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SHOW DAILY

ISSUE 1
Wednesday

Bharat Tex 2025 Opens At India Expo Center & Mart, Greater Noida

Handicraft And Co-Located Shows DyeChem World And GTE Attract Participation Of Top Companies

Union Minister of Textiles Shri Giriraj Singh along with State Minister of External Affairs and Textiles Pabitra Margherita in presence of Textile Ministry officials and industry leaders will be inaugurating the much-awaited Bharat Tex 2025 at India Expo Centre & Mart, from February 12-15, 2025. BharatTex 2025 at IEML will have BharatTex – Handicraft, and co-located shows – DyeChem World and Garment Technology Expo. BharatTex 2025 at Bharatmandapam is scheduled from February 14-17, 2025.

Dyes & Chemicals Industry At Bharat Tex 2025 For The First Time

With the Prime Minister's 5F vision to propel the textile industry's holistic growth, in the last Bharat Tex inauguration, he expressed his desire to include dyes and chemicals industry in the event. In line with his desire, dyes and chemicals industry is present in Bharat Tex 2025 at India Expo Centre and Mart in Greater Noida from February 12-15, 2025.

Approximately, 50 leading companies are displaying their sustainable products, services and technology for the textile dyeing, printing and processing industry including natural dyes.

The event will also host some interesting knowledge sessions on:

- Colour Science: Measurement, Automation and Artificial Intelligence
- Natural Dyes and Bio-Based Solutions: The Challenge
- PFAS (Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances) - The Why What and How

DyeChem World™ Exhibition

DyeChem World™ is the only focused exhibition for the industry that is organised with the aim to assist the textile industry to adopt sustainable chemical solutions, processes and technology that reduces environmental footprint, improves efficiency and productivity. On the other hand, textile dyes and chemicals industry's need of a platform to interact with their customers is fulfilled through the event.

DyeChem World™ Exhibition is organised by industry's well-known business magazine Textile Excellence.

Textiles dyes and chemicals industry

Textile dyes and chemicals are essential raw material for the textile and apparel industry and integral part of the fashion chain. This industry has gained even more importance today as 'Sustainability' has become a key issues for textile & apparel industry. Sustainable raw materials, its chemistry, processing and finishing technologies are of great importance with the changing scenario of apparel sourcing, consumption



HANDICRAFTS
MACHINERY
CHEMICALS & DYES

and regulations enforced by various countries and regions.

Textile dyeing, printing, processing and finishing sector is considered to be the most polluting industry in the value chain. The industry, therefore, is in dire need of sustainable raw materials, process and practices that are environmentally friendly to support the trade and conform to the regulations. The Dyes and Chemicals industry plays a very important role providing the right raw materials, process know-how and technology without which growth of the textile & apparel business would be impaired.

In 2022, India produced around 398,000 metric tons of dyes and pigments, including disperse dyes, reactive dyes, direct dyes, vat dyes, pigments and optical whitening agents. Being second largest textile manufacturer in the world, India produces around 700 varieties of dyes, pigment, dye intermediates and the domestic textiles industry consumes about 80% of the total production. Apart from textile industry, paper, plastics, printing ink, and foodstuff industries consumes dyes.

Textile chemicals are integral part of bleaching, scouring, sizing, de-sizing, dyeing, printing, finishing, coating process of textile manufacturing process. Both organic and inorganic chemicals are used in the textile industry and India is the second largest producer of textile chemicals due to its large domestic market.

Maharashtra and Gujarat account for 90% of dyestuff production in India in about 1200+ factories.

In 2023-24, India exported dyes worth US\$ 2.25 billion and import value of dyes were US\$ 297.63 million. In 2023-24, India's overall chemicals industry exported goods worth US\$ 20.38 billion and imported US\$ 27.11 billion.

Products categories for the exhibition:

- All type of textile dyes, pigments, inks and colorants
- All textile chemicals, enzymes and auxiliaries that are used from retreatment to finishing
- Special textile finishes and technology that impart functionality to textiles (for example anti-odour, anti-microbial, wrinkle free, wicking or moisture managed, flame retardant).
- Water-treatment chemicals: Chemicals that are required in ETP, WTP and ZLD process

INSIDER



'All Roads Will Lead To India'

Read article on PG 6



'Textile Recycling Is Essential For A Sustainable Future'

Read article on PG 14



Will US Tariffs On China Benefit India's Apparel Exports?

