

Manufacturers have long resisted big wage rises, saying these would erode Bangladesh's advantage as a cheap source of labour, with wages below other major garment-making nations such as India, China and Vietnam.

Astrakhan to launch 3bn rubles cotton cultivation project

The Astrakhan region in Southern European Russia would be launching a new project worth 3 billion rubles to grow cotton in the region.

Under the project cotton cultivation would be initiated in the Limanovskaya region of Astrakhan on an area of 120,000 hectares, and further processing of raw cotton with subsequent production of cotton fiber, reports RIA Novosti. The project initiated by the Astrakhan Cotton Company is estimated at 3 billion rubles and would provide the country with 250,000 tons of cotton per year. Gennady Gorbunov, chairman of Agricultural Committee of the Federation Council, said the project would help in overcoming the shortage of raw materials for the domestic textile industries in Russia.

The project is being launched in Astrakhan as experts of the Central Research Institute of Russia had earlier conducted a study which revealed that the region is ideal for production of cotton, he added.

Mr. Gorbunov also emphasized the fact that Astrakhan cotton project would be beneficial to the national economy as Russia spends millions of dollars on purchase of cotton. In 2012, Russia imported 90,000 tons of cotton.

Russian textile imports increase in August 2013

The imports made by the Russian Federation in August 2013 under the textiles and footwear category increased by 9.9 percent month-on-month to US\$ 1.85 billion, according to the data from the Federal Customs Service of Russia, portnews.ru reported.

Sub-category wise, imports of knitted fabric in August jumped 18.5 percent compared to July 2013, while garment imports rose by 10.7 percent, man-made fibre by 4.2 percent, chemical fibres by 1.5 percent and other

textiles by 11.2 percent. However, imports of cotton declined by 6.3 percent month-on-month in August 2013, whereas knitwear imports fell by 3.2 percent. The imports of finished textile products remained at the same level as of July 2013. Compared to August 2012, knitted fabric imports by Russia increased 20.4 percent in August 2013, as per the data. Similarly, woven garment imports rose by 4.2 percent year-on-year in August 2013, while knitwear increased 4.1 percent. However imports of cotton, man-made fibres and finished textile products fell by 9.1 percent year-on-year, 9.3 percent and 17 percent, respectively, in August 2013.

Technical textile industry to reach \$36 billion by 2016-17

India's technical textile industry is expected to grow at a rate of 20 per cent annually to touch \$ 36 billion by 2016-17, according to experts. "Technical textile is an important part of the overall textile sector in India. Not only has it grown at an annual rate of 11 per cent during 2006-11, but is also estimated to expand at a rate of 20 per cent to reach \$ 36 billion by 2016-17," Messe Frankfurt Trade Fairs India Managing Director Raj Manek told reporters.

Technical textiles are products manufactured primarily for their technical performance and functional properties rather than aesthetic and decorative characteristics.

The technical textile industry in India, whose current size is estimated at \$ 17 billion, is seen as the next hub for both manufacturing and consumption, he said.

India is seen as a key growth market for the sector, given the sheer size of its population. Cost-effectiveness, durability and versatility have made technical textile popular in the domestic market; and with the discovery of new applications every day, the growth of the industry is only expected to amplify, Manek added.

He was speaking on the sidelines of 'Techtextil India 2013', a conference on technical textile. Its 4th edition opened here today and witnessed participation from over 182 exhibitors from Austria, India, Turkey, Sweden, Switzerland, Czech Republic, Netherlands, UK and US, among others. At the two-day event, the participants presented the newest products, services and technologies available in the sector.



World Textile News

Bangladesh garment factories agree wage rise, ending protest

Bangladeshi garment factory owners promised on Sunday to raise wages for more than three million workers as soon as a government panel sets a figure, ending a week-long violent protest.

The manufacturers said they would raise wages by as much as the panel decides, despite earlier insisting they cannot afford more than a 20 per cent increase on the existing minimum wage of \$38 a month.

They made the announcement after holding talks late on Saturday with the leaders of more than 40 unions representing workers in 4,500 garment factories in Bangladesh, the world's second largest apparel maker after China.

The government has already said wages would be raised by November, a month earlier than the previous deadline, but the exact figures are still unclear. Unions have demanded a minimum wage of \$100.

