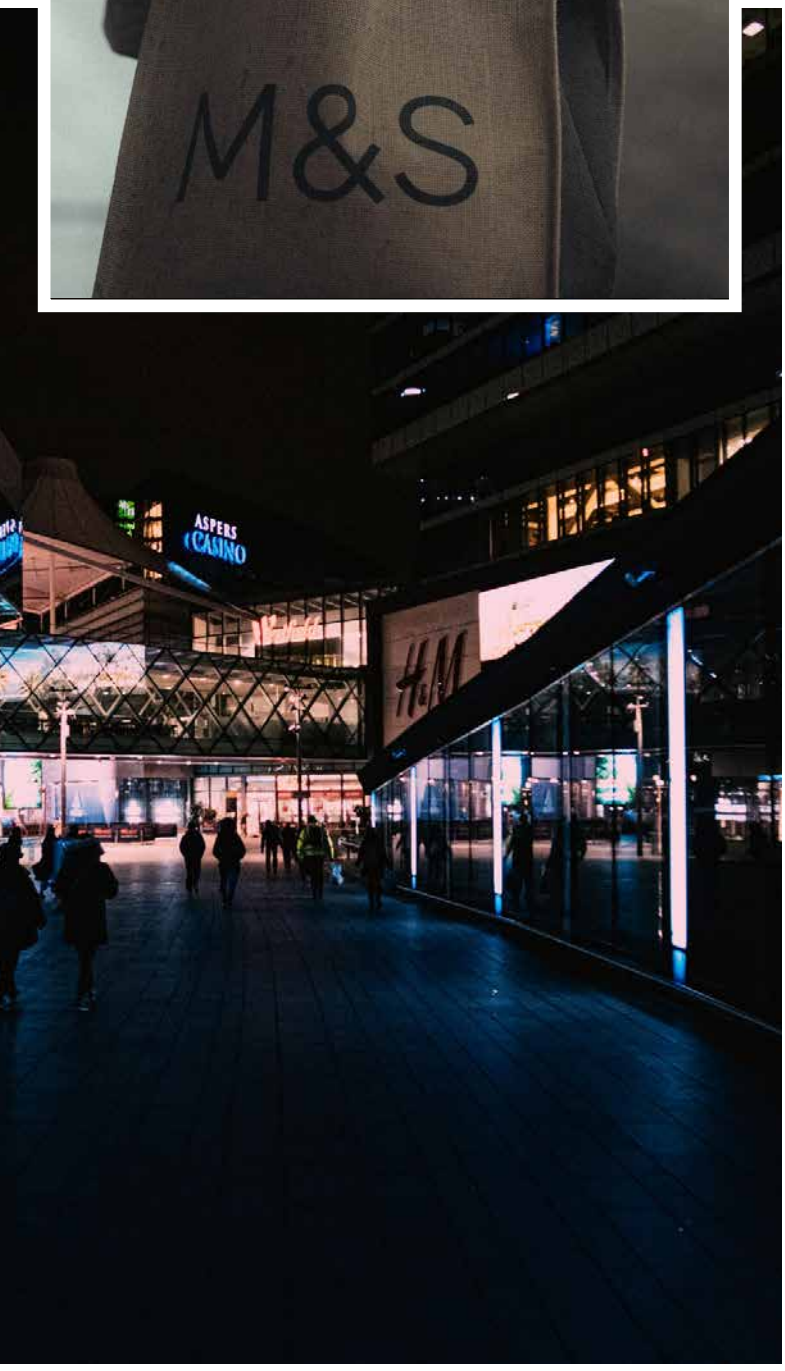
POWER-2 is the natural progression for those factories, who have successfully completed POWER-1. The program looks at designing an intervention with scalability on representation of women workers leadership and participation at different levels in workplace and at the community.

POWER-2 shall develop a career progression pathway for women workforce by enabling capacities and systems aimed to achieve their empowerment and gender equality in the garment sector supply chain which in turn would lead to a more conducive business environment, generating shared value for workers and factories and capacity building for women workers at communicating, managing money, maintaining good health and planning for their future. The program is also aimed at better equipping those women with interpersonal skills required for leadership at work, at home and within in their communities.



(i) POWER-2 shall measure performance against those targets by assessing the percentage of





factories with at least 10 percent of enrolled female workers.

(ii) POWER-2 will further assess the extent to which factories are institutionalizing as part of their HR management processes and demonstrate commitment to the POWER-2 from the top management levels.

The intervention of M&S India under its CSR grants to ATDC shall strive in such a manner that factory is ready to adapt a system pathway for women leadership advancement and career progression as a bottom up approach and women feel more confident to plan their career, take up new responsibilities and leadership roles. In addition to this, expected outcome shall be all genders including men in the workplace are aware of gender inequities and start promoting gender equality and prevention of gendered violence within and outside the factory (e.g. community, public spaces, home, etc)

The POWER-2 shall be undertaken in phases.

Phase-1
In the form of improved workforce, productivity and performance and greater retention of workers. POWER-2 strengthens relationship with their suppliers and enhances their performance, and it also deepens the sense of meaning and purpose among our employees.

PHASE-2
Programming into their supplier sustainability team in supply-chain capability building, efficiencies and enhancements.

Phase-3
Continue to grow POWER-2 in the community through strategic partnerships including educational institutions.

It has been the proven belief that factories demonstrated an increase in knowledge, attitude and skills related to gender, financial literacy, health and stress management after they are exposed to such a programme. Thus, the programme provides a win-win situation.

The programme shall ensure scalability and benefit women, garment manufacturing factories, families and communities. ATDC shall develop tools to align the objective as per phase 1, 2 and 3 through Exchange of Information, Idea through Communication, Converting Problems to Opportunities, Adherence to Time Management & Distress, Health, Right Thing Best Way, Piggy to Real Banker, Gender Balancing and Functional Digital Literacy etc.

ATDC shall target 3,000 to 5,000 workers in 3 years period during the said MoU by encouraging factories to come forward and take up such POWER-2 initiative with ATDC on their own.

STUDY IN APPAREL TRAINING & DESIGN CENTRE

ONE YEAR FASHION DESIGN TECHNOLOGY DIPLOMA COURSE

Programme offers you to understand and learn elements of design and its application to apparel designing.

Course Curriculum

PRACTICAL & HANDS ON

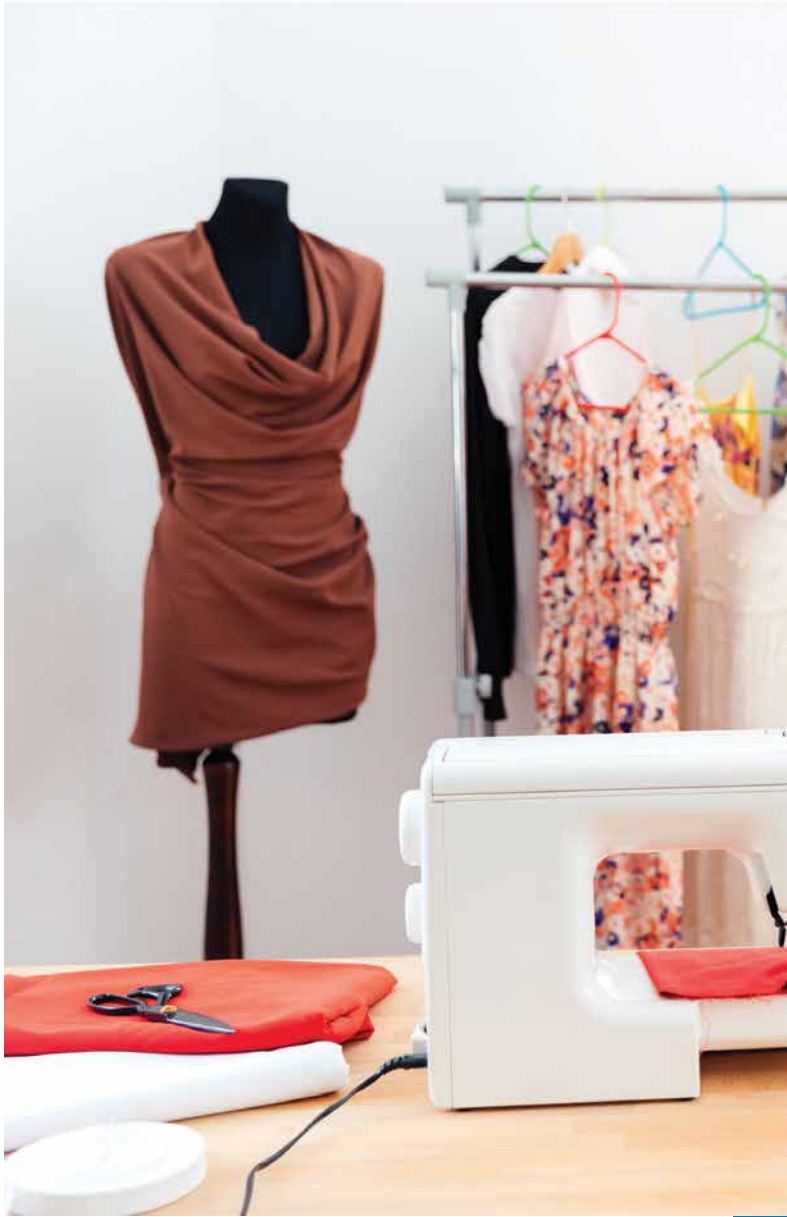
- Design ideas
- Embroideries & Needle craft
- Drawing garment parts
- Development garment on paper (Pattern construction)
- Garment construction by sewing
- Basic computer (Email writing, MS Excel, Word, Power Point Presentation)
- Soft skills

THEORY

- Merchandising
- Apparel Production
- Textile studies to know Fiber to Fabric
- Fashion technologies
- Developing design by understanding
- International and Indian garment industry
- Life skills

Eligibility

10+2 from a recognized Board of any discipline



WIDE Choice of Study Locations

P.A.C.E.
Gap Inc.



ONE YEAR APPAREL MANUFACTURING TECHNOLOGY DIPLOMA COURSE

Highly sought after course with job demand undertaken by experienced faculties resources.

