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## Bangladesh Garment Industry Commits To Cotton Recycling

Recycling 100% cotton waste could save Bangladesh half a billion USD in cotton imports alone.

- New data reveals the valuable opportunity for fashion companies to implement circular systems in Bangladesh
- 100% cotton waste in Bangladesh is worth over US\$ 100 million in the recycling market
- Benetton, Fashion Cube, Gymshark, Kiabi, Next, Primark and The Very Group are among the latest companies to join the Circular Fashion Partnership

**A**nalysis conducted by the Circular Fashion Partnership has revealed the significant value in utilising textile waste more efficiently in Bangladesh. The Circular Fashion Partnership is a cross-sectorial project led by Global Fashion Agenda, with partners Reverse Resources, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) and is supported by P4G, that aims to achieve a long-term, scalable transition to a circular fashion system.

### The scale and value of Bangladesh textile waste

Its research has found that in 2019, Bangladesh produced approximately 577,000 tonnes of waste just from ready-made garments (RMG) and fabrics mills, of which almost half (250,000 tonnes) was 100% cotton waste.

It is estimated that factories in Bangladesh could sell this 100% cotton waste to the recycling market for up to US\$ 100 million.

Bangladesh is currently heavily reliant on the importation of textile fibre. In 2019, the country imported 1.63 million tonnes of staple cotton fibre (with a value estimated to be US\$ 3.5 billion). Based on the Circular Fashion Partnership findings, if just the 100% cotton waste was recycled within Bangladesh, imports could decrease by around 15%, thus saving half a billion dollars that would have been spent on cotton imports.

### More prestigious fashion companies are seizing the opportunity

Since its launch in November 2020, over 50 brands, manufacturers, recyclers and NGOs have signed up to take part in the Circular Fashion Partnership. The partnership supports the development of the textile recycling industry in Bangladesh by capturing and directing post-production fashion waste back into the production of new fashion products. In addition, the

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# Bangladesh Garment Industry Commits To Cotton Recycling

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partnership seeks to find solutions for the Covid-19 related pile-up of deadstock and to engage regulators and investors around the current barriers and economic opportunities in the country. To do so, the initiative facilitates circular commercial collaborations between textile and garment manufacturers, recyclers and fashion brands operating in Bangladesh.

**The participants include:**

● **Brands:** Benetton, Fashion Cube, Gymshark, Kiabi, Next, Primark, The Very Group and Teddy SpA

● **Manufacturers:** AKM Knitwear, Aman Group, Asrotex, Aukotex, Beximco, Bitopi Group (Tarasima), Cute Dress, Echotex Ltd, Epillyon, Fakir Fashions, Fakir Knitwear, Genesis, GMS, Impress, Interstoff, J.M. Fabrics JL Sweaters, Knit Asia Group,

MAS Intimates, Meghna Knit Composite, Natural Denim Ltd., Norp Knit Industries Ltd. Unit-2, Northern, Ocean Sweaters Ltd, Ratul Group (Knitwear & Fabric), Reedisha Group, Rising Tex, Sakura, SB Style, Shasha Garments, Simple Approach, Tarasima Group, Urmi, Vintage (ABA Group)

● **Recyclers:** Bangladesh Petrochemical Company Ltd. (BPCL), Circ, Circular Systems,

Ecolife, Evrnu, Natural Fiber Welding (NFW), Officina+39, SC Grand Plus, the partnership has welcomed new affiliate partners including Fashion for Good, the Danish Embassy in Bangladesh, the Bangladeshi Embassy in Denmark and McKinsey & Co. The affiliate partners will contribute by sharing knowledge, networks, exposure and unlocking investment opportunities for the development of the textile

recycling industry in Bangladesh.

The Circular Fashion Partnership is now closed for new participants. However, the organisers hope to continue the project and expand it to other key production countries such as Indonesia, India or Vietnam - in the future.

Learnings from the work conducted in Bangladesh will be published in an openly available 'Circularity Playbook' later in the year.

Federica Marchionni, CEO, Global Fashion Agenda says: "In order for fashion to continue to prosper within planetary boundaries, we need to urgently embrace the opportunities of a circular economy. Using the Reverse Resources technology platform, we have been able to map participants' textile waste to grasp its scale and quantify the economic opportunity of closing the loop. These findings demonstrate that a circular fashion system could breed not only environmental but financial benefits for a country. It is wonderful to see so many esteemed parties joining us on our journey to circularity and I hope that the business model being developed in Bangladesh will be replicated in other countries around the world."

Nin Castle, Head of Recycling and Chief Project Officer, Reverse Resources, says: "Bangladesh produces arguably the most recyclable textile waste of any apparel producing country.

With the emergence of new and improved versions of existing recycling technologies, Bangladesh has a huge opportunity to scale its local recycling capacity and accordingly reduce its dependency on virgin raw materials. If a recycling industry is fostered now, it would enable the country to not only enjoy the obvious benefits of cost and carbon footprint reduction but also gain a massive competitive edge." ■

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# Entrepreneurs Disrupt Wasteful Supply Chain Practices

The pandemic exposed the fragility of the global system designed to get the right product to the right place at the right time. When faced with resource shortages, product scarcity, and limited traceability, the supply chain became susceptible to counterfeit goods, compromised quality, and delays in distribution.

In response, companies are trying to build more resilience into the supply chain and the effort has revealed an unexpected connection with sustainability. As a recent GS1 US whitepaper points out, a more circular economy will be more resilient. At the same time, consumers have a growing appetite for greener, more sustainable products, so the future of supply chains must also be circular to build consumer loyalty and back up brand promises such as "made from recycled materials."

## Solving recycling to address the shrinking supply of virgin materials

Most Americans recycle bottles they use every day. However, less than 10% of plastic is recycled in the United States because the industry still struggles with sorting plastics. Shrink sleeve and pressure-sensitive labels are often the culprits: they cannot be separated from the plastic bottles they cover, making them impossible to process. Magnomer is a startup that believes magnetizable ink can fix this problem. Their technology uses magnets that already exist in many recycling plants to remove labels that often prevent recycling.

MeCycle is also aiming to improve the US recycling rate. A consumer can scan the UPC barcode of plastic, aluminum or glass containers using the MeCycle app, which shows them how much carbon and waste they are reducing and returns incentives such as bottle deposits that are available in their area. MeCycle is beginning to offer its service within select

markets of New York State, so consumers can return bottles and cans to ensure they get reborn into new beverage containers or other useful items.

## Rethinking fashion to reduce waste

In addition to food, bottles, and cans, textiles are wasted at a staggering rate. A whopping 14.5 million tons of textiles were sent to landfills or incinerated in

2018, which is equivalent to 85% of the textiles produced that year in the US alone.

A growing base of entrepreneurs are driving experimentation in the apparel industry to reduce this unsustainable amount of waste and make fashion greener. OtaiO, for example, enables a "click-to-brick" returns management solution with smart and optimal returns routing for retail brands. Leveraging the GS1 sys-

tem of standards for identifying products and locations, this solution enables shoppers to buy anywhere and return anywhere. OtaiO technology makes brick-and-mortar locations a network of return and resell centres, which cuts down on textile waste, and means far less transportation and packaging associated with the traditional returns process. These entrepreneurs recognise the opportunities

associated with the growing consumer demand for sustainability. Their visions lead to a more circular economy, where products, assets, and infrastructure will be more productive as they are kept in use longer and reduce stress on supply streams. Future circular supply chains will transform today's vulnerabilities into tomorrow's opportunities. ■

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## Crypto Fashion: Why People Pay Real Money For Virtual Clothes

When the virtual world Decentraland said in June users could make and sell their own clothing for avatars to wear on the site, Hiroto Kai stayed up all night designing Japanese-inspired garments. Selling kimonos for around US\$ 140 each, he said he made US\$ 15,000-20,000 in just three weeks.

While the idea of spending real money on clothing that does not physically exist is baffling to many, virtual possessions generate real sales in the "metaverse" - online environments where people can congregate, walk around, meet friends and play games.

Digital artist and Japan-enthusiast Kai's real name is Noah. He's a 23-year-old living in New Hampshire. After making as much in those three weeks as he'd earn in a year at his music store job, he quit to become a full-time designer.

"It just took off," Kai said. "It was a new way to express yourself and it's walking art, that's what's so cool about it... When you have a piece of clothing, you can go to a party in it, you can dance in it, you can show off and it's a status symbol."

In Decentraland, clothing for avatars - known as "wearables" - can be bought and sold on the blockchain in the form of a crypto asset called a non-fungible token (NFT). Kai's kimonos include exquisite crushed blue velvet pieces with golden dragon trim.

NFTs exploded in popularity earlier this year, as speculators and crypto enthusiasts flocked to buy the new type of asset, which represents ownership of online-



A virtual sneaker made by digital fashion company RTFKT in collaboration with the fund A16z

only items such as digital art, trading cards and land in online worlds.

The niche crypto assets are also capturing the attention of some of the world's biggest fashion companies, keen to associate themselves with a new generation of gamers - although most of their forays so far are for marketing.

LVMH-owned Louis Vuitton launched a metaverse game where players can collect NFTs, and Burberry has created branded NFT accessories for Blankos Block Party, a game owned by Mythical Games. Gucci has sold non-NFT clothing for avatars within the game Roblox.

"Your avatar represents you," said Imani McEwan, a Miami-based fashion model and NFT enthusiast. "Basically what you're wearing is what makes you who you are."

McEwan reckons he has spent US\$ 15,000-16,000 on 70 NFT wearable items since January, using profit from cryptocurrency investments. His first purchase was a bitcoin-themed sweater and he recently bought a black beret designed by his friend.

### Selfie shopping

The overall size of the NFT wearables market is difficult to establish. In Decentraland alone wearable sales volume totalled US\$ 750,000 in the first half of 2021, up from US\$ 267,000 in the same period last year, according to NonFungible.com, a website which tracks the NFT market.

Some proponents say wearables and shopping in virtual shops could be the future of retail.

"Instead of scrolling through a feed and shopping online, you can have a more immersive brand experience by exploring a virtual space - whether you are shopping for your online avatar or buying physical products that can be shipped to your door," said Julia Schwartz, director of Republic Realm, a US\$ 10 million virtual real estate investment vehicle which has built a shopping mall in Decentraland.

For NFT enthusiasts, online fashion does not replace physical purchases. But Paula Sello and Alissa Aulbekova, co-founders of the digital fashion start-up Auroboros, say it could be an environ-

mentally-friendly alternative to fast fashion.