"We told the unions that we'll hike wages for all workers as soon as the new minimum wages are announced by the government panel," said Atiqul Islam, head of the influential Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

"We are also ready to hike wages as much as the panel determines. We will accept even if it is more than 20 per cent. But obviously our hope is that the enhanced wages will be win-win for the industry and the workers," he said. The announcement appeared to have quelled one of the

biggest wage protests in the industry in years. Industrial police chief Mustafizur Rahman told AFP all factories were open on Sunday and there was no report of violence. The president of the Jago Bangladesh Garment Sramik Federation which represents workers, Baharine Sultan, told AFP the employees had returned to work.

"We hope there won't be any unrest until the panel announces a pay hike. And we also hope manufacturers will keep their word." Violent protests demanding a minimum \$100 monthly wage erupted in the country's key industry on September 21 after the owners announced their maximum 20 per cent offer.

Tens of thousands of workers hit the streets in protest, blocking roads, setting factories alight and clashing with police, who responded with rubber bullets and tear gas. The riots, in which hundreds of people were injured, ebbed on Thursday but continued sporadically in major industrial areas till Saturday.

Protests over poor wages, benefits and working conditions are frequent in Bangladesh but have gained in intensity since April when a factory complex collapsed, killing more than 1,100 people in one of the world's worst industrial disasters.

Manufacturers and police said production in "at least 500 garment factories" - which make clothing for some of the world's top retailers such as Tesco and H&M - had been hit by the protests, costing owners some \$40 million. Home Minister Muhiuddin Khan Alamgir had warned of a crackdown on the demonstrations, amid concerns about the impact of the protests on the sector.



added.

Over one million tons of raw materials are being used in the national textile industry, he added.

In June, Mehdi Mahmoudi, an official at the association of Iranian textile producers declared that legal and illegal imports hold a 40 per cent share in Iran's textile market.

The figure was 50-60 per cent last year, he said, adding that fluctuations in the dollar exchange rate have made importers reluctant towards importation.

In October, 2012, Iranian industry ministry official Mehdi Eslampanah said that regional countries as well as South America are the main targets for Iranian textile products.

More than 9770 industrial units are working in different fields in this regard including textile, clothing, leather and shoes, according to reports.

Carpet, shoes and materials of leather are among the textile products' exported to other countries.

Iranian petrochem to benefit from private sector finance

The Iranian petrochemical sector would attain its targets by benefitting from private sector financial resources, according to Abbas Sheri Moqqadam, new managing director of the National Petrochemical Company (NPC).

The NPC director said there is plenty of potential for participation of the private sector in the country's petrochemical sector activities.

Mr. Moqqadam said that during the tenure of former Iranian President Khatami from 1997 to 2005, Bijan Namdar Zanganeh, then oil minister and Mohammed Reza Nematzadeh, then NPC head, provided great opportunities for development in the petrochemical sector.

Zanganeh's return as Petroleum Minister is a great opportunity for oil industry which should take advantages of the situation, he added.

The Petroleum Minister Zanganeh recently announced that the value of Iran's petrochemical output may double to US\$ 40 billion from the current value of US\$

20 billion.

Iran exported about US\$ 12 billion worth of petrochemical products to over 65 countries during the previous Iranian calendar year (March 2012-March 2013).

East Asia, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and Africa were the main destinations where Iran exported petrochemical products.

Iran-Turkey trade turnover sharply drops

The trade turnover between Iran and Turkey fell by 41 percent compared to last year.

The Iran-Turkey trade turnover reached some \$10.357 billion during first 8 months of the current year, while the figure in the same period of the last year was \$17.527 billion, Iranian Tasnim news portal reported.

Iran imported about \$3.133 billion worth of goods from Turkey during the period which indicates a decrease by 63 percent compared to the same period of last year.

Meanwhile, Iran exported \$7.224 billion worth of goods to Turkey during first 8 months of the current year, which indicates a decrease by 19 percent.

Iran was Turkey's 3rd largest goods export market in 2012. Turkish goods exports to Iran in 2012 were \$9, 9 billion.

The top export categories for 2012 were: gold and golden plated silver (\$6,528 billion); iron and steel (\$629 million); textile yarn, fabrics (\$226 million); land transportation vehicles (\$209 million) electrical machinery, apparatus and appliances (\$171 million).

Oil, gas, and petrochemicals account for a lion's share of Iran's export to Turkey.

In December 2012, Iran's Ambassador to Turkey Bahman Hosseinpour said that the trade volume between Tehran and Ankara can potentially increase fivefold - to as high as \$100 billion a year.

He said that ample investment opportunities await Turkish investors in Iran.

The volume of the trade between Iran and Turkey exceeded \$16 billion in 2011. The two countries plan to increase the level of their bilateral trade volume to \$30 billion by 2015.