Course Curriculum

PRACTICALS ON IMPORTED SEWING MACHINES

- Spreading & Layout, Cutting, sewing,
- Seams & stiches, Machine Parts
- Fabric Terms, Dart Manipulation
- Drafting & Draping
- Measurement systems, Notches, Seams Allowance

FOR STRONG CONCEPTUAL THEORITICAL BASE

- Garment Analysis Through Tech Pack
- Pre-Production Planning
- Merchandizing Process, Costing
- Garment Sample Development
- Buyer's Approvals, Quality control Process, Environmental Education
- Textile Studies, Fibre, yarn & Fabrics
- Written Communication skills on computers, Documentation, Basic English
- Soft Skills & Life Skills

Eligibility

10+2 from a recognized Board of any discipline

ADMISSION OPEN FOR JANUARY 2022 SESSION

ABFRL LAUNCHES ETHNIC MENSWEAR BRAND TASVA

Indian fashion brand Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited (ABFRL) along with ace designer Tarun Tahiliani launched a new ethnic menswear brand Tasva.

The brand was launched in Varanasi, at the historic Brijrama Palace, one of the oldest landmarks of the city on the banks of the Ganga. This is the first brand to be launched after ABFRL acquired a stake in Tarun Tahiliani's couture business earlier in February 2021.

"Tasva aims to rethink the Indian male celebratory experience forever, whether it is fitting out the Indian groom or creating magnificent statements in our pantheon of traditional celebrations, the brand offers a wide range of high-quality, sophisticated celebration wear for men at accessible price points," ABFRL said in a press release.

The newly launched collection is a perfect weave of rich Indian cultural heritage, wealth and state-of-the-art, craft and fine tailoring – representing the best of east and west.

In the Tasva collection, one can embrace the mood and get going with a fresh new take of Achkans, Bandhgalas, Jodhpuris, Sherwanis and all the accessories such as shawls, stoles, shoes and more as part of the Tasva collection.

Over 70% of the fabrics used in Tasva's debut collection are sourced from Benaras, with brocades dominating the range.

Ashish Dikshit, Managing Director at ABFRL, said, "We are proud to present the new brand 'Tasva'. We believe that ethnic wear is going to be an important category, as confident Indians rediscover their culture and heritage. Tarun Tahiliani has been a pioneer of the Indian design industry and 'Tasva' gives the emerging Indian consumer a new range of celebration wear reflecting the unmatched and exquisite design excellence."

Tarun Tahiliani, Creative Director at Indivinity Clothing Pvt Ltd, said, "The launch of Tasva is a long-time dream of mine, one that I shared with Mr Kumar Mangalam Birla and Ashish Dikshit, without whose support this would not have been possible. The name itself stands for the best version of oneself and we have worked hard to achieve this. We have created garments that give our consumer – the Indian Man – a fabulously made, internationally constructed, comfortable well-cut Indian brand with Tarun Tahiliani styling yet with complete accessibility of pricing."



ABG AUTHENTIC BRANDS GROUP

ADITYA BIRLA FASHION & RETAIL

ACHIEVE $44 BN TEXTILE EXPORTS TARGET IN 2021-22: SHRI GOYAL



Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal exhorted leaders of textile industry to make effort for achieving $44 billion textile exports target in 2021-22.

While interacting with the leaders of Textile Industry on 10 December 2021, the Hon'ble Minister said that the government is always open to consider all industry requirements to ensure that targets are achieved. He said industries that don't depend on subsidies thrive much more.

Prominent exporters from the textiles sector, Export Promotion Councils (EPCs) as well as industry leaders participated in the interaction which was held to discuss measures to boost manufacturing and enhancement of exports.Shri Goyal stated that PLI scheme for textiles and MITRA parks scheme are going to benefit the industry in a big way.

"India has met all of its international service commitments, which has made us the trusted partner of the world," he said.It may be noted that India is showing signs of robust economic recovery. Total merchandise exports upto November 2021 was $262 billion.

The Hon'ble Minister said that instead of being satisfied with small increments, it's time for a quantum jump.

Earlier, Shri Goyal had asked the textile industry to aim for $100 billion exports in a quick time. He then said that exporters must back the expectations of the nation with their effort, expertise and efficiency and should explore new markets.

Shri Goyal asked the participants and stake holders to cater the small exporters and guide them. He added that the government aims to provide a conducive ecosystem to explore the competitive and comparative advantage.

The upcoming Foreign Trade Agreements (FTAs) with different nations would provide new avenues to build trade partnerships. Notably, Ministry of Textiles has adopted a holistic development model of the sector supported by infrastructure and cluster development, technical textile mission, performance linked incentives and a zero rated tax policy on exports to restore India's pride in the global textile market, the Ministry said in a press statement.







BODOLAND TEXTILE & SILK MISSION INAUGURATED

Hon'ble Minister of State for Textiles Smt Darshana Vikram Jardosh along with Hon'ble Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma inaugurated Bodoland Textile Mission (BTM) and Bodoland Silk Mission (BSM), while attending one-year celebrations of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) Council on 18 December 2021.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between the Central Silk Board and the Assam Forest and Environment Department on the occasion. The MoU will support forest based families in frontier forest area of Assam who earn their living by rearing silkworms. It will also provide proper assistance in providing new livelihood opportunities to them, according to a press statement of Ministry of Textiles.

Hon'ble Minister of State in her address said that Bodoland is a beautiful region, rich with natural resources and a strong and intellectual social tradition, apart from being one of the most peaceful borders of the Indian Sub-Continent.

She paid floral tribute to the statue of Bodofa Upendra Nath Brahma during her visit to Kokrajhar and was also present at the inauguration ceremony of the Information Technology Park at Kokrajhar in BTR.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Minister Dr Sarma said that the new government in BTR has completed a glorious one year- the year which was full of challenges. However, notwithstanding the challenges, the government with its commitment has gained a new momentum towards progress, he said.

Referring to the historic Bodo Peace Accord signed in presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, Dr Sarma said that the Accord ushered in a new era of peace in the BTR.

Assam's Health and Family Welfare Minister Keshab Mahanta, Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) Chief Pramod Bodo also spoke on the occasion. State Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Ashok Singhal, Minister for WPT & BC UG Brahma, BTC Deputy Chief Gobinda Basumatary and a host of other dignitaries were present on the occasion.

ABFRL TO TAKE ON REEBOK'S OPERATIONS IN INDIA



Global brand development, marketing and entertainment company Authentic Brands Group (ABG) and Indian fashion company Aditya Birla Fashion and Retail Limited (ABFRL) signed a long-term licensing agreement, which grants ABFRL exclusive rights to distribute and sell Reebok products through wholesale, e-commerce and Reebok branded retail stores in India and other ASEAN countries.

The deal marks a foray for ABFRL into India's fast-growing sports and active wear segment.

Over the last few years, this segment has been growing rapidly on the heels of rising income levels, increased health consciousness and the adoption of active lifestyles by young Indians. This segment is expected to grow to $13 billion by financial year 2024 at an annual growth rate of 14%.

The transaction marks a significant milestone in the journey of ABFRL, which has developed its portfolio into a powerhouse of brands across all major fashion and lifestyle segments over the last several years. The addition of Reebok will have an important role in ABFRL's portfolio.

Commenting on the transaction, the Managing Director of ABFRL Ashish Dikshit said, "As Indians get more active, athletic and health focussed, their consumption of apparel and accessories is expected to increasingly change in line with these trends, providing an opportunity to build iconic brands of global repute."

"Reebok is one of the leading brands in the sporting goods industry globally and has built a very strong presence in the Indian market over the last two decades. In partnership with ABG, we plan to accelerate Reebok's business in India, combining its global appeal and salience amongst Indian youth. This transaction further strengthens the ABFRL portfolio and increases our ability to engage with consumers across various need spaces," he said.

ABFRL will partner with Reebok Design Group (RDG), the newly established global brand hub that is based in Boston, on all product design, development, innovation and creative direction to drive a unified brand voice and vision.

Corey Salter, Chief Operating Officer at ABG said, "We are very pleased to expand our existing partnership with ABFRL, which includes Forever 21 and other ABG brands, and are confident that ABFRL will be successful in solidifying Reebok's position with a growing audience of fans in India and Southeast Asia."



DPIIT TO HOST INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM EVENT IN JANUARY 2022

In a bid to mark the 6th anniversary of the launch of Startup India initiative, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) will host a week-long event 'Celebrating Innovation Ecosystem' in January 2022.

The key objectives of the innovation week will be to bring together country's key startups, entrepreneurs, investors, policy makers and other national/ international stakeholders for a specially curated event on innovation and entrepreneurship and to exchange knowledge on best practices on nurturing startup ecosystems, according to a press release of Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The initiative aspires to encourage and inspire the youth for innovation and entrepreneurship and develop capacities of entrepreneurial ecosystem. The event is also set to showcase high-quality, high technology and frugal innovations from India, the Ministry said.

The proposed week-long event will comprise of activities organised with specific themes. The tentative themes are international engagements, market access and incubation support, funding support to start-ups etc.

The event will feature a dedicated exhibition area for select startups (including DPIIT-recognised startups, national startup awards finalists, startups supported by fund of funds for startups, beneficiary startups of Government of India).