Customers can send Auroboros an image of themselves and have clothing digitally added for 60 pounds (\$83) to 1,000 pounds. Sello argued that the virtual garment concept could limit the waste of consumers buying clothes to wear on social media, citing a 2018 Barclaycard study which found 9% of British shoppers have bought clothes for social media photos, then returned them.

"We need to have the shift now in fashion. The industry simply cannot continue," said Sello. Virtual sneaker company RTFKT sells limited edition NFTs representing sneakers which can be "worn" in some virtual worlds or on social media via a Snapchat filter.

"It really took off when Covid started and loads of people went more online," said Steven Vasilev, RTFKT's co-founder and CEO. The company has posted US\$ 7 million of sales, with limited edition sneakers selling in auctions for US\$ 10,000-60,000, he said. While the majority of customers are in their 20s and 30s, some are as young as 15.

RTFKT's NFTs can also be used as a token to get a free physical version of the shoe, but one in 20 customers do not redeem that token. "I didn't do the redemption stuff because I couldn't be bothered," said Jim McNelis, a Dallas-based NFT buyer who founded NFT company, nft42. "I try to avoid the physical stuff as much as possible." ■

(Reuters)

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## 'Global Used Clothing Industry Is Part Of the Recycling Solution'

Four associations involved in the global used clothing industry have teamed up to "dispel myths" and "set the record straight" about textile recycling.

The associations - including the Secondary Materials and Recycled Textiles Association (SMART), the European Recycling Industries' Confederation (EuRIC) - Textiles, Textile Recycling Association (TRA) and the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) - Textile Division - believe there is a "common misconception" that second-hand clothing exported to developing countries partially ends up being discarded right away. They add the clothing not sold

directly in the market gets passed down the supply chain and ends up selling in other smaller markets throughout the region, suggesting that no profitable business will spend money on packing, shipping and distributing a product only to have it end up in landfill.

The associations say the used clothing industry is growing right now "in response to the increasing demand" for affordable products and environmentally-conscious consumers and add in many cases, the used garments are also "higher quality and last longer" than cheaper new products.

Jackie King, Executive Director of

SMART said: "Textile reuse and recycling is the solution, not the problem. Second-hand clothing exported to countries is sorted and graded for customer needs or preferences. Suppliers do not ship waste; it is not cost-effective. Customers demand quality clothing for resale, not waste; the semantics of 'waste' really means what they couldn't sell. The reality is if clothing doesn't sell, it is often shipped to other worldwide markets for resale or recycling - not thrown away."

The associations cite an extensive study conducted by the Institute of Economic Affairs in Kenya in April 2021 on the used clothing industry and its con-

tributions to the Kenyan economy.

It found the used clothing industry directly employs around two million people, in addition to thousands of jobs created and supported in ancillary sectors, such as the transportation industry.

In addition, 91.5% of households in Kenya are said to purchase second-hand clothes - for every 100 used garments bought, it means 60 - 85 new garments are displaced, which results in a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and the use of toxins that would have been caused by the production of new textiles. ■

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## Digital Knowledge Platform Asia Garment Hub Launched

The Asia Garment Hub, a one-stop digital knowledge platform, has been launched to help industry stakeholders understand, promote and operationalise decent work and sustainable business practices across the supply chain.

A collaboration between German government's GIZ FABRIC and ILO's Decent Work in the Garment Sector Supply Chains in Asia project, the platform will elevate best practices, foster partnerships, facilitate learning and exchange, and inspire action to address critical challenges in the industry, the Asia Garment Hub said in statement. The Asia Garment Hub is aimed at manufacturers, brands, trade unions, employer organisations and development partners, as well as at journalists, civil society, policymakers and individuals interested in a more sustainable future for the industry, according to the statement. "Ensuring decent work for all in Asia's garment sector will only become a reality if stakeholders at every level are actively engaged," said David Williams, manager of the ILO's Decent Work in Garment Supply Chains in Asia project.

Access to the Hub is free of charge while to bridge language barriers, its navigation and content is offered in English and 10 other languages including Amharic, Bahasa, Bengali, Burmese, Chinese, Hindi, Khmer, Sinhalese, Urdu, & Vietnamese.

In 2019, the garment sector employed an estimated 65 million workers in Asia and the Pacific -or 75% of all garment sector workers worldwide. More than half of these - some 35 million in Asia and the Pacific - are women, and the sector employs 5.2% of all working women in the region. ■

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## India Will Fast Track Trade Deals With Six Nations: Commerce Secretary

India will fast-track free trade agreements (FTAs) with at least six nations - including the UAE, the UK, Australia, Canada, and the EU - over the next few months, in line with its revamped foreign trade strategy, Commerce and Industry Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam said. The earliest one may be inked with the UAE.

"We have revamped our FTA strategy. India has to engage with the rest of the world. Without that India will be shut out from global markets... The world has moved into bilateral or local/regional arrangements," he said, adding that such trade deals assume more significance now as India is not a part of any local or regional arrangement.

India walked away from China-backed Asian trade bloc Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership that signed an agreement last year to create the world's biggest free trade bloc. The government had then said its concerns related to the issue of market access were not adequately addressed. Addressing the Confederation of

Indian Industry (CII) annual session, the commerce secretary said about 20 FTAs are under negotiation currently. "We are fast-tracking six of them and putting the rest slightly on the backburner. The earliest FTA that we will probably strike will be with the UAE," Subrahmanyam said. ■

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CE 

# 'Our State-Of-The-Art Set-Up, Our Focus On Sustainability, Professionalism Has Won Us High-End Customers'



**Dinesh Gosrani,**  
Managing Director, Chur Textiles Ltd.

// Sustainability is very important at Chur Textiles. We are located in MIDC where our treatment levels are strictly monitored and tested to rigorous parameters. We are proud to say we have never faced any complaint on this issue. We have various certifications - Okeo-tex, BCI, ECO VERA, etc.

**B**hiwandi is a powerloom cluster that uses low level technologies. How and why did you opt for state-of-the-art weaving and processing facility in this cluster? How have you benefitted from these latest technologies?

First would like to address the misconception -, Bhiwandi is no longer just a powerloom cluster but has modernised significantly, with latest rapier and airjet weaving installations coming up in big numbers.

Having been in Bhiwandi since the last five decades, we always were a little surprised that even though it is one of the largest weaving clusters, there was no really good process facility for the buyers who demanded high quality at reasonable prices. They had to go all the way to Ahmedabad or other places for the same. Then bring back their fabrics for sale in Mumbai. So there was an existing geo located gap for a modern process house in Bhiwandi.

We as a business house were expecting that if we give state-of-the-art processing near the buyers, there will be a good demand for our products. The same has been validated by the overflowing order books. We are sure it is the choice

of modern high capacity machinery that has made us the process house of choice within Mumbai region.

How did putting up state-of-the-art help us? It has allowed and given us the niche of being recognised and certified by major fibre players, like Liva, Lenzing for TENCEL and ECO VERA. The same would not have been possible without technologically advanced industry set-up.

**Again being in Bhiwandi, there are certain notions attached to an operating firm - low quality, absence of professionalism, financial, social and environmental sustainable practices are in short supply - would you say this is generally true?**

As perceptions go, yes that would be true to an extent. However reality is changing rapidly with many state-of-the-art units, particularly in weaving having been installed in the near past.

Following this there is an improvement in the professionalism to some extent. As far as we are concerned, we have a fully professionalised set-up, with high level of domain experts associated in areas of manufacturing, finance, sales and environment.

Particularly in the area of environment,

we are located in MIDC where our treatment levels are strictly monitored and tested to rigorous parameters. We are proud to say we have never faced any complaint on this issue.

Beyond just complying, we have taken a proactive approach and are certified for Okeo-tex, BCI, ECO VERA, etc sustainability certifications.

**How did you manage to stand apart? What kind of strategies and actions did you have to take to achieve a different stature? Tell us about the important principles that Chur Textiles has been built on and thrives on?**

For us, the family name of over five decades is important above all. Integrity and fairness are the core of all our business dealings and remains the founding principal.

We have further embraced the concept of no compromise in quality and service. Testimony is that our products especially the stretch / spandex ones are considered to be among the top three in India today in terms of quality.

Our three principles - Trust, quality and consistency.

Standing up and rising above the Bhiwandi culture was a challenge personally and as an industry, but we are proud to say we have successfully navigated ourselves to be recognised as a unit with high level of work culture.

**What will drive environmental sustainability in textile processing? What bene-**

**fits have you derived from being environmentally sustainable? And any drawbacks of being environmentally sustainable?**

As we see it, the drive towards environmental sustainability is being driven by a couple of factors, namely:

- 1) Personal awareness of creating a better world for our children;
- 2) Demand from the consuming world, specially the export market;
- 3) Faster and wider availability of technological know-how to bring cost of sustainability to commercial levels;
- 4) Of course, regulations and laws that get stricter everyday;
- 5) Awareness and highlighted issues of environment on the social media.

Business wise, we are placed at a higher level than the other normal processing units surrounding us, thus enabling longer term relationships with high quality buyers who want no compromise fabrics with best finishes at affordable prices, yet are certified for sustainability.

At a personal level, there is great satisfaction for us that we are taking steps to leave a better planet for the coming generations to inherit.

**Tell us about some unique business, HR and production practices that you follow.**

While we are a modern, big capacity manufacturing company having more than

....Contd. On Page 7

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## Our State-Of-The-Art Set-Up, Our Focus On...

....Contd. From Page 6

750 employees, we remain connected to all our people. The family directors handle in a hands-on manner three important functions of production, sales and finance. In production we have ensured fast turnaround times with stringent quality controls during the manufacturing process and before despatch.

The human touch finds its place in our sales efforts also, with personal interaction and relationships developed with our agents and customers.

### What's new at Chur Textiles - in terms of products, services, capacity expansions?

We are one of the largest producers of demanding fabrics like shirting piece dyed with stretch. Among this we are considered to be leaders in Poly Spandex with our capacities booked for over three times in this particular sort.

The same applies to cotton stretch fabrics as we have the capacity to deliver batches of upto 50,000 meters in single shade with stretch properties. A capability that is rare to find outside branded organised mills. Barring events like the current pandemic we hope to double capacity within the next three years. We currently have a capacity to process and deliver finished fabrics of over 42,00,000 metres per month.

### You have invested in R&D... tell us about some innovative products that you have introduced.

Yes, we have state-of-the-art laboratory and R&D centre with all latest testing and sampling equipment. This enables us to provide in-house testing facilities for all major export buyers and high end branded garment manufacturers.

Using this facility, manned by a high level fully dedicated team, we have been able to introduce and enhance products like anti-viral, anti-microbial, stain-resistant, fragrance and other finishes. In addition, we have finetuned processing of sustainable fibres like hemp, bamboo etc.