Read article on PG 16



Trump's Tariffs On Canada And Mexico Are Delayed. Economic Turmoil Is Here

Read article on PG 22

Garment Technology Expo (GTE) Celebrates 25th Anniversary With Co-Located Show At Bharat Tex

The 37th edition of GTE—Garment Technology Expo 2025 will be held from February 12–15, 2025, at India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida. This is South Asia’s most comprehensive garment technology expo, showcasing anything and everything related to garment making. GTE International is considered the best launchpad for introducing technology innovations, new materials, processes, and services for the garment and textile industries in India. This time the show will be collocated with Bharat Tex.

Bharat Tex 2025 is a global textile event being organised by the Textile Export Promotion Councils (EPCS) and supported by the Ministry of Textiles. The Mega event is set to take place from February 14–17, 2025, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, and February 12-15 at India Expo Centre and Mart, Greater Noida. Bharat Tex 2025 is positioned as a global textile trade fair that showcases India’s prowess as a premier textile-manufacturing hub, encompassing the entire value chain from raw materials to finished products.

This edition of GTE will have 170 exhibitors with over 600 brands from 20 countries spread over 120,000 square feet in two halls. GTE is the most comprehensive garment technology show covering all segments of the industry, right from the latest machines to spares and consumables, from infrastructure set up to the latest processes and systems, from raw materials to trimmings and embellishments, from logistics and packing solutions to trade communication.

GTE as always will see all renowned technology companies from across the apparel value chain showing live demonstrations of new technologies and equipment. This strategically structured industry platform has seen progressive growth and patronage and has been



INDERJIT S. SAHNI,

INDERJIT S. SAHNI, Chairman, Garment Technology Expo, said, “As we are celebrating our 25th anniversary with our GTE Delhi edition, I would like to thank all our valued partners for their unwavering faith and continued support, which empowers us to reach new heights. We deeply appreciate the trust placed on us and our team will work tirelessly to exceed your expectations in the coming years.”

rated as the most comprehensive show in the sector. Tried, tested, and trusted for living up to its motto, “Best today, still better tomorrow,” GTE is sought after by trade professionals, comprising manufacturers, exporters’ CEOs, MDs, and production heads, besides institutions and other volume consumers who visit to see, compare, and negotiate deals for new machinery.

Serving the apparel industry



RICKY SAHNI

RICKY SAHNI, Joint Managing Director, Garment Technology Expo, said, “Being a collocated show at Bharat Tex 2025, the forthcoming edition of GTE will have more visitors and exhibitors. We are expecting more than 170 exhibitors and 600 brands from all over the world covering over 1.25 lakh sq. ft. of area. All the leading brands will be present here to showcase their latest developments. Come and join the biggest garment technology extravaganza.”

countrywide, the flagship mother event is held in Delhi-NCR annually, while the Southern and Western region shows in Bengaluru and Ahmedabad are held biannually. Building up on the success of each successive edition, GTE 2025 Delhi-NCR will once again bring together all major technology brands under one roof.

Product profile:

Sewing Machines, Embroidery



AMBRISH CHOPRA

AMBRISH CHOPRA, Director, Garment Technology Expo, further added “With the upcoming show of GTE, the company will also be celebrating their 25th anniversary. In the year 2001, we started GTE, and for the last 24 years, the show has offered garment manufacturers in India an opportunity to get acquainted with the latest trends and helped the industry to upgrade their manufacturing processes. This will help the Indian apparel manufacturer to produce world-class products and compete with other countries.”

Machines, Digital Textile Printing, Knitting Machines, Laundry & Finishing, Testing Equipments, Quilting Machines, Laser Cutting Machines, Heat Transfer Machine, Accessories & Trims, Hosiery, Dyeing, Fancy Yarns, Fabrics, Dyes & Chemicals, Spreading & Cutting, Printing & Packaging, Furnishings Machinery, IT Enabled Services, Software Solutions, Spares & Attachments, Logistics and Support, Trade Publications etc. ●●●



SHOW DAILY



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Mr. Dileep Baid, Chairman-EPCH & Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor in role of Director General EPCH, Chairman – IEML & Secretary General Bharat Tex addressed the press and media during Press Interaction – Curtain Raiser of 2nd edition of Bharat Tex - Handicrafts at India Expo Centre, Greater Noida on February 11, 2025. Also seen Mr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman-EPCH, Mr. Ravi K Passi, Member CoA-EPCH, Mr. R. K. Verma, Executive Director – EPCH and other senior officials.