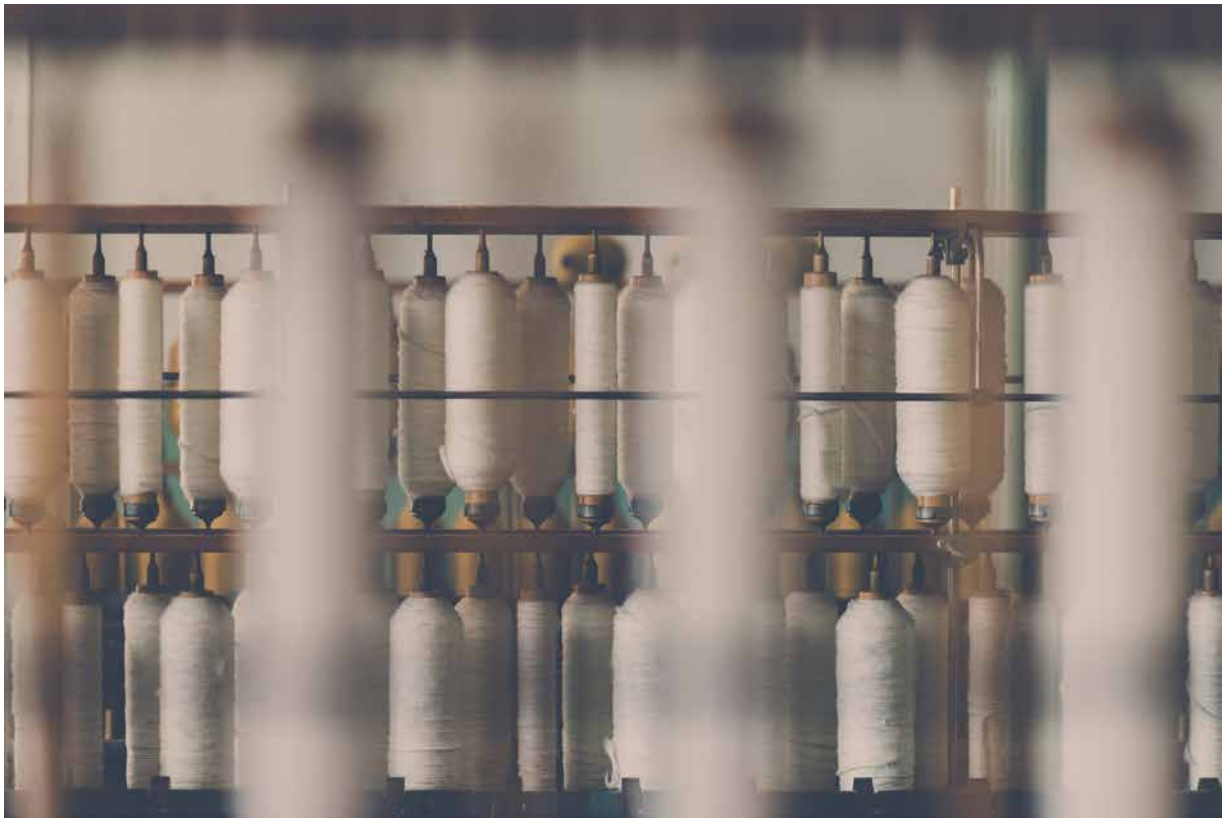
As part of the innovation week, various sessions are proposed to enable further international engagement and market access. Workshops with leaders within the investment and acceleration ecosystems will feature discussions on their global journeys, key learning and insights on the international market, the Ministry said.

A fireside chat will also be held highlighting strategies and methods to enter the global market. Furthermore areas/ sessions will be allocated for attendees to experience innovative technologies like augmented reality, virtual reality, 3D printing, drones, artificial intelligence etc.

Events will be based on the identified themes and will be conducted by one or more marquee speakers. The sessions will be conducted in virtual and/ or physical mode and will be live streamed through Startup India social media handles.

The corporate connect program will provide an opportunity to startups to work with five leading corporates on providing innovative solutions to the specific problem statements. A panel comprising of high-level domain experts, incubator, and investor network etc will shortlist the most promising set of startups through a robust process.

INDIA EMERGES AS WORLD'S TRUSTED PARTNER



Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry and Textiles, Shri Piyush Goyal said India has emerged as the 'world's trusted partner' and is poised to contribute significantly to global growth.

Addressing the 5th meeting of the CII National Council in New Delhi, he called upon the captains of Indian Industry to set ambitious targets as the economy is poised for a sustained spell of rapid growth.

Shri Goyal encouraged the industry to have a greater appetite for taking risks, to invest in industries that may be less profitable at the start, but are labour oriented and create lakhs of jobs. He also urged to promote tribal handicraft products as part of their CSR activities.

There is big scope in the expansion of labour intensive plastics, footwear and textiles industry. "India cannot be truly Aatmanirbhar without empowering its poor to be Aatmanirbhar," he added.

Conveying his appreciation for the industry's positive approach in Foreign Trade Agreement (FTA) consultations, he said, "Right now we are engaged in FTA negotiations with 6/ 7 countries."

Shri Goyal said India has cost advantage as well as trust advantage. "Services are growing at a fantastic pace; exports also are, of course on merchandise. Similarly, remittances continue to be strong and FDI is at never before levels for the 7th time in a row," he said.

Stressing that India is going through a sharp and strong revival, the Hon'ble Minister said that rising economic indicators point towards 'India is shaping up for a growth decade'.

Shri Goyal further added that the government is doing its part by undertaking transformational reforms such as PLI, PM Gati Shakti, one district one project, single window, retrospective tax amendment, national asset monetisation pipeline and opening up sectors like defence, space and atomic energy, mining and minerals.

He urged the top 100 CII members that could comprise 1,000 companies to onboard the national single window clearance system and make full use of India industrial land bank system.

Resolving to use Indian materials to make a truly Aatmanirbhar Bharat, he said this will transform the future of India by making it self-reliant, resilient and competitive and will create jobs.



PARTNERSHIP AMONG COUNTRIES FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry and Textiles Shri Piyush Goyal called for partnerships among countries for achieving sustainable growth at the inaugural session of the CII Partnership Summit 2021.

The Summit held on the theme 'Partnering for Building a New World: Growth, Competitiveness, Sustainability, Technology.' Shri Goyal said India, as it assumes presidency of the G20, will leverage global partnerships for collective solutions to global issues.

On India emerging as 'world's trusted partner', he said, "Even in the peak of the Covid, India met all of its international service commitments despite lockdowns and services supply chains did not suffer for even a second."

He assured that India will supply Covid vaccines to the whole world to tackle the pandemic. Shri Goyal added that India plans to manufacture 5 billion doses in the upcoming year. "In addition to protecting its own population, India has also provided medical supplies and equipment to more than 150 countries across the globe," he said.

Shri Goyal said the pandemic has put India under the spotlight, to introspect its potential as a global leader especially at a time when the country is celebrating 75 years of independence 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'. "India's cumulative COVID-19 vaccination coverage exceeds 1.33 billion doses," he said.

"We have been running the world's largest food distribution programme serving more than 800 million beneficiaries for 19 months besides the world's largest health insurance programme reaching out to the poorest of the poor," he said.

Calling for a just and equitable world trade order, ShriGoyal said, the Hon'ble Prime Minister has set ambitious targets for India at the COP26. He said, "India will reach its non-fossil energy capacity to 500 GW by 2030 and meet 50% of its energy requirements from RE.We hope to attain Net Zero (Carbon Footprint) by 2070 in the fastest possible time."

Shri Goyal also said that under Hon'ble Prime Minister, India is on a reform journey that has transformed its landscape with several schemes like the PLI, PM Mitra, Reduction in Corporate Tax, Ease of Doing Business and Single Window.

"Today India's businesses are moving towards adoption of technology like 5G, Artificial Intelligence and Internet of Things to achieve manufacturing excellence. India's 65 million MSMEs are fast moving to embrace digitisation to make India a trillion-dollar digital economy," said Shri Goyal.

US FASHION BRAND PATAGONIA CHOOSES KHADI DENIM FOR ITS APPARELS





Khadi has taken a big stride in the global fashion arena, as the US-based world's leading fashion brand, Patagonia, is now using handcrafted Khadi denim fabric for making denim apparels.

Patagonia, through textile major Arvind Mills, has purchased nearly 30,000 meters of Khadi denim fabric worth Rs 1.08 crore from Gujarat, according to a press statement of Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises.

The purchase of Khadi denim by the US based brand has created additional 1.80 lakh man hours, or 27,720 man days of work, for Khadi artisans. The order was placed in October 2020 and the same was executed in 12 months' time as per the schedule in October 2021, the Ministry said.

In July 2017, Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC) signed an agreement with Arvind mills Limited, Ahmadabad, to trade Khadi denim products around the world. Since then, Arvind Mills has been purchasing a large quantity of Khadi denim fabric every year from KVIC-certified Khadi institutions of Gujarat.

KVIC Chairman Vinai Kumar Saxena said that Khadi has evolved into the most fashionable and trendsetting wearable even as it retains its original values of being the most sustainable and eco-friendly fabric in the world.

"Khadi denim is the only handcrafted denim fabric in the world which has gained wide popularity in the country and abroad. Khadi denim is increasingly being used by leading fashion brands owing to the superior quality, comfort, organic and eco-friendly qualities of the fabric. Khadi denim is an apt example of 'local to global' as envisaged by the Hon'ble Prime Minister," Saxena said.

Last year, a team from Patagonia visited Udyog Bharti, a Khadi institution based in Gondal, Rajkot in Gujarat to see the manufacturing process of Khadi denim. The Patgonian team was highly impressed by the manufacturing process and quality of the handcrafted Khadi denim fabric.

Before finalizing the purchases, Patagonia appointed NEST, a US-based global third-party assessor, to assess the complete process of denim production at Gondal. The NEST, after assessment of all parameters at Udyog Bharti, stated in the certificate that "The spinning and handloom weaving operations are now eligible for the NEST seal of ethical handcraft".

For the first time Khadi institution in the country was assessed and certified by an international independent assessor for meeting ethical standards in its operations.



72 HANDLOOM PRODUCTS, 6 PRODUCT LOGOS REGISTERED UNDER GI ACT

Traditional handloom products are being promoted by registering them under Geographical Indication (GI) Act, 1999. So far, 72 handloom products and 6 product logos have been registered under GI Act, according to Ministry of Textiles.

Banaras Brocade and Saree and Champa Silk Saree and fabrics (made of kosa) have been registered under the GI Act to protect them from imitation or their unauthorized use by others.

Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms under the Ministry is implementing various schemes including National Handloom Development Programme and Raw Material Supply Scheme for development of handlooms and welfare of handloom weavers across the country.

India Handloom Brand (IHB) has also been launched for branding and promotion of high quality, niche handloom products with zero defects and zero effect on environment. A total of 1,714 registrations have been issued as on 31 October 2021. In order to promote e-marketing of handloom products including IHB products, 23 e-commerce entities have been engaged, the Ministry said.