### How did the lockdowns impact your business? What has been Chur's strategy for survival and growth since 2020, given the pandemic, the lockdowns, the uncertainty?

Like others, the first lockdown hit us without warning. For a company that

employs 750 plus persons, it was a major challenge, which we managed with empathy.

In business, it has had an impact on working capital and fund flow. Fortunately being well regarded for our product and quality, we were able to recover faster and were back to almost normal operations after the first wave, but the second wave has again impacted the business.

As a strategy, we have opted to forge deeper ties and cooperate with our buyers and suppliers to make sure we are poised and equipped to come back to optimum utilisation in the shortest possible period of time once things come back to normal.

### Two important business goals for you in 2021?

We plan to develop the export markets aggressively, making it a major portion of our sales. We plan to reach maximum customers in the domestic markets. Both segmentwise and geographically.

### Weaving and processing are the weak links in the textile industry. We have been hearing this for almost two decades now. Your take on this.

Yes, agree that processing still needs to work on skill levels of its workforce.

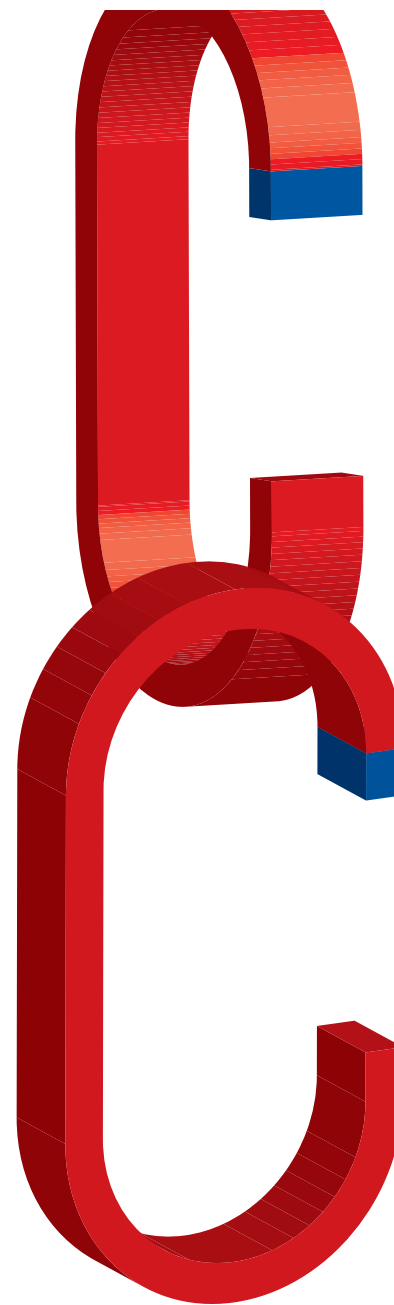
Another area is lack of knowledge to tackle effluent and other environmental issues. That leads to a mental block in entrepreneurs investing in new processing industry and resulting in lack of modernisation.

Also processing is a capital intensive project, and unlike weaving you cannot phase it out. Reluctance of formal finance sector to fund textile projects is another major hurdle. So to that extent, while some improvement has been there, they still do remain the weaker links.

### Anything else you would like to share with the readers.

I would like to exhort the readers to clear many myths and misconceptions about the Indian textile industry in general and MSME in particular. We are a young dynamic bunch and see a huge potential ahead, both for personal growth and the country via creating maximum employment. The sky is the limit if we just raise our vision and performance. ■

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# 'Kusters Calico Is Moving Towards Industry 4.0 Digitisation'

## Sushil Verma

Managing Director  
Kusters Calico Machinery Pvt. Ltd.

// "With our cold pad batch and continuous bleaching ranges, customers can reduce manpower to operate the machine as there is full automation of water, steam and chemical dosing for every fabric type."

**K**usters Calico has completed 25 years of successful operations in India. How are you celebrating and marking this milestone in the history of the company?

Completing 25 years of successful operations in India is a big milestone, which has been achieved with hard work of our employees, our business partners and associates and customers' support. We have lined up many programmes throughout the year from quality enhancement, production infrastructure upgradation, weekly training to employees, contacting customers and sending emailers, employee engagement, to recreation.

We are working to create a separate SBU of "Lifecycle Services" for the customers, which will hopefully be in operation by this year-end. We would be able to offer much more to our customers like 3D view of spare parts with SAP code in machine HMI, SCADA to enable production managers to see complete machine/production data on their computers, machine maintenance alarms at set intervals, digital operational and maintenance manuals, remote access of machines for online service support to name a few.

**Tell us about your journey of these 25 years? What were the important achievements over these years?**

A journey is always with a lot of sweet

and sour memories, which gives opportunity to learn, practice and move forward after overcoming the shortcomings. The journey started in 1996 and encountered rough patch in 2004 when Kusters Germany decided to sell their stake worldwide including Kusters Calico. Later on in 2005, Jagenberg AG, Germany purchased the stake in Kusters Calico.

A new journey started when the company started to set up their own R&D to continuously upgrade designs. A separate SBU of Converting Business was started in 2016 to give boost to coating and lamination machines.

Upgradation of manufacturing activities started in 2017 when new assembly shed was constructed, new paint and blasting booths were constructed, new double column machine was added apart from addition/upgradation of many other machines. Jagenberg AG purchased 100% stake in Kusters Calico and it became 100% subsidiary of Jagenberg AG, Germany in the year 2018.

Kusters Calico added manufacturing of slitting machines in 2020 under license from Kampf, Germany, a Jagenberg Group company.

**How do you rank yourself in the textile industry in terms of level of technology, environmental friendliness, quality levels, ease of operation, and position in the market?**



The Kusters technology in wet textile processing is well known worldwide and Kusters Calico has further done a number of improvements in the designs for cost reduction and better results. We have developed anti deflection S-roll technology which reduces the residual moisture up to 15% less after squeezing than ordinary squeezers which results in lesser steam consumption, while the Super Flush and Flush Master concepts are already proven for efficient washing with lesser water consumption due to innovative washing concepts.

Our swimming roll padders technology has no match even today. We use IE3 energy efficient motors. As explained above we are going towards Industry 4.0 digitisation in our machines. No competitor can beat us in technology and our motto is "Affordable Excellence". We aim to give the best machines and technology at competitive prices.

**What new can your customers and the industry expect from the company in terms of product, technology, service over the next few years?**

We have developed new ceramic burner for 2 metre width singeing machine and another design is under development

for 3.4 metre width singeing machine. We are also working on complete standardisation of the modules and customer has to select from the list of standard modules only, which will enable us to offer proven designs, optimise cost and delivery time. Another development is separate SBU of Lifecycle Services, which will enable us give to better after sales service to customers.

**How has business been since 2020 when the pandemic resulted in lockdowns, etc, given that the textile industry is reportedly doing really well? How do you expect markets to pan out going further?**

Initial months of 2020 were difficult as we lost almost three months in lockdown and then there were issues of supply chain, labour shortages, logistics issues, etc. In the second half, the activities picked up fast and our team worked in three shifts to meet the top and bottom line targets. Overall, the year was good.

Again, in 2021 beginning, Covid issues cropped up and slowed down the

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# 'Kusters Calico Is Moving Towards Industry 4.0 Digitisation'

...Contd. From Page 8

order booking although the production was going on this time. Hope that we will close this year also well. We hope going forward market will be good, provided there are no further disruptions in the economy.

## Is processing a weak link in India's textile industry?

Yes, you are right. Textile processors still do not give due importance to processing and still using old technology to process. But time is changing and competition itself is forcing them to shift to continuous process technology and over the years many process houses have shown interest and have installed machines with new technologies. Going forward this will further get better and more and more process houses will understand the environmental issues with water and energy and move towards quality continuous processing machines.

## Two important features that set apart Kusters Calico machines?

Our machines are designed and manufactured keeping in view the issues faced by customers in textile processing. The first one is swimming roll padders. Our swimming rollers used for dyeing gives best colour without colour variation in the width of the fabric.

These same swimming rollers are also used for dewatering or finishing applications in wet on wet application or in front of drying cylinders.

Customers get even chemical application throughout the width of the fabric as well as lesser residual moisture content in fabric, which reduces utility consumption for evaporation of the moisture content.

The second one is super flush in washing, which is designed for various fabric processing like desizing, bleaching, mercerizing, dyed washing and print washing. This is versatile washer and gives excellent

washing efficiency for the various washing sequence of textile processing. Due to lesser distance between guide rollers, any critical fabric can be washed without any distortion or crease formation marks. Due to lesser volume of liquor, it consumes less steam and with vigorous circulation system, generates high turbulence in liquor, which results in effective washing of any textile type.

## Two important features that are most relevant in Kusters Calico machines for the Indian market?

Due to stringent government norms on effluent generation and treatment in the processing industry in India, we see huge potential of continuous dyeing and bleaching ranges for process houses. Still many customers are carrying out dyeing and bleaching through "jiggers"




which is very old technology. When compared with latest dyeing and bleaching processes, jiggers consume more utilities due to increased liquor bath size. With our cold pad batch and continuous bleaching ranges, customers can reduce manpower to operate the machine as there is full automation of water, steam and chemical dosing for every fabric type.

## Business ethics that make Kusters Calico stand out from the competition?

We are 100% German owned company and have similar processes and ethics as any German company will have. We deliver what we commit. With rapid module standardisation each customer will be assured

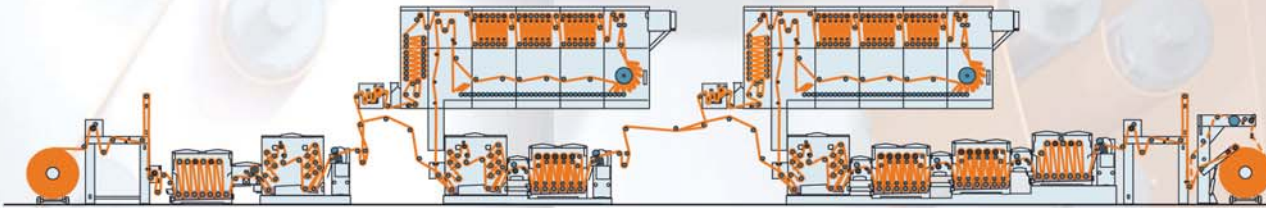
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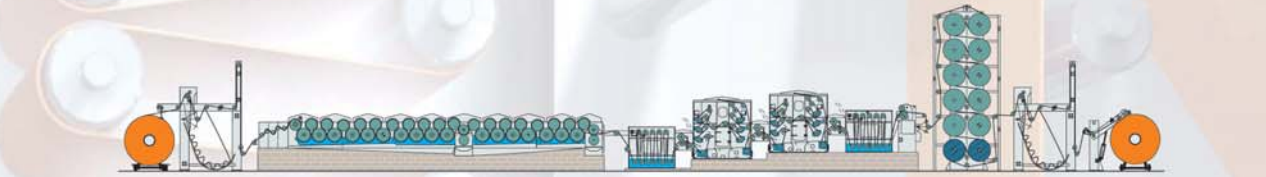
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Textile.Converting.Excellence.