Bharat Tex 2025 – Handicrafts At IEML Showcases India’s Rich, Modern, Sustainable Manufacturing

The second edition of Bharat Tex 2025 - Handicrafts is taking place from 12th to 15th February 2025 at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida. This prestigious event brings together industry leaders, international buyers, artisans and policymakers to honour India’s centuries-old traditions while showcasing modern advancements.

Bharat Tex 2025-Handicrafts is a significant part of the prestigious global textiles event organised by the Bharat Tex Trade Federation (BTTF) and supported by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. This mega event will be held across two prominent venues—India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida (12th–15th February 2025), focusing on handicrafts, garment machinery and dyes & chemicals, and at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi (14th–17th February 2025), showcasing the entire textile value chain.

Being organised by a consortium of 12 Textile Export Promotion Councils including Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) and supported by the Ministry of Textiles, Bharat Tex promises to be a tapestry of tradition and technology, attracting, besides policymakers and global CEOs, over 5000 exhibitors, over 6,000+ buyers from 110+ countries,

and more than 120,000 visitors. Bharat Tex 2025 aims to energise the global textile ecosystem, offering businesses unparalleled opportunities to forge partnerships, explore innovative products, and stay updated on the latest trends and technologies.

Dileep Baid, Chairman, EPCH, shared, “This event is a perfect blend of our rich textile heritage and cutting-edge technology. It’s not just about showcasing our industry but demonstrating our commitment to sustainability, innovation and expanding global trade. With around 600 exhibitors including well established exporters, young designers, startups and artisans, the event will showcase 15 categories, including gifts and decorative items, furniture & accessories, home furnishings, houseware, fashion jewellery & accessories, lamps and lighting, textile machinery, bathroom accessories, garden & outdoor décor, handmade paper products & stationery, leather bags & cases, candles, incense & potpourri, GI products, traditional toys, spa & wellness products and carpets & rugs.”

Speaking about the event, Dr. Rakesh Kumar, Chief Mentor in role of Director General EPCH, Chairman – IEML & Secretary General Bharat Tex said: “Handicrafts and textiles are intertwining complementarities,

bringing out the best in one another; be it the case of Furniture and Upholstery and Handcrafted Accessories. In a home many places find textile as a base with a handcraft as the accentuation and vice-versa. Bharat Tex 2025 provides buyers this unique opportunity to see the best of both worlds - the entire kaleidoscope and figure the ‘Look’ and ‘Feel’ they want to create and propose. Bharat Tex 2025 at IEML will also feature concurrent events, including Garment Technology Expo 2025, DyeChem World 2025, and the 2nd India Sourcing Conclave 2025 - organized by Buying and Sourcing Consultants, making it a comprehensive platform for the textile and handicrafts industry.”

Dr. Neeraj Khanna, Vice Chairman, EPCH, shared that in “Bharat Tex 2025 visitors will get to source Geographical Indication (GI) certified handicrafts and textiles. GI products possess qualities, reputation, or characteristics inherent to a specific region, and we believe that this is an excellent opportunity for GI producers to gain recognition on a global scale.” He further updated on the special attractions that include Traditional Toys, Live Craft Demonstrations and a Designers Showcase.”

Sagar Mehta, Vice Chairman

– II, EPCH, said, “As a B2B fair with a strong focus on the export market, the event is poised to attract overseas buyers, importers, domestic volume retail buyers and their representatives.”

R. K. Verma, Executive Director, EPCH, added: “During the fair, there would be interactive sessions on ESG in Quality Parameters; Cross Border Trade Financing; Logistics and Supply Chain Management; Seamless GST Refunds for Exporters as well as a Panel Discussion on Design Strategies for Business.”

EPCH is a nodal agency for promoting exports of handicrafts from the country to various destinations of the world and projecting India’s image abroad as reliable supplier of high quality of handicrafts goods and services. Handicrafts exports during the year 2023-24 was Rs 32,758.80 crores (US\$ 3,956.46 million) registering a growth of 9.13% in rupee term and 6.11% in dollar terms over the previous year and handicrafts exports during the ten months of the current financial year from April to January, 2024-25 are Rs. 27,087.70 crores (US\$ 3,220.07 million) registering a growth of over 8.66% in rupee term and 6.89% in dollar terms over the same period of last year informed by R. K. Verma, Executive Director-EPCH. ●●●

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GIRIRAJ SINGH

This Is Why India Is A Revolutionary Manufacturing Hub And Economy, Explains Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh.