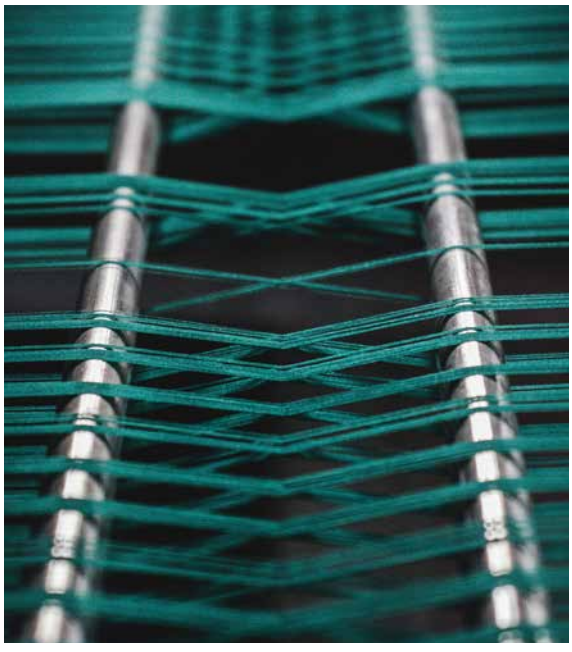
INDIA AIMS TO INCREASE SUPPLY CHAIN EFFICIENCY

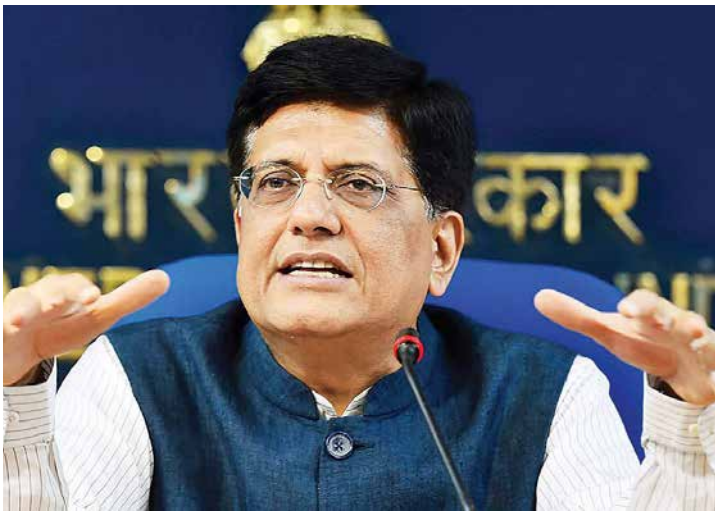
Hon'ble Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shri Sarbananda Sonowal said that India is aiming to increase the supply chain efficiency and lowering logistics costs to facilitate its well-defined goal of being a $5 trillion economy by 2025.

Speaking at the virtual CII Partnership Summit 2021 in New Delhi, the Hon'ble Minister said that developing world-class mega ports, trans-shipment hubs and infrastructure modernization of ports would help in lowering overall operational costs of ports, reducing turnaround time for vessels, increasing efficiency and providing ability to handle larger ships and developing Indian Port's strategic importance in the South Asian region.

He said India to have one of the largest supply chain and logistics sectors in the world. "An efficient logistics ecosystem is believed to be a vital tool for improving all sectors of the economy," he said.

Shri Sonowal added that the Ministry has prepared a blueprint –Maritime India Vision 2030 (MIV 2030), to ensure coordinated and accelerated growth of India's maritime sector in the next decade with the objective of propelling India to the forefront of the Global maritime sector.





INDIA, UAE TO WRAP UP CEPA BY NEXT MONTH

Hon'ble Minister of Commerce & Industry and Textiles Shri Piyush Goyal said that India and the UAE will wrap up the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) by next month.

"Hopefully by the end of this month or next month, we hope to conclude them (the negotiations) so that this would probably be one of the fastest trade agreement between two countries ever made," he said, while addressing the India Global Forum, UAE-2021, through video conference.

Shri Goyal said the agreement will be a mutually beneficial win-win solution for both countries,

He said, this year Indian economy has been able to largely recover from what it had contracted last year due to the 'very severe lockdown' we had imposed to tackle the Covid.

"We have been able to look at very attractive growth rates in second quarter that is July-September. We grew at 8.4% which is one of the fastest growing growth rates in the world today. Our investments are at an all-time high, we are getting some of the highest FDI or FPI in recent months. Indian businesses are showing more compliant growth, more profitability growth."

TOTAL CAPITAL INVESTMENT SUBSIDY OF RS 615 CRORE RELEASED



The Centre has released Rs 615.65 crore as Total Capital Investment subsidy in 2,388 cases under Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (ATUFS) during the last three years. In addition, a total of Rs 880.55 crore has been disbursed as Interest Reimbursement/ Margin Money Subsidy under the committed liabilities of old version of TUFS, making the total release under ATUFS during last 3 years as Rs 1496.20 crore.

Hon'ble Minister of State for Textiles Smt Darshana Jardosh gave this information in a written reply in the Lok Sabha on 8 December 2021.

As many as 403 energy saving machine have been incentivized during the last three years under ATUFS. As per the requests submitted by units for verification against their subsidy claims under ATUFS, a total of 3, 21,085 numbers of machines have been purchased during last three years, the Ministry of Textiles said.

As per the report of impact assessment study of TUFS/ ATUFS by NITI Aayog in January 2021, the scheme had a significant impact on increasing production and improving productivity. More than 85% beneficiaries witnessed an increase in production volume. In weaving segment, more than 75% beneficiaries witnessed an increase in production volume of greater than 5%.



CHANEL APPOINTS INDIA-BORN LEENA NAIR AS GLOBAL CEO

India-born British national Leena Nair will lead French fashion giant Chanel as global Chief Executive Officer (CEO). She will take over the charge from Alain Wertheimer, who will now be global chairman, in January.

Fifty-two-year-old Nair announced this through her twitter handle on 14 December 2021.

"I am humbled and honoured to be appointed the Global Chief Executive Officer of CHANEL, an iconic and admired company. I am so inspired by what CHANEL stands for. It is a company that believes in the freedom of creation, in cultivating human potential and in acting to have a positive impact in the world," Nair said.

The French luxury fashion house Chanel was founded by Gabrielle Chanel in 1910. The fashion giant focuses on women's ready to wear clothes, luxury goods and accessories.

In her last stint, Nair was the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) at British consumer goods company Unilever in London.

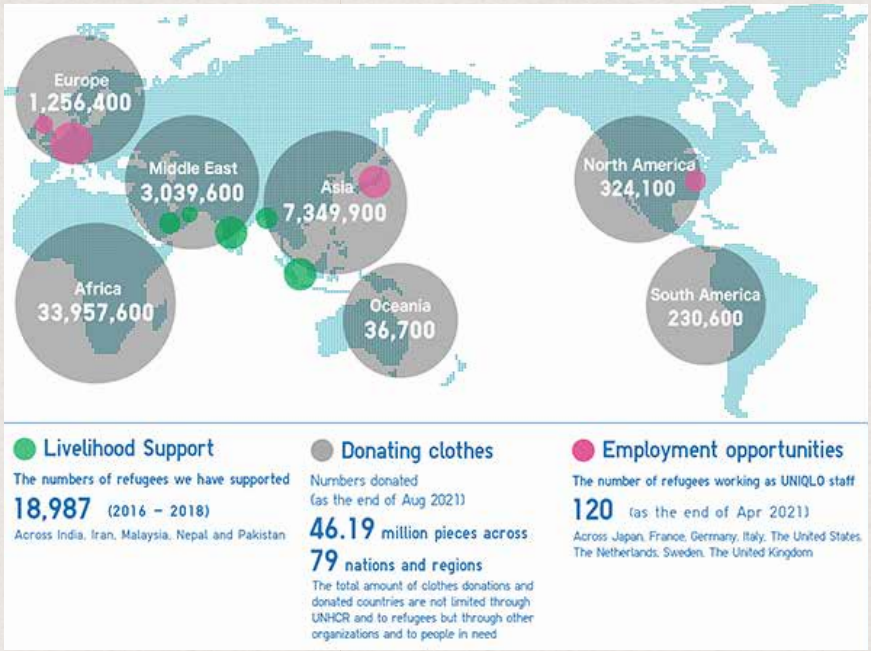
"I am grateful for my long career at Unilever, a place that has been my home for 30 years. It has given me so many opportunities to learn, grow and contribute to a truly purpose-driven organisation. I will always be a proud advocate of Unilever and its ambition to make sustainable living commonplace," she added.

Born in Kolhapur, a small town in the western state of Maharashtra in India, she graduated in electronics and telecommunications engineering from the Walchand College of Engineering in Sangli district.

Thereafter, Nair moved to XLRI Jamshedpur where she did her MBA in Human Resources in 1992. After completing her MBA, she joined Hindustan Unilever, the Indian subsidiary of British consumer goods company.

In her 30 years of career in Unilever, Nair has achieved several milestones. She holds the record of being the 'first female, first Asian, youngest ever chief human resource executive' of Unilever and member of the Unilever Leadership Executive (ULE), which is responsible for delivering Unilever's business and financial performance.

FAST RETAILING TO DONATE 1MN ITEMS OF WINTER CLOTHING



Fast Retailing will donate one million items of winter clothing for refugees and internally displaced people.

The donation includes heattech, outerwear and monetary support to protect forcibly displaced persons this winter, the company said in a press release. It will go to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), an UN refugee agency.

In addition, in response to an appeal from UNHCR, Fast Retailing will also donate $800,000 to UNHCR, to help displaced persons in Afghanistan and the region this winter, the company said.

Even before the full-fledged onset of winter, when temperatures can fall below freezing, many displaced persons in Afghanistan and surrounding regions suffer drought and other natural disasters, as well as food shortages.