### CONTINUOUS BLEACHING RANGE



- Guarantee of corresponding degree of whiteness
- High degree of absorbency

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- Maximum colour brilliance
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- Continuous Pad Steam ● Squeezer for Finishing Application at the front of Stenter ● Combi Range for Desizing, Mercerizing & Over Dyeing for Denim
- We can also supply **CONVERTING** machines for Coating and Lamination Industry

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# Why Is The Indian Textile Industry Shy Of Digitization?



Sharad Tandon

An elaboration. The bigger corporates in the Indian textile industry have adopted digitization to a great extent. However, since MSME makes up almost 90% of the textile industry today, barring of course spinning, it is an absolutely accurate assessment of the ground realities.

To give a clearer picture of the level of digitisation in our industry compared to the developed textile industries of the world, the Indian textile industry would rank at about 3 on a scale of 10. I personally have been a vociferous advocate of the need to digitize processes not only in manufacturing, but across the total spectrum from material movement to customer relationship management - CRMs, digital data capture and analy-

sis, etc. I have to admit, that we have been a dismal failure in making much of a difference in this aspect.

The reasons? Here is my assessment.

**Fear:** The fear of failure of implementation. Being that in MSME, these type of decisions and implementations are under direct command of the owner executor, the failure becomes very personal. Now when they look around and hear stories of failed implementation, the tendency to avoid being labelled one too, overtakes the need to act as per his

## Ask The Expert

responsibility of growing the business. The bigger factor here is the said or unsaid ridicule or comments likely from immediate and extended family members working in the same business, albeit looking at other divisions.

**Lack of understanding the mechanism of digitization:** ERP is one of the most misunderstood, if not abused word, I have heard in the textile industry. Ninety-five percent of the owners I have spoken to did not understand its real meaning. Another 4% were lying. Just 1% actually grasped what it is. Now compound it with self-taught expertise from Google and yes men all just looking to secure their salary cheques or contracts, and you have a recipe for disaster. It's only a matter of time before implementation is abandoned

with the grandiose proclamation : "Its impossible in India".

**Teaching the experts:** I have set or been involved in many a discussion wherein the just-fresh-from-MBA-school entrepreneur has tried to convince me how some of the world's most popular softwares being used by probably billions, have flaws; and he is looking to get the perfect one tailor-made for himself.

I have now stopped trying to reason with them and just stay bemused as he sits the local software graduate down and explains to him, how and why the software should be written. Then negotiate with him how many hours of code writing, which language blah blah. The saying finally coming home to roost few months later. Garbage In Garbage out.

**Ego:** The I. I know it all. I don't need an expert or to pay someone. I can get it implemented all by myself and don't have to put in place an IT person. I don't need to first define my internal processes and be disciplined in them. I am right and most qualified, even if I never handled any software implementation project any time in my life.

The solution: Is successful digitization possible and beneficial? A resounding Yes!! How? Now that is a very elaborate subject and deserves a total column of its own. Maybe the next one that follows? ■

Read Online

## 'Kusters Calico Is Moving Towards Industry 4.0 Digitisation'

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the same quality. Being fully professional company we never cut corners in design and manufacturing.

### What are the challenges that you face in the Indian market?

Many customers are not ready to pay for the improved good features in the machine which cost initially but would pay back later multiple times to customer. The whole chain itself works on cost conscious model so it is very difficult to convince a customer to invest more in better technology.

Secondly, they do not have concept of machine maintenance, no one includes that in their regular work schedule. Customers believe that supplier has given the machine

"We are going towards Industry 4.0 digitisation. No competitor can beat us in technology. Our motto is "Affordable Excellence".

he is responsible for everything now. Also they do not have proper trained manpower to run today's technically advanced machines and maintain them.

### Two important business goals for you in 2021-22?

Foremost to prepare 3D drawings for all the identified standard modules and write Standard Operating Procedures for all the activities we do in our company right from taxi booking to machine manufacturing. Both

these activities when completed will definitely take us to next level of manufacturing unit where we can deliver cost effectively, in time and high quality every time.

### Anything else that you would like to share.

The recent steep rise in prices of all commodities especially steel prices, logistics cost, containers cost, labour cost has resulted in sharp increase in manufacturing cost denting the profits badly. The government must intervene to stabilise prices now before it damages the industry further. We expect a reasonable growth in requirements as more and more wet processors will slowly switch to continuous processing lines for better quality and environment considerations. ■

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# Transparency, Traceability Gains Traction In Fashion Industry

This month has been big for transparency, traceability in the textile industry. Many top retailers and brands are partnering with traceability solution providers to improve transparency in the supply chain, and give credence to their sustainability claims.

Hopefully, the momentum will gather pace and continue. Fashion Revolution's annual Fashion Transparency Index has been witnessing a year-on-year increase - 8% in 2017, and 12% in 2019.

Traceability is crucial to not only weed out unethical activity; in the long run, traceability also helps clothing recyclers understand what items are made out of so they can reuse or dispose of them properly. Traceability is difficult to achieve and progress is slow. But technology is offering solutions. Here are some of the exciting companies creating tech solutions to transform supply chain traceability.

## H&M's COS, Next, IBM in blockchain textile traceability project

The UK Fashion and Textile Association (UKFT) launched a blockchain traceability project, partnering with IBM and retailers including H&M (COS Brand), Next and New Look. The nine-month sustainability project aims to develop and pilot a supply chain traceability solution for the UK fashion industry and is financially supported by Innovate UK to the tune of GBP 1.4 million (US\$ 2 million).

The global fashion industry is one of the world's biggest polluters. Data firm Quantis estimates that apparel makes up 6.7% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions, rising to 8% when footwear is included. That's almost four times the estimated emissions from the airline sector.

Consumers want to understand the environmental impact of their purchasing behaviour, particularly in an industry that has received widespread criticism over unsafe workplaces, labour abuses and low wages.

The issues come down to a lack of transparency. Visibility across different stages of the supply chain is often opaque, and high levels of manual effort mean that parties have little incentive or the means to share data. This means organisations delay implementing more responsible practices and prevents consumers from shopping more sustainably.

"Working together, we are pleased to support the development of a new supply chain platform tool for the apparel and textiles sector, to facilitate the gathering of robust sustainability data and provide clear visibility of environmental and ethical impacts to empower better decisions," said Joanne Poynor, Head of Sustainable Development at Next.

The new platform will use IBM's blockchain technology to share information about the clothing products - such as place and date of production, product composition and environment-related certificates - accessible to consumers via a QR code.

Key supply chain processes will be digitised, creating a shared system of data that different parties can access. This will all be stored on IBM Cloud, which will also use AI technology for optimisation and to detect and respond to supply chain disruption.

Other retailers participating in the pilot include N Brown and yarn manufacturer Laxtons. Last year, IBM partnered with German workwear company KAYA&KATO to trace sustainable clothing using blockchain. Meanwhile, this year, the US Cotton Trust Protocol partnered with TextileGenesis to track and trace cotton fibre on its blockchain platform, with leading brands such as Gap and Next using the Trust Protocol.

## Arvind partners with Textile GenesisTM for blockchain-based track & traceability initiative

Arvind Limited too is collaborating with Textile GenesisTM, a blockchain-enabled digital transparency platform, to improve transparency and traceability in its entire denim supply chain. This platform will provide complete traceability of upstream inputs being used by Arvind. This technology works closely with a network of key sustainable fibre suppliers and textile chain partners helping create a sustainable ecosystem for major brands and retailers.

"Sustainability and traceability are really two sides of the same coin, and great to see Arvind taking a lead on both fronts. Our supply chain traceability platform will create end-to-end traceability for Arvind's innovative and sustainable products across the entire supply chain using

Fibercoins™ traceability technology" said Amit Gautam, CEO & Founder of Textile GenesisTM.

Path breaking digital "Fibercoins™" technology from TEXTILE GENESIS™, allows brand and retailers full value chain traceability and visibility along with ESG (environmental, social and governance) credentials of the supply chain partners from fibre origin to retail.

Arvind Denim's wide range of sustainable offerings like single-origin non-conflict cotton Renaissance range of recycled cotton, polyester and other man-made fibres; natural indigo etc., will now be available with full track and trace.

## CIEL Textile partners with Serai to advance supply chain traceability

Serai, a digital B2B platform that simplifies global trade, has partnered with leading manufacturer CIEL Textile to map out and trace product-level order flow through their global supply chain.

Serai's traceability solution will enable CIEL Textile to access and unify complex supply chain information from multiple sources to gain full visibility over their global supply chain. At the same time, they will be able to collect and analyse important metrics to help them achieve their sustainability goals. This is the first time CIEL Textile has collaborated with a company to gain such in depth supply chain transparency.

"CIEL Textile has always been a pioneer in striving for sustainability and innovation. Through Serai's Traceability solution, they will be able to easily collect and manage data from their supply chain partners. Having all this information in one place can help them drive operational efficiencies, manage underlying risks and eventually achieve greater transparency and trust in their extended supply chain," says Vivek Ramachandran, Chief Executive Officer, Serai.

A major challenge for CIEL Textile was that they had a diverse range of systems and solutions fragmented across the group. Their garment production comprised a variety of materials including cotton, cellulosic fibres and wool in knitted and woven fabrics which made transparency further upstream difficult. Serai's solution was flexible to adapt to changing requirements and be integrated with CIEL

Textile's existing solutions.

After evaluating a few technology providers, Serai was chosen based on a criteria comprising the scope of the traceability, flexibility of the solution and integration of global standards to monitor the sustainability performance of CIEL Textile's suppliers.

Serai's ambition is to simplify global trade, with an initial focus on the apparel industry.

## TAF launches digital traceability for Radianza™ fibre

Thai Acrylic Fibre Co. Ltd. (TAF) - a part of Aditya Birla Group - has launched a digital traceability platform to trace its flagship fibre brand - Radianza™. This digital platform backed by blockchain technology will ensure complete transparency and traceability for brands, retailers and consumers of Radianza™ fibre in the finished garment. The platform has been developed by Canada based company - Licof Inc.