Iran Textile News

Iran holds prototype design event for nano-based goods

The 'prototype design' competition participated by university students and professors, knowledge-based companies, research centers and organizations working on nanotechnology was held in Iran early September. The event was intended to present the potentials and capabilities of the participants to the investors and industrialist to create investment opportunities.

Among the 68 proposals submitted for the competition, 24 were capable of being presented to the referee committee. Taking into consideration several factors, including the commercialization ease and technological level, the referee committee announced 12 proposed projects as winners.

A few of these textile related projects included:

- 1- Fabrication of aerogel blankets (insulated blankets)
- 2- A fine coating device comprising arc discharge
- 3- Industrial water and wastewater treatment systems based on nanofiltration membranes
- 4- Breathing masks based on nano fibers technology

Iran plans expansion of export markets for carpets

Iran has planned to expand its carpet export markets in countries such as Russia, Malaysia, South Africa and

China, according to Iran National Carpet Center (INCC). The INCC has also announced plans for increasing exports of carpets to countries like Qatar and the UAE, reports Tehran Times.

According to data released by INCC, Iran has exported around €24.9 million worth of handmade carpets to the European Union during the first half of the current Iranian year that began on March 21, 2013.

Countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Sweden, and the UK were the main European importers of Iran's handmade carpets during the six-month period.

Iranian carpets constitute 35 percent of the global carpet trade.

The exports of handwoven carpets fetched US\$ 427 million for Iran, during the last Iranian calendar year.

Over 1.2 million weavers in Iran engage in carpet weaving and produce around five million square metres of carpets each year, 80 percent of which are exported.

Iranian private sector runs 90 per cent of country's textile manufacturing units

More than 90 per cent of the textile manufacturing units are being run by the private sector, Iran's industry ministry official Ne'matollah Mardani said.

Some of the state-run textile manufacturing units have been closed down after the privatisation process, he





DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR: gateway to new opportunities in the Asia-Pacific floor coverings market

- 75 percent of available exhibition space already booked
- New: special programs for architects and designers

12.09.2013 [D]

Hannover/Shanghai. The floor coverings markets of Asia are booming, with 377 million square meters of floor coverings having been sold in China in 2012, alone. Next year, the DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR tradeshow will once again provide the international floor coverings industry with a powerful, high-yield springboard for new business and new markets in Asia.

There are still eight months to go until the start of the 16th DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR, but already 75 percent of the show's available exhibition space is booked. DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR is an annual event held at the Shanghai New International Exhibition Centre (SNIEC), and next year's season runs from 25 to 27 March. A good number of exhibitors took time out from the 2013 showcase to re-register for 2014, and over the past few months the organizers have noticed another spike in demand for exhibition space. DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR 2013 featured some 1,200 exhibitors, who used the show to profile a wide array of floor covering products and give their target market a comprehensive overview of the latest flooring trends.

The highlights in 2014 include a revamped "InnovAction Flooring" marketing platform that will give innovative floor covering products an even greater share of the DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR limelight. The platform will enable exhibitors to showcase selected product innovations with great accuracy to their target markets. In addition, new event formats at the exhibition venue will draw the attention of visitors in a highly targeted fashion to selected flooring products and product

categories. The plans include a dedicated display zone in Hall W5 for providers of hand-knotted carpets and a special platform in Hall E7 for the best-known Chinese wood flooring producers of the last 20 years.

Special hub for architects and designers

The DOMOTEX Asia/CHINAFLOOR database now encompasses more than 200,000 professionals in the flooring and related industries. It's a sizeable pool of addresses – and one in which architects and designers feature strongly. So much so, in fact, that the fair's organizers have developed a special Hub for Architects and Designers to cater for the special interests of this professional group with respect to the Asian floor coverings market. The "A&D Hub" will be located in the center of the exhibition grounds (Hall W5) and will be structured into five separate areas:

– The Shanghai Architect Fair – an annual event for architects and designers that will focus on specific kinds of floor coverings and explore topical issues, such as the use of tiles in the Asian contract flooring market.

– The InnovAction Flooring Centre. This is a special display area that will cluster the best products of the year, as selected by an expert jury.

– Materia. The independent global network Materia is running a special display themed around ceramics, natural stone, sustainability and health.

– Showroom Areas. A series of flooring installations staged by the show's top exhibiting manufacturers, the Showroom Areas will wow trade visitors with an exciting array of colors, designs and creations.

– Ceramics special display. Specially developed by international manufacturers of high-end hard flooring solutions, the display will take a close look at ceramic tiles and natural stone flooring.