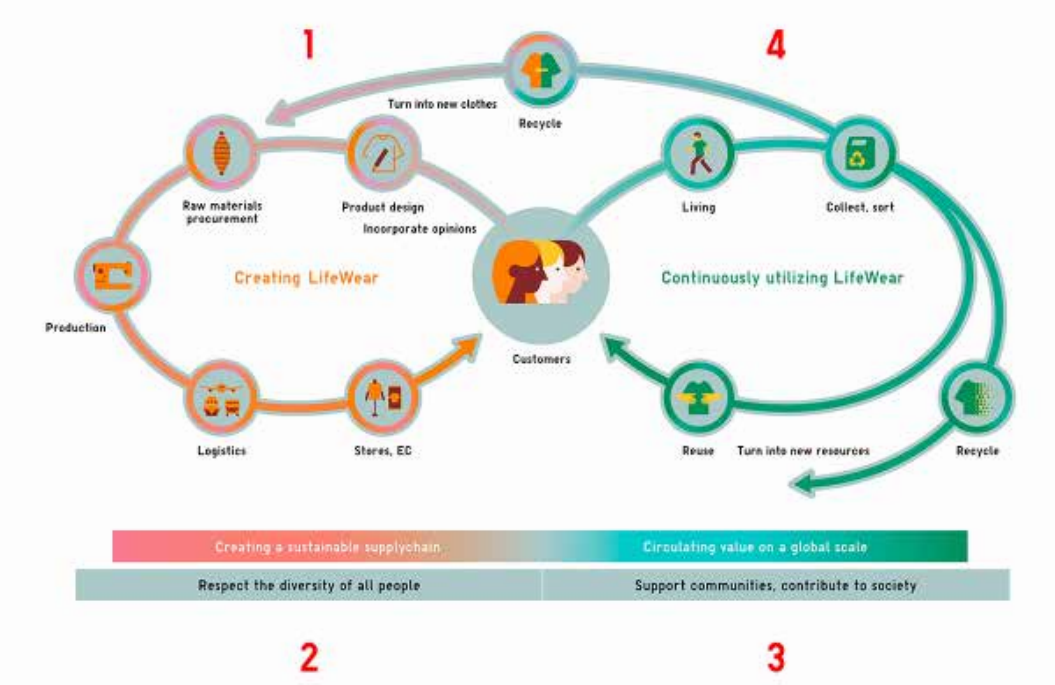
The donation will be used to provide relief supplies, such as blankets, solar lanterns, and tent insulation kits, to allow people forced to flee, especially women and children in particularly vulnerable situations, to protect themselves from sub-zero temperatures.

Chairman, President and CEO of Fast Retailing, Tadashi Yanai, said, "Through our decade-long partnership with UNHCR, we believe that supporting refugees is a major responsibility of a global company. It is essential for sustainable development that people who have been forced to flee their homes are able to rebuild their lives. We hope that the clothing and relief we deliver together with the UNHCR will help protect the lives and health of displaced people preparing to face a harsh winter."

Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, said, "Today there are more than 84 million refugees and displaced people who have fled war, conflict, violence, discrimination, or persecution. Many of them are preparing to face winter struggling to keep their families warm while also facing the threat of COVID-19. Thanks to support from amazing partners like Fast Retailing and their customers, this winter we can help keep refugees safe and warm."

Fast Retailing launched its refugee assistance program in 2001. In 2006, Fast Retailing partnered with UNHCR to provide clothing support for refugees and internally displaced persons around the world. The company claimed to have sent more than 46.1 million items of new and recycled clothing through UNHCR and other organizations to refugees and internally displaced persons in 79 countries and regions worldwide.

FAST RETAILING FORMULATES FISCAL 2030 SUSTAINABILITY TARGETS



Japanese fashion brand Fast Retailing has formulated fiscal 2030 sustainability targets and an action plan for making LifeWear a new industry. The entire Fast Retailing Group, based on the LifeWear concept, will be accelerating its transition to a new business model encompassing sustainability as well as business growth, the brand said in a press statement.

Fast Retailing is advancing its LifeWear concept, which is designed to make everyone's life better and creating apparel that not only emphasizes quality, design, and price, but also meets the definition of good clothing from the standpoint of the environment, people, and society.

In conjunction with the objective of the Ariake Project, to make and sell only apparel that customers truly want, Fast Retailing will emphasize care for the environment in all processes, from manufacturing to transport and sales, sharply reducing greenhouse gas emissions and waste to establish a production process with a light environmental impact, said the company.

Group Senior Executive Officer of Fast Retailing Koji Yanai said, "Providing apparel that customers will cherish for a long time has been the aim of our business for many years. With environmental problems and other serious global issues becoming increasingly evident, we have further advanced our philosophy, and are pursuing measures to show the world a completely new way for clothes to be, while contributing to the realization of a sustainable society. By making LifeWear available to more customers, we aim to conduct business in a way that improves the lives of people and societies throughout the world."

The company further said that it will safeguard human rights in all processes. It plans to do so by building a supply chain that allows customers to purchase products with trust. Further, Fast Retailing will develop new reuse and recycling services and technologies to extend the life and utility of LifeWear post purchase.

To help find solutions to the increasingly complex problems being faced by the world, Fast Retailing announced to be extending its worldwide initiatives for social contribution and diversity through the apparel business. Through these initiatives, the company plans to increase the value of LifeWear and advance its philosophy for sustainability, providing customers with clothing they will appreciate and use for a long time.



GAP INC HONOURS MICROSOFT WITH TOP STITCH AWARD

American clothing company Gap Inc honoured Microsoft with its Top Stitch Award this year.

Gap annually recognizes and honour one of its many outstanding suppliers for their quality, continuous improvement, and overall excellence in partnership through its award.

Powered by Microsoft's cloud technology, Gap Inc stands at a stronger, healthier, faster, and more focused today, the brand said.

Microsoft's partnership on Gap Inc's cloud migration has unlocked tremendous value across the enterprise and helped dramatically accelerate the company's speed of innovation and implementation of new tools and technologies, said Gap in a press communiqué.

The company said that when its brick-and-mortar stores were shut down during the pandemic, Gap Inc became a digital-only business overnight, putting massive pressure on its platforms, both for its customers and its internal processes and technologies.

Based on a long-term partnership with Microsoft, Gap Inc was well prepared to seamlessly transition to a remote work model and scale the online business to meet the needs of millions of customers shopping online across its four purpose-led billion-dollar brands.

Gap leveraged an Azure-hosted digital platform that is fast, responsive, and able to scale, while also enabling employees to work faster and collaborate more effectively across brands and boundaries.

"Our partnership with Microsoft has touched all aspects of our business, from the store experience to inventory logistics to enhanced personalization analytics, and it has supported double-digit growth in our online business. Honouring Microsoft with the Gap Inc Top Stitch Award is a small way of expressing gratitude for our two companies' shared success, supports, and values," the brand said.

Gap Inc said, "To show our appreciation for our companies' shared values of sustainability and innovation, and mark the significance of this award, Gap Inc will make a $100,000 donation in Microsoft's honor to Water Aid America, a Gap Inc non-profit partner who enriches communities by improving water access for millions of people worldwide."

"We are grateful to all the incredible teams who have made our transformation to a digital-first enterprise possible, and we look forward to close collaboration between Gap Inc and Microsoft for years to come."



H&M UNVEILS INNOVATION CIRCULAR DESIGN STORY COLLECTION

Swedish clothing brand H&M unveiled innovation circular design story collection highlighting its commitment to a more circular form of production.

Celebrating the new collection, the brand has teamed up with Normani, Gigi Hadid and Kaia Gerber, to embrace the excitement and anticipation of party-prep and dressing up.

It is the latest addition to H&M's Innovation Stories, a new sustainability initiative that focuses on forward-thinking design and innovative materials, the brand said in a press release.

The collection is for those who love to experiment and express themselves, and this jubilant ethos is also reflected in the campaign, shot by the pioneering photographer Rafael Pavarotti and titled "Just before the party starts".

The theme captures the sensation of getting ready, and the optimism and individuality of those who love fashion, glamming up, choosing looks, posing in front of the mirror, dancing, and being free.

The collection was created by the H&M design team together with the stylist Ib Kamara, who contributed as Creative Advisor and styled the campaign. Both Kamara and Pavarotti were given creative agency to bring their dynamic, colourful vision to life.

The campaign was unveiled on 16 November 2021, ahead of the collection's release in selected stores and online from 9 December 2021.

Kamara said, "I was proud to work with H&M on a collection that is so committed to circularity and positive change, while also embracing style, bold colour and great fit. It's a really multifaceted, rich collection, and it captures a special feeling for me; the excitement and anticipation of getting ready, of choosing a look and making oneself into a star."

Concept Designer at H&M Ella Soccorsi said, "Fashion has the power to transform, to enliven, and to empower. This collection is a tribute to this, and to the special excitement that comes when you're getting ready to go out, just before the party, styling yourself, ready to head into the night with friends, full of joy and enthusiasm."

The Circulator is being developed by H&M Group in order to support the company in its efforts to become more circular, and to reach their goal of becoming climate positive by 2040.

M&S BUYS 25% STAKE IN NOBODY'S CHILD



Britain's multinational clothing brand Marks & Spencer (M&S) has bought 25% stake in womenswear brand Nobody's Child.

Nobody's Child will continue to operate independently but with the opportunity to utilise M&S's investment and infrastructure to scale the business. The brand will benefit from the agility of Nobody's Child, including the brand's focus on near-sourcing supply, which has previously been identified as a growth opportunity, the company said in a press statement.

With evolution in the partnership, there will be further opportunity for collaboration between the brands that include development of fashion and design talent and sustainability initiatives. Both brands have recently launched on rental platform Hire Street.

M&S and Nobody's Child share a passion for responsible retailing and making clothes that don't cost the earth. In September, M&S brought in an ambitious plan to rapidly reduce its own carbon footprint and support customers to make more sustainable choices and live lower carbon lives.

The investment is part of the Brands at M&S strategy that utilises different models including wholesale agreements, exclusive collaborations, strategic acquisitions and investments such as this one. The emerging platform strategy has produced encouraging results. M&S now trades with over 30 partners from Sloggi lingerie to Ghost dresses to Clarks school shoes.

Richard Price, Managing Director of M&S Clothing and Home, said, "We're shaping the future of M&S clothing - the strength of our own-brand product, our broad customer base and the reach of M&S.com makes us an attractive platform partner. In turn, introducing brands helps us become more relevant, more often for our 22 million customers – offering them a convenient and seamless shopping experience. Nobody's Child was the first brand to launch on M&S.com and has proved incredibly popular with new and existing M&S customers."

Jody Plows, CEO at Nobody's Child, said, "We are proud of the growth over the last year and particularly our M&S partnership. Nobody's Child is an independent brand, with a passionate team committed to delivering easy to wear pieces from sustainable fabrics at affordable prices. This remains the driving force behind everything we do. We are excited to be launching in M&S stores next year."