Radianza™ fibre, that uses the revolutionary gel-dyeing technology, has recently become the first and only acrylic fibre to have Material Sustainability Index (MSI) Scores published by Higg Co. based on the Life Cycle Assessment Impact study conducted by Thinkstep (now Sphera). Earlier this year, the TAF become the first and only acrylic fibre company to become a bluesign® SYSTEM partner.

Highlighting the effectiveness of blockchain in textile tracing, Ritesh Khare, founder of Licof adds, "Blockchain is a very powerful technology, especially for those at the end of the value chain like brands and retailers to validate the authenticity of the materials they are sourcing in a complex value chain like textile and apparel. Blockchain makes digital tracing and tracking immutable, while a user-friendly platform makes it very easy for the value chain players to collaborate and share relevant information. We are very excited to collaborate with TAF and support them and their customers trace Radianza™ and other specialty fibres." ■

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# Market Intelligence Reports

Products	28-Jun 2021	12-Jul 2021	28-Jul 2021	12-Aug 2021	% Change
Brent	74.0	76.5	74.3	70.6	4.98↓
<b>PFY</b>					
POY 130/34	106	106	106	108	1.89↑
POY 250/34	103	103	103	103	0.00
FDY 70/34	124	127	127	128	0.79↑
FDY 70/72	127	129	129	130	0.78↑
FDY 100/48	123	125	125	127	1.60↑
80 roto	121	123	123	124	0.81↑
80 Tex	116	119	119	120	0.84↑
80/108	123	125	125	127	1.60↑
150 roto	112	114	114	115	0.88↑
150 tex	110	112	112	113	0.89↑
150/108	114	116	116	118	1.72↑
50 flat	132	134	134	136	1.49↑
75 flat	124	127	127	128	0.79↑
150/48 Flat	114	116	116	118	1.72↑
<b>Nylon</b>					
20/1 den	298	298	308	313	1.62↑
44 den	252	252	262	267	1.91↑
70 den	221	221	231	236	2.16↑
<b>PSF</b>					
1.4 den	108	110	110	111	0.91↑
1.2/1.0 den	109	111	111	112	0.90↑
<b>Cotton price/candy* = 355.62 kgs</b>					
Beng Desi (RG)	41400	41600	43000	43100	0.23↑
Beng Desi (SG)	41900	42200	43600	43800	0.46↑
V797	34300	34600	36100	35800	0.83↓
Jaydhar	35900	36700	38000	37700	0.79↓
J-34	47700	48900	51600	50700	1.74↓
H4/ Mech 1	51800	52500	56800	55800	1.76↓
Shankar 6	52800	53500	57500	56600	1.57↓
Bunny/ Brah	53700	54200	58500	57600	1.54↓
DCH-32	84000	88000	94000	96000	2.13↑
<b>Spun yarn</b>					
30s p/c (65/35)	198	198	202	204	0.99↑
40s p/c (65/35)	204	204	208	210	0.96↑
40s p/v (65/35)	212	214	217	219	0.92↑
45s p/v (65/35)	217	219	222	224	0.90↑
20s carded	165	167	170	173	1.76↑
30s carded	190	192	195	196	0.51↑
40s carded	237	239	242	245	1.24↑
40s combed	254	256	259	261	0.77↑
60s combed	295	298	301	302	0.33↑

## Cotton Insights

### Well Covered Mills Wait For New Cotton Season, Prices Under Pressure



**Vimal Verma**

Indian cotton trading activity has slowed down since the end of July. Buyers are losing interest in CCI cotton sales too, which till last month was in high demand.

The industry is looking forward to arrival of new cotton crop. Now new crop is progressing well; sowing is almost at par as previous year. Some cotton growing areas have reported deficient rains. Saurashtra in Gujarat reported around 38% shortfall in rain. It is predicted that rain deficit will come down in the next 10-15 days. If this in fact happens, then crop numbers can be better than previous years.

Nominal cotton arrivals have begun in the north, which is expected to pick up from the first week of September, again depending on the monsoon situation in the region. September rains in the north can damage cotton and also impact quality in terms of grade and other parameters. Monsoon rains across India in the previous week was below average for the second straight week, the weather department has raised concerns over production of summer-sown crops including cotton.

CCI has limited stocks now. Mills are reportedly covered for the next 60-90 days on average. Mills have done well this year in terms of yarn production and profits, and

cotton demand therefore is expected to remain strong.

The new season is just 45 days away. Traders/ stockists are trying to liquidate their stocks of cotton, but buyers are not willing to buy at current prices. Thus, the spike in ICE failed to impact Indian cotton prices.

#### CAI's latest estimates

The Cotton Association of India (CAI), in its July estimate of the cotton crop for the season 2020-21 has reduced the crop estimate by 150,000 bales (of 170 kg each) to 35.45 million bales from its previous estimate of 35.6 million bales.

The CAI maintained its cotton crop estimate for the Northern Zone at the same level as in its previous month's estimate i.e. at 6.55 million bales. The cotton crop estimate for the Central Zone has been reduced by 50,000 bales to 19.35 million bales. There is a reduction of 250,000 bales in the crop estimate for Gujarat state, while the crop estimates of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have been increased by 150,000 bales and 50,000 bales respectively compared to the estimates of these states made in the previous month.

The cotton crop estimate for Southern Zone has been reduced by 100,000 bales to 9.05 bales. The cotton crop for Telangana is estimated lower by 100,000 bales, whereas the estimates for the states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have been maintained at the same levels as estimated previously. Also, there is no change in the cotton crop estimate for Orissa.

The total cotton supply estimated by the CAI during the period from October 2020 to July 2021 is 48.26 million bales. This consists of the

arrivals of 34.861 million bales upto July 31, 2021, imports of 900,000 bales upto July 31, 2021, and the opening stock at the beginning of the season on October 1, 2020 of 12.5 million bales.

Further, the CAI has estimated cotton consumption during the months of October 2020 to July 2021 at 27.5 million bales, while the export shipment of cotton upto July 31, 2021 is estimated at 7 million bales.

Stock at the end of July 2021 is estimated at 13.761 million bales, including 8 million bales with textile mills, and the remaining 5.76 million bales with Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), Maharashtra Federation and others.

#### August 2021 WASDE cotton

In this month's 2021/22 US cotton projections, beginning stocks are slightly larger, and a 536,000-bale decrease in production results in lower exports and ending stocks. Beginning stocks are larger as estimated exports for 2020/21 are reduced 50,000 bales based on final Export Sales data and Census Bureau data through June. National Agricultural Statistics Service's (NASS) first survey-based estimate of production for 2021/22 is 17.3 million bales.

Exports are 200,000 bales lower than in July, and ending stocks are 300,000 bales lower, equating to 17% of expected use, the same as in 2020/21. The US season-average price for upland cotton is forecast 5 cents per pound higher than in July which, at 80 cents, would be its highest since 2011/12. Lower production is

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# Expected Revival In World Cotton Production In 2021/22 Season

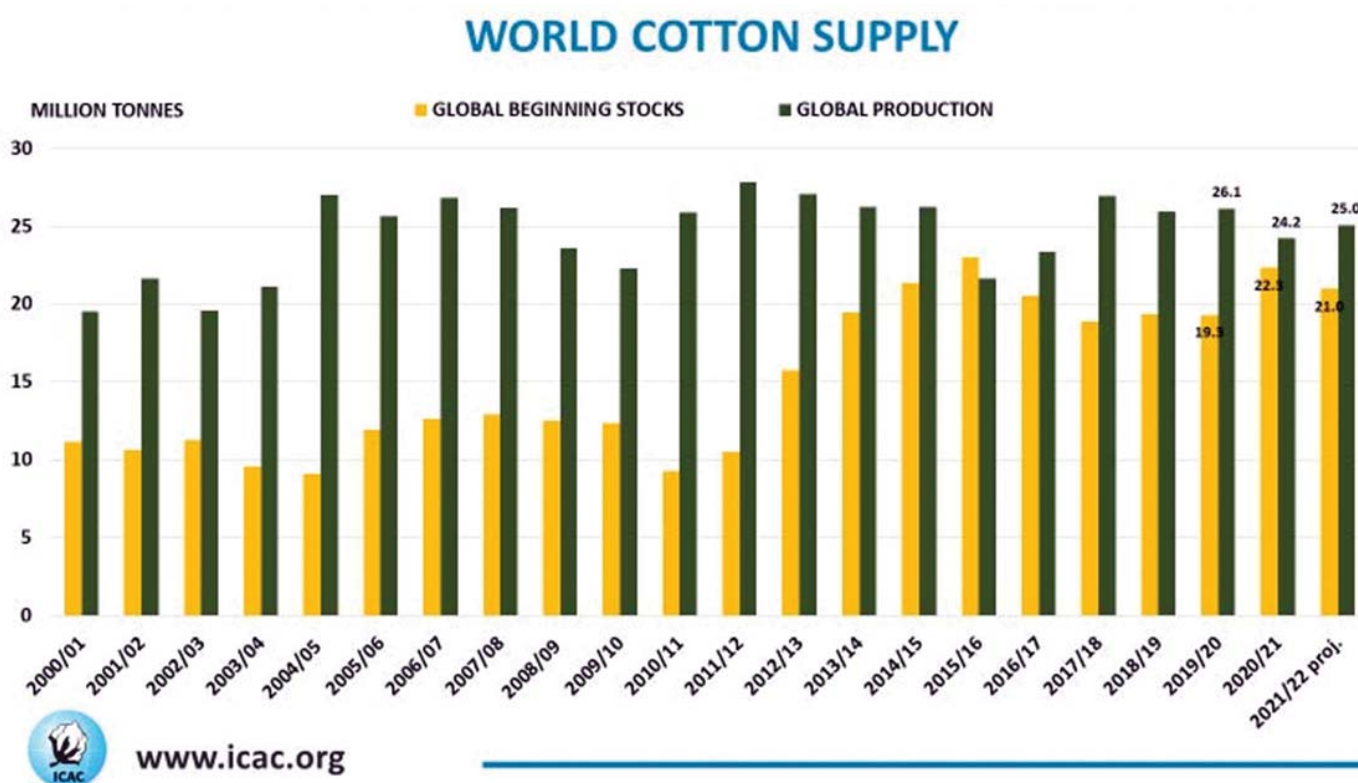
- Global production is expected to increase by 3% to 25 million tonnes in 2021/22
- Consumption posted a 12.4% increase to 25.5 million tonnes in 2020/21, with a similar performance expected in 2021/22
- Concerns remain due to Covid-19's stubbornness, with threats from factory closings and logistical problems looming in Bangladesh and Vietnam

## Expected revival in world cotton production in 2021/22 season

The coronavirus might have won the battle in 2021/21, driving down global cotton production to 24.2 million tonnes, a decline of 7% from the season before. But the industry has responded well and production is expected to rise by 3% in 2021/22 to reach 25 million tonnes.