India's Manufacturing Boom: A New Era of Economic Strength and Global Influence

India is witnessing an unprecedented surge in its manufacturing sector, with growth figures breaking records and propelling the nation toward an exciting new economic chapter. January's manufacturing activity saw a remarkable expansion, with the Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) hitting an impressive 57.7.

The growth of India's manufacturing sector is not just in numbers, but in its impact on jobs. Employment in the sector grew at the fastest pace in 20 years, marking a historic leap that adds tremendous value to the country's economic foundation. As industries thrive and capacity builds, new opportunities are emerging, providing both a new impetus for the workforce and a strong backbone for India's future economic prosperity.

Ports of Progress: Opening New Doors to Trade

Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's ports are becoming powerful gateways to new opportunities. India's expanding ports are not only facilitating the smooth flow of goods but also supporting the rise of innovation, self-reliance, and global development. Trade has seen a boom, with an increase in cargo traffic and the emergence of dynamic startups contributing to India's growing influence in global trade.

The Rise of Artificial Intelligence in India

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is another key driver of India's economic boom. Already, 23% of Indian businesses

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Union Textiles Minister looking at new applications in jute at NINPET's labs in Kolkata

have embraced AI technologies, and this figure is set to grow rapidly, with 73% of businesses planning to expand their AI adoption by 2025. AI is becoming an integral part of India's digital economy, fostering innovation across sectors and accelerating growth in key industries, from manufacturing to services.

Digital Payments Revolution: UPI Leading the Charge

India's digital revolution is accelerating at a rapid pace, and a major testament to this transformation is the astounding growth of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI). In just five years, UPI transactions have surged from 34% to a commanding 83% of all digital payments. With a staggering 208.5 billion transactions in 2024, this leap represents the Government's commitment to a digital-first economy, empowering businesses and consumers alike.

Transforming Textiles: Empowering MSMEs

The textile industry in India is undergoing a transformation, thanks to game-changing reforms under the leadership of Prime Minister Modi. Enhanced investment and turnover limits for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are set to empower 80% of textile units in key clusters. This move will drive innovation, boost exports, and strengthen India's global competitiveness, elevating the country to new heights in the global textile supply chain.

From 'Make in India' to 'Make for World'

India is no longer just an exporter of raw materials. The nation is making a significant shift, exporting not only raw materials but also high-quality finished products. This transformation represents a shift from the 'Make in India' campaign to 'Make for the World,' positioning India as a leader in global supply chains.

Textile Innovation in India: Blending Nature with Technology for a Sustainable Future

I was amazed to see the groundbreaking developments at IIT Bhilai and Kasari Wild Silk Mill who have come together to spearhead the creation of sustainable textiles that blend the best of nature with cutting-edge technology.

One of the most exciting outcomes of this collaboration is the revolutionary use of jute in textiles. Jute, traditionally known for its use in bags and sacks, is now being integrated into menswear, making a significant shift in its application. The visionary work done by IIT Bhilai and Kasari Wild Silk Mill is proving that jute has far more potential than previously imagined. This innovation aligns with the larger mission of promoting jute as a mainstream textile and doubling the income of jute farmers and workers.

The new line of products made from a unique blend of 50% silk and 50% or 30% natural fibres, including jute, wool, and bamboo, is set to



The Union Textiles Minister is happy to see innovations that are improving sustainability in the industry, such as the 100% water-soluble bio-degradable fabric developed by SBT Textile Mills in Raipur.

revolutionise the textile sector. With an 80+ count super yarn, these textiles are not only environmentally sustainable but also create new opportunities for domestic consumption and international exports. This blend of natural fibres offers a unique aesthetic and texture, making it a desirable choice for high-quality, eco-friendly clothing.

IIT Bhilai is doing some interesting work in functional textiles too, such as the sweating thermal mannequin

developed with indigenous technology and the innovation of the portable cooling jacket.