REEBOK COLLECTIVE WITH MENSINGER TO UNVEIL SWEATSHIRT COLLECTION

The Reebok Collective, a group organized by Reebok to create an inclusive community of acceptance and belonging, has partnered with decorated upcycle designer Justin Mensinger to advocate for mental health awareness with their 'Pieces of Us' limited-edition sweatshirt collection.

Mensinger, winner of a hit fashion and streetwear design series, created six one-of-a-kind eco-conscious designs that highlight mental health messages and feature repurposed patchwork pieces from the closets of the Reebok Collective's very own members including Broderick Hunter, Lazarus Lynch, Richie Shazam, AmritSidhu, Maxwell Pearce, and Kendra Oyesana.

The six sweatshirts will be auctioned off on the world's leading impact marketplace, Charitybuzz, in January with all proceeds going to Reebok's non-profit partner BOKS, an organization that aims to instil positive physical and mental health practices into every child's daily routine.

Through this initiative, Reebok tends to manoeuvre its mission to provide inspiration and mental health support to underserved communities.

"The Reebok Collective was created to celebrate the stories of individuals who champion and advocate for various causes and platforms. One common denominator that unites this group is our belief in the importance of individuality and mental health," said Nicole Adriance, Director, US Brand Activation, Reebok. "We're so proud to bring this group and Justin Mensinger together to create an incredibly unique collection that advocates for a topic we all feel passionate about."

Justin Mensinger said, "I wanted the pieces in this collection to tie together cohesively but also have their own unique look and feel. Each piece of clothing that previously held someone's energy and style came together to create a new story and new garment that someone else can enjoy."

"With the inspirational quotes gathered from our Reebok Collective members I was able to add messages that are universal reminders to each of us. I can't wait for the world to see this collection," he said.

To launch this collection, the Reebok Collective created a video piece where viewers will be able to watch the unique process the Reebok Collective and Mensinger took to create each striking 'Pieces of Us' bespoke item behind-the-scenes.



AEO'S REVENUE RISES 24% IN Q3

US based clothing company American Eagle Outfitters (AEO) announced 24% revenue increase in the third quarter that ended on 30 October 2021.

According to the company, total net revenue increased $242 million, or 24% to $1.27 billion, compared to $ 1.03 billion in the third quarter of 2020. Operating income was $210 million, which is more than double the operating income of $96 million in third quarter 2020.

"I'm very pleased to report another quarter of record revenue and profit. The power of our brands, operations and talent are clearly evident and we are intensely focused on ensuring these strengths continue to take AEO to new heights," said Jay Schottenstein, AEO's Executive Chairman of the Board and Chief Executive Officer.

"This quarter, we took an important next step in our supply chain transformation with the planned acquisition of Quiet Logistics to ensure ongoing efficiencies and procure a state-of-the-art logistics platform with meaningful growth potential. I am confident that we will exceed $600 million of operating income for the year, well above the $550 million 2023 target," he added.

BAIN & COMPANY JOINS ABC AS KNOWLEDGE PARTNER

The Aura Blockchain Consortium (ABC), founded by LVMH, Prada Group, and Cartier, part of Richemont, and OTB Group, announced that they have entered a Global Strategic Partnership with Bain & Company.

The addition of Bain & Company as the exclusive knowledge partner will ensure a world-class onboarding as well as strategy development for luxury brands working with the ABC.

Daniela Ott, Secretary General of Aura Blockchain Consortium, said: "Bain & Company has long been recognised as the leading management consultancy that is helping companies transform and define the future of luxury and fashion brands. We share a common goal and are delighted to welcome them as our newest global strategic partner. Our members will now have access to world class management consultancy to support them as they embrace the opportunities to transform their business using our blockchain solutions."

Federica Levato, a Bain & Company Partner and Head of EMEA Luxury Practice, said, "We are delighted to join the Aura Blockchain Consortium as the exclusive knowledge partner. The advent of blockchain and non-fungible tokens (NFT) has led to a whole new paradigm of how brands engage with their customers."





BGMEA SEEKS RUSSIA'S COOPERATION

Ambassador of Russia to Bangladesh Alexander Vikentyevich Mantytskiy called upon Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) President Faruque Hassan to discuss various trade related issues especially how bilateral trade between Bangladesh and Russia could be enhanced further.

The meeting was held in BGMEA office in Dhaka. BGMEA Vice President Miran Ali and First Secretary at the Russian Embassy Anton Vereshchagin were also present at the meeting.

BGMEA President Faruque Hassan said Russia is a promising market where demand for Bangladeshi garments is huge. He added that transactions in banking channels and tariff complications are major barriers to boosting RMG exports to Russia.

He sought cooperation from the Russian government for resolving the trade barriers and paving the way to exporting readymade garments and other products to the Russian market.

On December 8, a delegation of German development cooperation agency GIZ led by Country Director for Bangladesh Dr Angelika Fleddermann also held a meeting with BGMEA President Faruque Hassan at BGMEA office in Dhaka to discuss future avenues of collaboration between BGMEA and GIZ in a bid to facilitate further development of Bangladesh apparel industry, especially in the areas of environmental sustainability, social standard, productivity, capacity building.

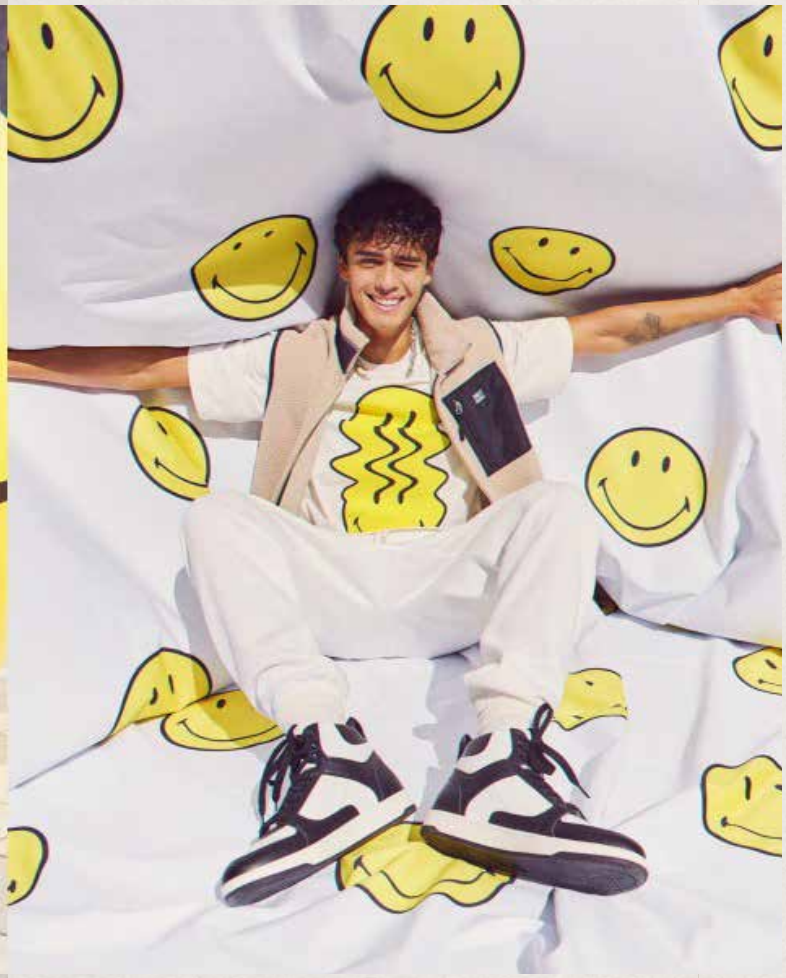
BURBERRY PARTNERS WITH MARCUS RASHFORD MBE



In partnership with English international footballer and youth advocate Marcus Rashford MBE, British luxury fashion house Burberry announced its support for organisations in the UK committed to helping disadvantaged children develop their literacy skills.

Burberry will provide funding to transform school libraries and donate books, ensuring children have access to safe environments and resources to develop their potential. The brand will also support organisations in the United States and Asia to create new libraries and provide books to underserved communities.

"We have identified a real need here. Far too many children do not currently have access to books, typically because of financial restraints, and there was a need to inspire them and allow them to see beyond the challenges they face daily. I'm really proud of what we've achieved here, building upon the work of the Marcus Rashford Book Club and I hope children will feel the benefit of these spaces for years to come. This has been a really rewarding process and I'm thankful to Burberry for continuing to stand with me on this journey to better underserved communities and offer real opportunity," said Marcus Rashford, MBE



H&M LAUNCHES STREETWEAR COLLABORATION WITH SMILEY

Swedish multinational clothing company H&M launched upbeat and vibrant streetwear collaboration with the universal counterculture symbol Smiley. As a youthful symbol of defiant optimism, the campaign feels upbeat and vibrant with highlights from the '90s. The collection is infused with full on retro vibes, designed for both men and women, the brand said in a press statement.

The collection includes tie-dye hoodies, loose-fit denim and relaxed joggers, tees, rugby shirts and sport socks. Even fun, flippant accessories and key pieces like the pile vest and the puffer jacket. The colour palette is light purple, off-white, soft beige and solid black. The vast majority of the collection is made using more sustainable materials.

The Smiley x H&M collection was launched on November 30 in selected stores and at hm.com. H&M is known for its fast-fashion clothing for men, women, teenagers, and children.

BURBERRY UNVEILS SHANGHAI PLAZA 66

British fashion brand Burberry announced the opening of its new flagship Shanghai Plaza 66, the second flagship store to feature the brand's new global design concept that encapsulates the essence of the luxury house.

Burberry China President Josie Zhang, said, "We are delighted to open the doors of our newest flagship store at Plaza 66 within the highly-dynamic and cosmopolitan city of Shanghai. A place of discovery, the store is emblematic of our rich heritage – at once, embodying creativity and innovation with our new global design concept, while supporting China's ambition to become carbon neutral. It is a unique and bold setting which brings our brand vision to life and we are excited to welcome customers to our new home in Shanghai, providing the finest luxury products and exceptional experience that are hallmarks of shopping with Burberry."