The increase will be led by:

1. The USA, which is projected to reach 3.8 million tonnes, up 22% from the season before,
2. India, whose production is expected to remain high in 2021/22 (5.9 million tonnes), and
3. Brazil, which hasn't publicly announced its production area and forecasts yet because sowing won't begin



until December but still should reach about 2.3 million tonnes.

On the bright side, global cotton consumption and trade have seen a welcome recovery in the

2020/21 season, with consumption increasing by 12.4% to reach 25.5 million tonnes, with a similar trajectory projected for 2021/22. But Covid-19 has proven itself to be very stubborn;

recent reports from Bangladesh and Vietnam indicates that Covid infections are on the rise, so lockdown-induced factory closures and shipping problems are still major threats, leaving manu-

facturers scrambling to fill their orders. ■

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## Well Covered Mills Wait For New Cotton Season, Prices Under Pressure

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reducing this month's 2021/22 global ending stocks forecast slightly. World production is forecast 546,000 bales lower as reduced production in Brazil, the United States, and Uzbekistan offsets higher projections for Australia, Mali, and Tanzania. Consumption is forecast slightly higher, up 170,000 bales, with gains for Bangladesh and Pakistan.

World 2021/22 cotton ending stocks are projected at 87.2 million bales, about 500,000 bales

lower than in July, and 4.6 million lower than in 2020/21.

### US cotton

The USDA expects upland cotton production to be up on the year, while should be well below year ago levels. That follows year to year changes in planted area and these numbers will depend on average weather conditions through late development into harvest.

The USDA raised the US old crop cotton ending stocks guess, while cutting the outlook

for new crop, while old and new crop rice carryout projections were both down on the month.

### US cotton export sales for week ending August 5, 2021

Net sales for 2021/2022, which began August 1, totaled 342,700 RB. Increases primarily for China (123,800 RB), Turkey (72,500 RB), Bangladesh (39,400 RB, including decreases of 200 RB), Pakistan (39,100 RB, including decreases of 700 RB), and Vietnam (30,500 RB, including 300 RB switched from

Japan and decreases of 2,300 RB), were offset by reductions for Taiwan (200 RB).

For 2022/2023, net sales of 15,300 MT were reported for Mexico (6,500 RB), Turkey (4,400 RB), and South Korea (4,400 RB). A total of 1,310,900 RB in sales were carried over from the 2020/2021 marketing year, which ended July 31.

Exports for the period ending July 31 of 49,100 RB brought accumulated exports to 14,882,100 RB, up 5% from the prior years' total of 14,174,500

RB. The destinations were primarily Mexico (10,900 RB), Pakistan (8,000 RB), Turkey (6,700 RB), Vietnam (6,400 RB), and Indonesia (5,900 RB). Exports for August 1-5 totaled 190,600 RB, with Pakistan (38,900 RB), Vietnam (36,500 RB), China (30,100 RB), Turkey (23,700 RB), and Mexico (14,000 RB) being the primary destinations. ■

(Vimal Verma is a cotton trader)

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## Chinese Sportswear Brands Profit From Xinjiang Controversy

College student Lin Hong long looked to Nike for his sneaker needs, buying five pairs of its basketball shoes over the past two years. Now he is eyeing the US brand's biggest Chinese rivals.

"It's time to ditch Nike for Li Ning or Anta," he said, complaining that his latest Nike sneakers did not hold up well while the Chinese brands offer "vibrant designs and tougher soles."

Thanks to consumers like Lin, Li Ning, founded by the Olympic gymnast of the same name, has signalled soaring half-year profit growth. Xtep International Holdings and Anta Sports Products, the fastest growing sportswear company in China's market over the past five years, are due to follow suit.

While all three companies have highlighted a recovery in consumer demand since the eruption of the pandemic last year, that had little benefit for Western competitors in China like Adidas and Nike. Their sales suffered in the spring after state media and social media users blasted their previous expressions of concern about forced labour in the minority region of Xinjiang and company statements about avoiding cotton from the area. Many western brands have been impacted by this furor. Chinese celebrities broke off endorsement contracts with H&M, online mapping and ride-hailing services erased H&M stores from their systems, top internet shopping platforms dropped its products and some landlords cancelled store leases amid a boycott campaign.

For the quarter to May 31, H&M's net sales in mainland China tumbled 28.1% to 1.62 billion Swedish krona (US\$ 186.86 million) from a year before while its national store network contracted by a net 13 outlets to 489. Previously the chain's third-biggest market, China ended the quarter in sixth place.

Adidas, meanwhile, recorded a 16.3% fall in greater China

sales to 1 billion euros (US\$ 1.18 billion) in the April-June quarter. Nike earlier reported that its greater China revenues for the March-May period rose 17% to US\$ 1.93 billion, but this came as its global revenues nearly doubled from a year earlier.

By contrast, Chinese brands publicly trumpeted their use of Xinjiang cotton, with Anta and others quitting the Better Cotton Initiative, a Geneva-based group seen as a key culprit in raising questions over the use of forced labour, and captured a wave of nationalist sentiment. Li Ning has said that it expects to report revenue growth of more than 60% and at least 1.8 billion yuan (US\$ 277.65 million) in net profit for the first half of the year, potentially tripling the 683.27 million yuan it earned in the same period last year. The swing in consumer attitudes enabled Beijing-based Li Ning to cut back on discounting, with Daiwa analysts Adrian Chan and Sybil Hu projecting the company will report "a record-high net margin of over 18%" for the half year as some stores sold out of popular products.

Li Ning shares have risen 86% since the party campaign against H&M started while Anta is up 44% and Xtep's stock has almost tripled in value.

Xtep has told investors it will report profit growth of at least 65% for the half year while Anta has talked of a surge of more than 110% from revenue expansion of over 50% as it cut back on discounts. Anta recorded 1.66 billion yuan in profit a year ago. Buoyed by its new sales momentum, the Xiamen-based company laid out plans to analysts last month for expanding sales volumes and shifting its branding up market, with an eye toward pricing basketball shoes at as much as 1,500 yuan a pair to level up with Nike and Adidas.

**Is consumer sentiment shifting again towards western brands?**

Momentum, though, now appears to be shifting, with the

Western brands regaining their footing in China while their domestic rivals' momentum from the Xinjiang controversy fades.

Adidas Chief Executive Kasper Rorsted told analysts recently that the company's Chinese online sales returned to growth in June while overall sales were flat. Analysts believe sales picked up last month with high-profile appearances of the Western brands at the Tokyo Olympics, with Chinese sprinter Su Bingtian, who set an Asian record for the 100-meter dash, notably sporting Nike.

"In our observation, discussions about 'Xinjiang cotton' have in most social media diminished in July-August," Citigroup analyst Xiaopo Wei wrote in a client note. "In recent weeks, Chinese state-owned media have been reporting Chinese athletes wearing Nike/Adidas uniform in Tokyo Olympics, leading to Chinese consumers' much more positive sentiments towards Nike/Adidas."

**Chinese brands facing new threats in the US**

While each of them generates almost all their revenues within China, they have looked to endorsements from National Basketball Association players to lift their brand profile.

Senator Jeff Merkley and Congressman James McGovern, who head up the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, took aim at this link in June, writing to the NBA Players Association to urge members to break off contracts with Anta and Li Ning unless they halt use of Xinjiang cotton.

Representative Scott Perry and three other congressmen wrote to the US Department of Treasury, meanwhile, calling on the agency to add Li Ning and Anta to a blacklist that would bar American companies and individuals from any business dealings with them. ■

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## Adidas Hit By China Boycott, Vietnam Factory Closures

- Factories closed in Vietnam until August 15
- 2021 sales to grow up to 20% vs previous high teens forecast
- 2021 net income from continuous operations seen at 1.4-1.5 billion euros
- Q2 sales 5.077 billion euros vs analyst consensus 4.97 billion euros
- Q2 EBIT 543 million euros vs consensus 458 million euros

Adidas felt the impact of a Chinese boycott of Western brands on its second-quarter results and is also suffering from the closure of factories in major supplier Vietnam due to rising Covid-19 infections.

The German sportswear company still raised its outlook for full-year sales and profitability as it said it has seen demand recover in China since calls for a boycott in late March, and said it hopes to restore production in Vietnam soon.

Analysts noted that its growth was lagging rivals Nike and Puma, which both reported that sales nearly doubled in recent earnings releases.

Second-quarter sales at Adidas rose 52% to 5.077 billion euros (US\$ 6 billion), while operating profit came in at 543 million euros, ahead of analysts' average forecasts.

Adidas raised its 2021 outlook to predict sales will grow up to 20%, and net income from continuing operations will reach 1.4-1.5 billion euros. That compared to Puma's forecast for sales to rise at least 20% for 2021.

The new Adidas outlook assumes that the sourcing network will be back to normal by the end of September and that the company will continue to see a steady recovery in Greater China, where sales fell 16% in the second quarter.

Western brands including Adidas faced online attacks in China in late March over past statements saying they would not source cotton from Xinjiang after reports of human rights abuses against Uyghur Muslims. Beijing denies any such abuses.

Adidas already saw online sales return to growth in China in June, Chief Executive Kasper Rorsted said, adding he expects the country to record strong growth for the full year and he welcomed a government drive to promote youth sport.

The company hopes to be able to restart production in Vietnam after the scheduled end of a coronavirus lockdown on August 15 and is working on reallocating production to other centres in the meantime.

Vietnam usually accounts for 28% of Adidas sourcing and its factories mostly make shoes for the company, with a lag of three to four months before products hit the shelves. The combined impact of supply chain problems, new Covid-19 lockdowns in Asia and tensions with China could amount to more than 500 million euros in lost sales in the second half, said finance chief Harm Ohlmeyer.

Ohlmeyer added he expects Adidas to seal a deal to divest the underperforming Reebok brand by the end of the summer. ■

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# Closed-Loop Tech Aims To Change Textile Industry's Water Use From 'Waste2Fresh'

The toxicity and persistence of industrial dyes have been harming our waterways for years. Made to last on our clothes, they last in our environment - which means devastating consequences for our environment. Many rivers across the world have been declared "biologically dead," thanks to these dyes.

The World Bank has identified 72 toxic chemicals in waterways as a result from textile dyeing alone. Although climate change and water pollution are global problems, the water-polluting impacts of the textile industry are mainly localised to the developing countries that produce the majority of garments - with garment workers and local communities most vulnerable to the health and environmental impacts.

"In such resource-intensive industries, we need breakthrough innovations to recycle water and create closed loops in industrial processes," says Phill Jones, a project manager at the UK's Centre for Process Innovation (CPI) - an independent innovation centre, part of the consortium developing the Waste2Fresh breakthrough technology, which could bring an end to the textile industry's harsh, water-polluting methods. The Waste2Fresh project, fund-

ed by the EUH2020, aims to address the textile industry's contribution to global water pollution. As Jones explains it: "The Waste2Fresh system will integrate novel catalytic-degradation approaches with highly selective separation and extraction techniques to deliver a closed-loop system that assures near-zero discharge; reduces current use of freshwater resources; and considerably increases the recovery of water, energy and other resources - for example, organics, salts and heavy metals."

Standards for industrial water treatment do exist - for example, the Zero Discharge of Hazardous Chemicals (ZDHC) standards - however, textile manufacturers often find it difficult to cost-effectively meet them. Therefore, innovations such as Waste2fresh could prove essential for scaling accessible, sustainable processes for textile manufacturing globally. Waste2Fresh offers a sustainable industrial water-recycling system; as Jones explained: "This closed-loop discharge system allows for factories to reuse the water numerous times, ideally indefinitely. This essentially means that factories no longer need to take in further water from precious local freshwater sup-

plies, nor do they need to pollute those same freshwater supplies."\*

As we exceed critical planetary boundaries earlier and earlier each year, immediate action needs to be taken on a global scale, with businesses being held to account for both their products and byproducts.

"A business's success and its sustainability will become more intertwined as we progress into the future," Jones says. "Therefore, textile business owners cannot just focus on the textiles that they fabricate, but also their processes and byproducts." Long term, the Waste2Fresh consortium is aiming to distribute the Waste2Fresh system across a large number of textile manufacturers, as well as engaging other water-intensive industries on the benefits of the technology - which itself was developed with sustainability in mind: Plant materials such as fique are used in the treatment process; and the equipment itself can be powered by a solar array, with resulting hydrogen used to run equipment at night, and rainwater catchment capability to help compensate for water lost to evaporation.

To achieve UN Sustainable Development Goal 6, water sanitation and

pollution issues need to be addressed globally - particularly in the developing world. With this in mind, Jones said the main goals of the Waste2Fresh project are:

1. A reduction in water stress for the region using the technology.
2. An improvement in water quality due to minimization of hazardous chemicals and materials entering the waterways.
3. Expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies.

"We believe these types of projects are key to SDG6 - the problems associated with water and sanitation are varied and complex in their causes, scope and solution; and thus, so are the solutions," Jones said. "There is no one magic bullet. We feel the projects we are working on will do their bit in helping move towards safer, less polluted water." ■

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## Cosmo Specialty Chemicals Launches Green Scouring Agent, Eco Clay

An eco-friendly multi-functional product for pre-treatment of cotton knits, wovens and terry towels.



Cosmo Specialty Chemicals, a 100% subsidiary of Cosmo Films Ltd., has launched a clay based scouring agent, Eco Clay, for the textile industry, which reduces load on ETP upto 30%. Eco Clay reduces COD/BOD levels in the wash effluent by eliminating/reducing the need for additional auxiliaries in treatment baths i.e. wetting, sequestering, demineralising and stabilising agents, surfactants, lubricants, softeners, and defoamers.

Compatible with alpha amylases in the desizing bath, it boosts the tegewa rating, and

remains stable with electrolytes and hardness present in the water. Eco Clay works in a way that it helps in achieving minimum weight loss of the fabric as compared to chemical scouring. It also provides fabric with a smooth handle. Due to its unique natural chemistry and good sequestering and dispersing power, it helps avoid precipitation of insoluble salts in bleaching baths, and prevents scaling on the rollers of steam and wash boxes. With distinctive wash performance and instant absorbency properties, it retains whiteness index with reduced usage

of caustic while improving the bursting strength of the fabric. Action on natural pigment drastically enhances whiteness during the bleaching process. The recommended dosage of Eco Clay for exhaust application is 0.5% to 1.2%.

On this new innovation, Dr. Anil Gaikwad, Business Head, Cosmo Specialty Chemicals said, "Because of its mechanical shearing on fabrics, Eco Clay helps to remove oils, dirt, greases, etc. The product lowers the maintenance time and cost while increasing the shelf life of machines. Being an eco-friendly product, it is non-toxic to all aquatic organisms. We thrive to make innovative products and we will always try our best to drive meaningful innovation for the textile industry, to deliver new solutions at a quicker pace to a broader audience." ■

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## Indian Kurti Now Available With Polygiene ViralOff Technology

Igyne Fashion, Indian producer of kurtis, western and semi-western tops, as well as other typical Indian traditional garments, is launching their first kurtis with Polygiene ViralOff™ anti-microbial technology starting from summer season 2021. The products are distributed via web stores, general and own retail as well as wholesale, covering all of India. Production will continue in the coming seasons, and volumes are planned to increase.

"We have chosen Polygiene ViralOff\* technology to add value to our products. For us, the sustainable approach of Polygiene plays a key role, as well as its



reliable service and consistently high quality. We have seen an increased demand of products with anti-microbial effect during the pandemic," says Abhay Dahale, founder of Igyne Fashion. "The potential is big for these types of garments commonly used across India, as well as the entire South Asia. Demand of anti-microbial textiles has

increased during this tough time of the pandemic, and it has put Polygiene on the map in India. Additionally, we also see that our main business of Polygiene Stays Fresh technologies is coming back in the Indian market, that saw strong growth even before the pandemic", says Ulrika Björk, CEO, Polygiene. ■

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## Re-Dye, Don't Re-Buy, Says Dylan

Initiative aims to let consumers know how easy it is to revive and recycle garments.



If just 10% of the 26 million adults in the UK aged between 20-50 years old decided to re-dye an existing pair of jeans, rather than buy a new pair, the potential saving in carbon dioxide output in only one year would equal 49 million kgs - the same as a staggering 15,500 round-trip flights from London to Hong Kong

Dylon Dyes, the UK's leading fabric dyeing brand, is launching the 'Re-Dye Don't Re-Buy' initiative this Autumn/Winter in a bid to help the textile industry lower its carbon emissions.

The campaign is in response to a new academic report commissioned by the company that looks into the environmental impact of consumers buying new clothes compared to re-dyeing existing garments.

British consumers are notorious for their fast fashion consumption and buy more clothes per person compared to countries in Europe. In fact, 66% of respondents to a survey for the report admitted to buying the same or more garments than they were two years ago.

However, one in three (34%) are now consciously buying less clothes and have cited environmental impact as one of their key reasons. Dylan's Re-Dye Don't Re-Buy initiative aims to inspire consumers to make old clothes look brand new and colourful again, with a fresh fashion-led creative approach. Video content will be launched on social platforms including Facebook, Instagram and Youtube, along with simple but effective how-to guide. These will be complemented by user generated content from revered fashion influencers who dominate these plat-

forms; also the release of the brand's first fashion capsule collection, to name just a few.

"We are thrilled to be supporting efforts in the fashion industry to build a more sustainable future," said Rebecca Bland, senior brand manager at Dylan Dyes. "The goal of this initiative is to let consumers know how easy it is to revive and recycle garments whilst significantly helping the environment and saving money."

The report shows that every pair of jeans that are re-dyed instead of re-bought saves up to 20kg CO2 per pair. If just 10% of the 26 million adults in the UK aged between 20-50 years old decided to re-dye an existing pair of jeans, rather than buy a new pair, the potential saving in carbon dioxide output in only one year would equal 49 million kgs - the same as a staggering 15,500 round-trip flights from London to Hong Kong.

"Currently 300 tons of UK household textile waste goes to landfill or for incineration each year, but much of it could be recycled," Bland continued. "We're hoping that our initiative will urge people to first dig into their wardrobes to see how they can and transform their existing clothes with Dylan dye machine pods before making new purchases." ■

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## Avery's New Digital Care Label

Avery Dennison's new digital care label solution allows for traceability and transparency across the supply chain. In addition, new digital revenue streams become possible for the brand as additional products can be marketed to the consumer via this new direct-to-consumer touchpoint. Currently many consumers remove the physical care label, while brands underutilise it. This increases the risk of the garment ending up in landfill rather than being resold or recycled. In contrast, the new digital label helps advance the circular economy as recyclers can be confident of composition and resellers will be able to check authenticity. Ambercycle, Avery Dennison's first partner for its digital care label, converts end-of-life textile 'waste' into new yarns for apparel brands and manufacturers. Its garments are created from polyester textiles that were destined for landfill, but are instead broken down to a molecular level, turned into pellets, and then spun into Cycora yarns which can be processed by garment manufacturers in the same way as virgin yarns. "These labels are an exciting development, as consumers can discover their garment's story, see how it was made, and understand the environmental benefits from their choice," said Sarah Swenson, global senior sustainability manager, Avery Dennison RBIS. "When the consumer no longer needs the item, they can scan the QR code to see what needs to happen to properly dispose of the garment. In this case, if they send the garment back to Ambercycle it will be recycled back into a new textile. Brands can benefit from access to a deeper level of data both in terms of shopper engagement and also understanding just how many items remain in the circular economy." ■

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## Italian Textile Machinery Suppliers Report Sharp Rebound Of Orders In Q22021

Italian textile machinery sector has witnessed robust order booking in the second quarter of 2021. According to ACIMIT, the Association of Italian textile machinery manufacturers, the index of orders intake for Italian textile machinery, for the period ranging from April-June 2021, was up 214% compared to the same 2020 period. The value of

the index was attested at 150.7 points (basis: 2015 = 100), a result that was no doubt influenced by the comparison with a quarter, from April-June 2020, in which orders were obviously at a minimum, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

An analysis of the index of orders intake for the first six months of 2021 confirms a


clearly positive business dynamic for Italian manufacturers. An overall growth rate of 122% compared to the first half of 2020 in both the domestic and export markets.

Alessandro Zucchi, president di ACIMIT, comments: "The data are certainly positive, bearing witness to a renewed climate of confidence." On the domestic

market, in addition to a physiological rebound following the collapse in 2020, the boost generated by 4.0 incentives is being felt. "The push towards digitalisation in the business sector," adds Zucchi, "is being perceived as creating a competitive edge for the entire textile industry, especially here in Italy." ■

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# Quality, Efficiency, Good Service - This Is What Makes BRÜCKNER Successful In Turkey

Turkey's ARIKAN Mensucat Industry and Trade Inc. has grown from strength to strength since it was founded in 1993.