Designed in collaboration with renowned architect Vincenzo De Cotiis, Burberry's Shanghai Plaza 66 twists classicism as rules become skewed; juxtaposing brutalist elements with luxurious materials to create a distinctly modern feel.





ADVANTAGES OF AEPC MEMBERSHIP

AEPC is doing its best for its members in these difficult times of pandemic by taking various initiatives with central and state governments. Our team of professionals is working hard to provide all necessary support to the members in running their apparel export units smoothly and thereby enhancing apparel exports from India.

AEPC is giving support in all verticals of apparel exports domain and we would like to inform you to understand about the advantages of taking / continuing AEPC's membership.

TRADE FACILITATION – AEPC actively takes up exporters issues, stuck up at customs, Icegate, DGFT, ECGC and other export related organisations and facilitates in resolving the exporters issues related to risky exporters tagging, pending ROSL & RoSCTL, pending drawback etc.

AEPC'S FACILITATION FOR RISKY EXPORTERS: Since 2019, a lot of exporters were being put on Risky exporter's tag, which led to stoppage of IGST, drawback and other refunds. To address the issue of long delays in resolution of these cases, AEPC has been working closely with DGARM to understand the concerns, advice exporters on the required protocols for resolution, follow up with DGARM and get the NoCs. A dedicated facilitation desk at HO & regional offices of AEPC have been working on compiling the cases, taking them up with DGARM and getting them resolved. As on 11 June, 2021 AEPC has taken 94 Risky exporters cases with DGARM out of which NOC for 67 cases have been received.

AEPC'S FACILITATION FOR ATUFS: With the aim to facilitate faster resolution of the pending TUF cases, AEPC has been compiling the TUFS pendencies and is taking them up from time to time with the Textile Commissioner's office and Ministry of Textiles with regard to changes in scheme guidelines, technical issues, documentation issues and other clarifications and about their resolutions. Some of the major issues like In-Principle Bank Sanction Letter, Year of Manufacture issue, revision in repayment period of non-MSME applicable for existing cases also and issuance of Corrigendum for inclusion / modification of machines specification have been taken up by AEPC for resolution. During F.Y. 2020-21, 203 cases have been received and have been followed-up.

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR PPE PRODUCTION AND EXPORTS: Badly hit by Covid-19, the Indian Apparel exporters found a good alternative in production of Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) to help fight the pandemic and also make India a hub for sourcing PPE kits over the next few years. Since April 2020, Council has been constantly working with the Government at all levels on how to ramp up the production and supplies of PPE & Medical Textiles, interaction with the testing Laboratories and the certification agencies towards export promotion of these products. Council conducted several seminars, webinars for awareness creation on technology, inputs needed for PPE production, standards and accreditation. As a result of the above, India is today the second largest supplier of PPE from not having a single manufacturing unit for PPE in March. 2020.

APPAREL INDIA MAGAZINE – AEPC publishes Apparel India magazine along with e-copy of it, which is uploaded on AEPC's website in which details of latest updates (national and global) related to textile & apparel industry, government notifications / circulars, GST updates and the important activities performed by AEPC for the benefit of industry are published. AEPC's Apparel India Magazine is widely circulated online as well as offline and is reachable to all the stakeholders such as exporters, buyers, buying agents, government officials and all other concerned.

APPAREL DOSSIER – Updating the members through weekly Apparel dossier for weekly news, notifications and the issues that AEPC has taken up, for AEPC Members

UPDATE ON NOTIFICATIONS – AEPC updates its members about the recent notifications/circulars/Public notices related to DGFT, CBIC, Textile Commissioner. GST, MSME etc.

MARKET ACCESS INITIATIVE - The council gets MAI subsidy for organizing Mega shows, participation in international renowned apparel fairs and for organizing Buyer Seller Meets international. The subsidy is passed-on to the members of the council in subsidizing the cost of stall in Buyer Seller Meets and Mega shows / international fairs in overseas events. Guiding and facilitating Apparel exporters to showcase their best products at domestic fairs as well as international fairs. This also helps in Identifying opportunities for collaborations with overseas partners for up-scaling and technology upgradation with providing market intelligence for Textile and Apparel Industry

VIRTUAL EXHIBITION PLATFORM- AEPC has recently launched a Virtual Platform for organizing Export Promotion activities, in order to bridge the gap between buyer & seller during these trying times due to the worst pandemic of the century. The platform is a virtual exhibition platform to showcase products of AEPC members on 24x7x365 days format. Key features include exhibitors booths in the virtual exhibition landscape, free-flowing two-way communication between attendees/ buyers and exhibitors through video / audio call and Whatsapp chat facilities, live presentation auditorium, high security features and knowledge management. Buyers can navigate through options and ensure a near-physical fair experience through high resolution exhibitor's avatars.

DATA BANK – AEPC provides RMG export statistics regularly in the Apparel India magazine for the benefit of the members. Country-wise export statistics and top HS Codes selling in important countries along-with the description of the garments are also provided for the benefit of the exporters.

GST FACILITATION - AEPC is facilitating GST related issues of the exporters.

SEMINARS/WEBINARS & WORKSHOPS - AEPC Organizes seminars/webinars & workshops related to the apparel industry

COMPILATION OF DBK / RODTEP DATA -Compilation and submission of datas/documents for fixation of DBK/ RODTEP rates exercise is done by AEPC every year so that these benefits could be decided by the Govt., and these could be availed by the exporters.

SUBMISSION OF SUGGESTIONS OF FTP POLICY AND OTHER POLICY RELATED MATTERS
- Submission of suggestions for improvement in FTP Policy and other related policies are submitted by AEPC every year for the benefit of the exporters.

SKILL ASSESSMENT CELL
- The Skill Assessment Cell (SAC) was established with the prime objective to drive the skill assessment initiatives in Apparel / Garment, Khadi and Carpet sectors for employment generation, economic growth and social development. The cell helps in boosting the morale, uplifting the social status of the candidates and makes the workforce a certified skill pool. Council has been associated with Director General of Employment and Training (DGE&T) under the SDI Scheme for MES Courses, Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship assess in Apparel, Textile, Khadi and Carpet sectors, under the ISD Scheme of Ministry of Textiles for Non-MES courses to assess in Apparel & Textile sectors and then with the Resource Support Agency (RSA), Textiles Committee.

The current affiliations are with Apparel, Made-Ups & Home Furnishing Sector Skill Council (AMHSSC) for assessing the candidates under PMKVY and Non-PMKVY schemes under the Ministry of Skill Development &Entrepreneurship and with the Karnataka Commissionerate of Industrial Training & Employment (KVIT), Skill Mission at Karnataka state. Since its inception i.e. from September 2009 till date Council's Skill Assessment Cell has assessed over 1.66 lakhs candidates.

MMF CELL - AEPC has set up a MMF Cell to enhance the export of MMF garments and to explore the possibilities for Joint Ventures or 100% investment / technology collaboration for manufacturing of man-made fabrics in India. The Council has come up with a Compendium on MMF garments which contains the details of HS codes identified for proposed PLI scheme of Govt., of India of Rs 10,683 crores to enhance India's manufacturing capabilities of MMF segment and Technical textiles. The compendium contains the product description, images of identified garments falling under PLI HS codes, factsheet and contact details of domestic as well as overseas fabric suppliers.

The Embassy of India (EOI), Washington, and AEPC has carried out a study on **Market for Indian Apparel in the United States – Trends, Potential, and Expansion Strategy** through M/s. KPMG services. AEPC also established contact with M/s SERAI, a business-to-business platform founded by HSBC on improving reach of AEPC members to overseas buyers.

The membership of AEPC is surely helping our members to achieve their professional goals & having expert knowledge of the domain. The Membership Subscription costs just Rs 8,000+GST per year & can be paid online on our official Website https://www.aepcindia.com

SUMIT GUPTA
Secretary and Membership Department
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IMPROVEMENTS UNDER GST RETURNS AND OTHER NOTIFICATIONS UNDER GST

BY CA BALKISHAN CHHABRA

The gross GST revenue collected in the month of November 2021 is 1,31,526 crore of which CGST is 23,978 crore, SGST is 31,127 crore, IGST is 66,815 crore (including 32,165 crore collected on import of goods) & cess is 9,606 crore (including 653 crore collected on import of goods). For the second straight month gross GST collection crossed 1.30 lakh crore. The revenues for the month of November, 2021 are 25% higher than the GST revenues in the same month last year and 27% over 2019-20.

A revamped & enhanced version of GSTR-1/IFF is being made available on the GST Portal to improve the taxpayer experience. These enhancements would enable the saving of the GSTR-1 details on the GST Portal efficient and user friendly. Further, changes are being implemented incrementally in a gradual manner, to leverage the familiarity of taxpayer so as to ensure that taxpayers can adapt to the changes smoothly. The changes would be implemented in two phases, to ensure that disruption to the taxpayers is minimal, and valuable feedback received is accounted for in subsequent phase.

IMPROVEMENTS IN GSTR-1

The following provides an overview of the updated functionality and their benefits in Phase 1:

Reorganized GSTR-1 Dashboard:- Taxpayers will now experience an enhanced online user interface in GSTR-1/IFF with the following changes:

- GSTR-1/IFF has been grouped in two sections namely ADD RECORD DETAILS and AMEND RECORD DETAILS.
- All the tables/tiles for new details addition shall be available under ADD RECORD DETAILS section while all the tables/tiles for amending previously filed details shall be available under AMEND RECORD DETAILS section. Re-arrangement of tables/tiles shall ensure that taxpayers can navigate in an easy manner to add or amend record details in the GSTR 1/IFF.
- By default, ADD RECORD DETAILS section shall be in expanded form (visible) and AMEND RECORD DETAILS section shall be in collapsed form (hidden). Taxpayers can expand or collapse these sections as per the requirement. As it has been observed that only around 1% of details added are amended by taxpayers, that it why it will be in collapsed mode.
- E-invoice advisory and help buttons have been moved to the top of the dashboard page for ease of access. It also is notable that e-invoice provisions are applicable only to selected taxpayers, having aggregate turnover above a particular threshold.

Table/Tile Document Counts:- The document count for each tile (table) has been made more informative with color coding. The status of uploaded (Saved, Pending, Errored)

documents with their count will also be made available. Taxpayer can now ascertain if there are any pending or errored records in any of the tables of GSTR-1/IFF from the dashboard itself. System shall update the count of records in the tiles on real time basis which will help in easy reconciliation. In case any record added by taxpayer is errored out, then the tile will be highlighted in red color.