The German machinery manufacturer BRÜCKNER supported the Turkish company from the very beginning. From the foundation of the dyeing and finishing plant, BRÜCKNER supplied three stenters for the finishing of the high-quality knitted fabric in 2014. Two more lines followed in 2016. For decades, BRÜCKNER has been the market leader for the finishing of knitted fabric. Especially for very fine and elastic fabric, special line configurations and technological know-how are necessary to be able to produce a high-quality end product. During the drying and heat-setting process, for example, extremely accurate and uniform temperature distribution over the entire length and width of the dryer is essential. In the BRÜCKNER stenter this is achieved, among other things, by the alternating arrangement of the thermal zones every 1.5 meters and by the proven split-flow air system.

Besides these advantages, the machine operators at ARIKAN also appreciate the easy control of BRÜCKNER lines. The visualisation is intuitively designed and offers many intelligent auxiliary systems for an optimised production process. Also the very good accessibility of the line for maintenance and cleaning is a plus



Harun Bilginer, Production manager, ARIKAN

point. In addition, significant energy savings can be achieved with just a few changes to the machine parameters. Sophisticated software provides machine operators with valuable information for this purpose.

With all these advantages, the decision for another BRÜCKNER stenter in 2019 was an easy one to make. The management at ARIKAN attaches great importance to energy saving, especially in the fabric finishing department. The drying process is one of the most energy-intensive in the entire process chain, therefore the biggest savings can be made here. These have a direct impact on the manufacturing costs of the textiles and thus on

competitiveness in the market. In the meantime, talks are already in progress for another BRÜCKNER line which will include a very special feature: a combined heating system for the dryer. For many customers - and so also for ARIKAN in Turkey - e.g. steam energy is available free or very cheap. With the combined heating system developed by BRÜCKNER it is possible to use this steam energy for heating up the dryer and thus to achieve significant savings. If the available steam is not sufficient for a running process, it is automatically switched over to gas heating. This mode of operation does not only have an effect on the energy costs, but also makes a considerable contribution to

environmental protection. BRÜCKNER has been offering combined heating systems for many years, depending on the customer's requirements and the available resources. Thanks to the development over many years of these combined systems and to a sophisticated software, the changeover to another energy source is nowadays carried out without any problems.

Over the years, a close friendship has developed between the companies ARIKAN and BRÜCKNER. The Turkish BRÜCKNER agency INTER TEKSTIL is always the link between the two family companies.

Production manager Harun Bilginer is very satisfied: "The BRÜCKNER brand stands for quality, efficiency and innovation. What we also appreciate very much is the open exchange, the professional contact with customers and the good service. Of course, the representative in many countries also plays an important role. With INTER TEKSTIL BRÜCKNER is well represented in Turkey. We feel very well looked after, they simply take care. This is not a matter of course."

Soon when the latest line has been put into operation, a total of seven BRÜCKNER stenters will produce high-quality knitwear for the whole world at ARIKAN. ■

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## Grasim Industries' Nagda Plant Wins Promising Plants 2021 Award

Grasim Industries' staple fibre unit in Nagda was awarded Promising Plants 2021 award by The Economic Times. The ET team considered the plant's firm commitment towards environmental and social issues in the community in and around the plant along with excellence in water management, a pledge toward zero-liquid discharge, commitment towards sustainability and towards the socio-economic development of Nagda through the building of hospitals/schools and other developmental infrastructure.

On receiving the award, in a virtual ceremony held on 30 July 2021, Dilip Gaur, Managing Director, Grasim Industries Ltd. dedicated the award to all employees and stakeholders of the Nagda SFD (Staple Fibre Division) plant. He said, "The award is a recognition for our dedication to sustainability, excellence in water management, our pledge to zero-liquid discharge, and, most important-



ly, our commitment to the socio-economic development of Nagda through improved healthcare, education, and infrastructure development for a better quality of life for all." Incorporated 10 days after Indian independence, Grasim Industries Ltd. has been one of the pioneers of 'Make in India' success stories. Grasim Industries Ltd. the flagship company of the US\$46-billion Aditya Birla Group, has been awarded "The Economic Times Promising Plants 2021" in India for its Nagda SFD plant.

The Economic Times Promising Plants 2021 is an ET Edge initiative put together with The Machinist magazine and the ET Polymers Magazine to recognise, highlight and felicitate plants/factories which have not only scaled excellence but are serving as a source of inspiration to its peers and other industries in the country; and most of all, working towards the vision of 'Make in India.' ■

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# Australian Traceability Technology FIBRETRACE® Awarded European Patent

**F**IBRETRACE®, an advanced traceability technology solution for the textile industry, has been awarded a European patent issued for "Photon Marker System in Fiber Material".

The patent - EP3538692 - represents another step forward for Fibretrace in pioneering a completely traceable and transparent era of sustainable textiles, combining physical and digital traceability with the power of authentication.

Fibretrace received its US Patent - 10,247,667 B2 - issued for the "Photon Markers in Fibre Materials" on April 2 2019.

The European Environment Agency (EEA) reports that textiles are the fourth-largest cause of environmental pressure after food, housing and transport. The ever-increasing conversation around digitalization and transparency in every aspect of the textile supply chain has forced brands to recognize the need to



accelerate their own development of transparent solutions to ensure they remain at the forefront of sustainability.

"It's encouraging to see the rapid pace at which the global fashion and interiors industries are moving towards complete transparent and traceable solutions. Finalizing the European Patent for Fibretrace is recognition for the hard work,

research and development of our team which provides brands and manufacturers full confidence in the origin of fibre and integrity in their claims," said Danielle Statham, Co-Founder of Fibretrace.

Fibretrace works by embedding a natural, non-toxic, scannable luminescent pigment into any natural, man-made or synthetic fiber. Fibretrace delivers end-to-

end traceability in real-time to allow for irrefutable data and storytelling that is backed by scientific evidence.

Fibretrace's CEO, Shannon Mercer, says that Fibretrace offers reliable and trusted data that allows both brands and consumers to understand the true social and environmental impact of their products as it moves throughout the global supply chain.

"Consumers want the ability to make informed choices when it comes to their purchases. The continued growth of technology patents allows solutions like Fibretrace to offer brands real change with global impact." A survey conducted by McKinsey (2020) revealed that 57% of UK and German consumers have already made significant changes to their lifestyles to reduce their environmental impact with 65 percent making a commitment to purchase more durable fashion items. ■

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## New FET Meltspinning System Upgrade For NIRI



**F**ibre Extrusion Technology Ltd of Leeds, UK has installed a new meltspinning system to upgrade research facilities at NIRI, the Nonwovens Innovation & Research Institute Ltd UK, the global leader in nonwoven engineering and product development.

FET's Managing Director, Richard Slack commented. "We are absolutely delighted to secure this order with such a prestigious research organisation as NIRI, a reflection of much hard work and a sign that FET is moving in the right direction in a fast-changing world of textile development. In particular, NIRI had a requirement to invest in the most flexible and adaptable meltspinning technology available and FET was able to satisfy this priority". The installation comprises a FET-102 Series

Laboratory Meltblown Spinning System and FET-103 Monofilament Meltspinning System. This advanced equipment enhances NIRI's extensive pilot facilities and state-of-the-art analytical laboratory for fast tracking innovation. In particular, the FET meltblown system will be utilised for R&D, pilot projects, sampling and prototyping, proof of concept testing and for designing cost-effective, sustainable and innovative products.

NIRI helps global manufacturing companies to identify new opportunities for meltblown nonwovens, develop their next generation of products and accelerate their commercialisation activities. NIRI's new upgraded laboratory and pilot system from FET can process a wide range of polymer types, including chemically recycled polymers, bio-polymers and many difficult-to-process materials. Established in 1998, FET is a leading supplier of laboratory and pilot meltspinning systems with installations in over 35 countries and has now successfully processed almost 30 different polymer types in multifilament, monofilament and nonwoven formats. ■

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# Azgard-9 Has Developed A Garment Prototype That Produces Oxygen

Fashion was responsible for 2.1 billion metric tons of greenhouse-gas (GHG) emissions in 2018 - about 4% of the global total, according to McKinsey research. As the denim industry works to develop innovative methods for reducing CO2 emissions, one mill is thinking outside the box.

Pakistan-based Azgard-9 just debuted a piece of clothing that produces oxygen in addition to offering sustainable and anti-bacterial properties. The mill worked with London-based Post Carbon Lab, a design research studio focused on sustainability, to develop a poncho that mimics a plant's ability to photosynthesize and release O2 into the environment.

Though the poncho is not intended to be sold as is, it can serve as inspiration for brands to take it further and apply the technology to other garments.

"The prototype can show fashion houses and retailers that concepts we once associated with sci-fi are available to us right here right now and can help us rethink the future, in a demonstration of possibilities that Azgard-9's technology might add to these brands," the company said in a statement.

The development is part of "Future



Before Fashion," Azgard-9's recent push for future-focused solutions that have a low impact on the environment. It complements the mill's sustainable practices such as digital sampling and utilizing organic and recycled cotton.

Azgard-9's innovation is made of a membrane-bound polyamide which makes it breathable, waterproof and thermoregulating. Additionally, the fabric is treated with an anti-bacterial and anti-viral component, which eliminates the need for frequent home washing. Though it currently only exists as a prototype, Bernardo

Lago Cruz, Azgard 9's business development associate said it's a starting point for something big.

"In order to create change in the industry, we need to come up with realistic solutions that are serving a purpose for the consumer in general," he said. "This project brings something that is conceptual and not implemented on a large scale to the mainstream realm. This contribution itself is an example of how the denim industry in particular can adopt carbon negative actions in the production of denim."

High-tech solutions are becoming the norm in the denim industry. Earlier this year, trims manufacturer YKK unveiled a new program that uses an AI-powered "brain" to visualise carbon dioxide absorption at its Kurobe manufacturing site in Japan. Using the system's innovative sensors, the company receives insight into local meteorological and environmental data such as ground temperatures.

Similarly, denim bleaching recently got an AI update with the development of Wox, a device that collects data on the denim production process and feeds it to artificial intelligence algorithms.

Azgard-9's clients include Tommy Hilfiger, G-Star Raw and Gap, all known for their dedication to sustainability.

By 2030, Tommy Hilfiger aims to reduce the carbon footprint of its value chain again ahead of science-based target requirements, recycle or re-use all of its waste and use water sustainably - by ensuring that water leaving wet processors will have zero hazardous chemicals and will be filtered for microfibres, and by working with others to preserve water resources in high-risk basins. ■

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## KnitProcess

Knitting & Processing Technology Exhibition

### Exhibition & CEO SUMMIT

**21 22 23** January 2022

NIFT-TEA College Compound, Tirupur



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