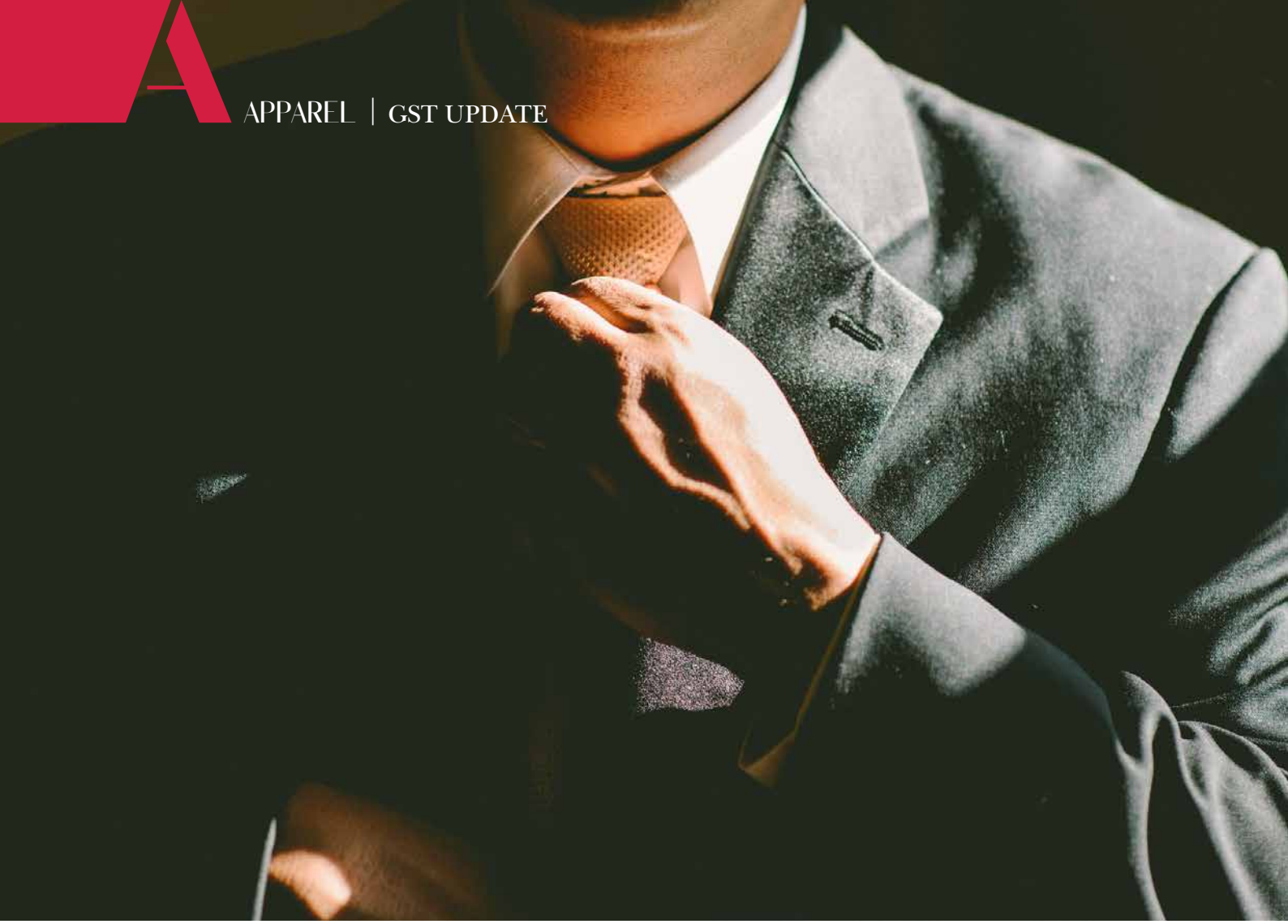
Enhancement in B2B and CDNR table/tile:- Taxpayers will now be able to view a new record details table with the details of the recipient wise count of records. Record details table will have the following columns:

- **Taxpayer type-** Type of recipient taxpayer (Regular, SEZ, and Composition) shall be displayed in this column.
- **Processed invoice-** Number of processed invoices will be available in this column with hyperlink. On clicking it, the taxpayer will navigate to document details page to view all the records added for the respective recipient(s).
- **Pending/errored invoice-** Number of pending invoices will be available in this column with hyperlink. On click of it, taxpayer can navigate to pending/errored records details page to view all the records which are in pending or errored status for the respective recipient(s).
- **Add Invoice-** Taxpayer can add new records for the selected recipient. On click of + symbol, add page shall open with pre-filled recipient GSTIN. On click of save, add page will reopen so that taxpayers can continue to add multiple records.
- **Search-** A general search functionality has been added in Document details page. Using this, taxpayer can now search specific record pertaining to a specific GSTIN. This will help taxpayer to search added records seamlessly.

Records per page feature:- System will now provide the records per page feature in all the tables under ADD RECORD DETAILS section leading to ease of viewing. This feature will allow the taxpayers to customized number of records to be viewed on per page. By default, the Records per page will be set at 10 records per page and can be increased to view 50 records per page.

Steps to file GSTR-1/IFF:- A new check has been introduced in the system which will check that whether the taxpayer has added





new records after generating the summary. Taxpayers may please note that there would be changed flow in such a situation. In case new records have been added, the SUBMIT and PREVIEW buttons will be disabled till a new summary has been generated after updating records. This check will ensure that filing of GSTR-1/IFF always happens with the correct & update summary only, and no mistake happens in this regard.

Taxpayer can upload details of outward supplies and file GSTR-1/IFF by following the steps enumerated below:

- Taxpayer can add or amend records in respective tables of GSTR-1/IFF.
- Once the records are saved, taxpayer shall click on GENERATE SUMMARY button.
- After the summary is successfully generated, system will enable PREVIEW and SUBMIT buttons.
- If the taxpayer intends to verify summary of GSTR-1/IFF, taxpayer can click PREVIEW button to download summary PDF.
- Taxpayer can make necessary changes before SUBIT/FILE of GSTR-1/IFF. However, if any new records are added after generating the summary, the SUBMIT and PREVIEW buttons will be disabled till a new summary has been generated by clicking GENERATE SUMMARY button after updating records.
- Taxpayer will also be informed to generate new summary, in case the latest summary is not available/ generated.
- After the changes done in GSTR-1/ IFF, taxpayer shall click on Generate summary button and can submit/file GSTR-1/IFF.

AADHAAR AUTHENTICATION

The CBIC vide Notification No. 38/2021 dated December 21, 2021 has notified effective date as 1st January, 2022, from which the amendments in the Notification No. 35/2021–Central Tax dated September 24, 2021 w.r.t Aadhaar authentication will come into force. Aadhaar authentication for registered person has been notified for the purpose of -

- Filing of application for revocation of cancellation of registration in Form GST REG-21 under Rule 23
- Filing of refund application in Form RFD-01 under rule 89
- Refund under Rule 96 of the integrated tax (IGST) paid on goods exported out of India

Authentication of Aadhar is must for every registered person and it shall be of Aadhaar number of authorized signatory of:

- The proprietor, in the case of proprietorship firm, or
- Any partner, in the case of a partnership firm, or
- The karta, in the case of a Hindu undivided family, or
- The Managing Director or any whole time Director, in the case of a company, or
- Any of the Members of the Managing Committee of an Association of persons or body of

individuals or a Society, or

- The Trustee in the Board of Trustees, in the case of a Trust

OTHER IMPORTANT UPDATE

Section 16(2)(aa) notified from 1 Jan 2022

Clause (aa) of Section 16(2) has been notified from 1st January, 2022. As per the said clause the details of the invoice or debit note referred to in clause (a) which has been furnished by the supplier in the statement of outward supplies and such details have been communicated to the recipient of such invoice or debit note in the manner specified under section 37.

Conclusion:- It means that from 1st Jan 2022, Input available only as when as come in GSTR-2B. After insertion of new sub-clause 16(2)(aa):-

- ITC cannot be availed beyond GSTR-2B
- No concept of Provisional Credit (now 5% ITC Provision applicable but from 1st January no provisional ITC)

New Functionality to withdraw their application for cancellation of Registration

Functionality has been introduced for taxpayers to withdraw their application for cancellation of registration, filed in form REG-16, provided no action has been initiated by the tax officer against their application.

Enabling EVC for all Taxpayers

Earlier all taxpayers registered as companies were mandatorily required to use DSC for all online processes on the GST Portal. Now, the facility of using EVC, in addition to DSC, has been extended to such taxpayers.

Change in the undertaking to be submitted by the taxpayer for issuance of Form PMT-03

To enable Tax officers to issue PMT-03, an undertaking has to be filed by the taxpayers. The text in the undertaking form to be submitted by the taxpayer has been altered to include both credit and cash ledgers for enabling re-credit of inadmissible refund amount to respective ledgers.

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SHREEJA SINGH | DECEMBER 16, 2021 / 06:51 PM IST



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By Shine Jacob

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SAI launches FairCapacity platform to build trust between Buyer-Indian Apparel Suppliers



SAI launches FairCapacity platform to build trust between Buyer-Indian Apparel Suppliers

New Delhi, 14 Dec (KNN) The Social Accountability International (SAI) has launched Blockchain-enabled FairCapacity platform, in India last week to strengthen buyer-supplier relationship and improve consumer confidence in Indian apparels, said the press release.

Garment makers in India can access the platform at no cost and gain prioritized access to digital tools and free training.

Commenting on this, Dr A Sakthivel, Chairman, AEPC said, "Indian apparel sector has come a long way in improving the working conditions for the garment workers. We at the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) consistently inform and encourage our members to meet the highest standards of social compliance."

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India is eyeing expansion of its global footprint by harnessing UAE's business capabilities and infrastructure, said the country's Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal after discussion with industry leaders in Mumbai and Export Promotion Councils heads.

Goyal told industrialists and export facilitators in India's commercial capital that the "UAE is the gateway to the GCC and to all of Africa. Our goal is to become the number one trading partner of the UAE."



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