Another interesting development I experienced was at the SBT Textiles factory in Raipur where I saw the processing of nonwoven interlining fabric, bakram and sheet. Their 100% water-soluble bio-degradable fabric is a revolutionary initiative in environmental protection and reducing textile waste.

Boosting Employment and Exports

The impact of this innovation extends beyond just textile production. The development of these new sustainable textiles is expected to create numerous employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas where farmers and workers are engaged in the production of jute and other natural fibres. This will contribute significantly to the livelihoods of those in the agricultural sector, boosting incomes and helping to foster a more self-reliant India.

At the same time, the export potential of these products is substantial. With the global shift towards sustainable and ethical fashion, these new textiles are perfectly positioned to cater to the growing demand for green and eco-conscious products. This collaboration between IIT Bhilai and Kasari Wild Silk Mill will help elevate India's position in the global textile market, driving the export of sustainable products and strengthening the country's competitive edge.

It will make Indian textiles

sustainable and globally competitive, strengthening the idea of self-reliant India.

The textile industry in India is entering a new era—one where nature and technology converge to create a greener, more prosperous future. Thanks to the visionary work of these institutions, jute, silk, wool, and bamboo are no longer just raw materials—they are the foundation of a brighter, more sustainable tomorrow.

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Westfalia Fruit Develops Natural Dyes From Avocado Leftovers

Westfalia Fruit is now using avocado skins and seeds as part of a valorisation process with Efficiency Technologies.

The global leader in the avocado industry, who is committed to utilising all parts of the avocado across the supply chain, said the valorisation of the entire byproduct channel of avocado skins and stones is assessed to optimise use, with the most recent development being technology extracting a natural, sustainable dye from avocado stones, with SAGES London.

This marks a significant advancement in total crop utilisation; the process extracts perseoragin (a rare and sought-after natural pigment) from avocado stones collected at Westfalia's UK facility.

The pigment offers eight distinct shades ranging from light yellow to rich reddish-brown, creating new opportunities for sustainable colouring solutions across multiple industries. The specialised extraction method isolates perseoragin, which constitutes approximately 3% of the avocado stone, and processes it into a dried powder form, offering extended shelf life.

"This breakthrough represents a significant step in our journey toward our total crop use strategy,"



The dyed fabric was the centerpiece of the Westfalia stand at Fruit Logistica



ANDREW MITCHELL, Head of Group Innovation at Westfalia Fruit

says Andrew Mitchell, head of group innovation at Westfalia Fruit. "By transforming what was once considered byproduct into a valuable resource, we're creating sustainable solutions that benefit multiple industries. The ability to produce eight distinct natural shades while maintaining our commitment to use the entire fruit demonstrates the potential of innovative thinking in sustainable agriculture."

Besides the dye extraction, remaining materials from the avocado skins and stones are also processed into additional valuable products – for

example, starches are directed to paper manufacture as a precursor to packaging production.

The natural dye extraction process represents a significant advancement in sustainable practices, particularly as industries increasingly seek alternatives to synthetic dyes. The powder format ensures stability and ease of use across various applications, while the range of the eight distinct natural shades offers versatility for different product requirements.

The commercial potential and versatility of the natural dye have

already been demonstrated through several high-profile applications. The pigment's successful showcase at London Fashion Week highlighted its viability in sustainable fashion, while ongoing collaborations with industry leaders in cosmetics and packaging demonstrate its cross-sector appeal.

Away from the UK, the process shows scalability as plans are underway to understand how the technology could be expanded to additional Westfalia facilities in Europe, where more avocado byproduct can be processed using the same techniques. ●●●

STALL DESIGN FOR

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How is ESG transforming the textile industry? Discover how environmental, social, and governance factors are driving change and impacting businesses globally.

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The textiles and apparel industry a global behemoth employing millions and touching every life, stands at a critical juncture. While it provides essential clothing and fuels economies, its traditional practices have left a significant environmental and social footprint. Enter ESG (Environmental, Social, and Governance), a framework that's rapidly transforming how the industry operates, moving beyond conventional sustainability and green chemistry to encompass a holistic approach to responsible business.

Compliance and regulations globally and India

ESG is not a monolithic concept. Its implementation varies significantly across regions, driven by differing regulatory landscapes and market demands.

European Union: The EU is a frontrunner in ESG regulations. The EU Strategy for Sustainable and Circular Textiles aims to make textiles more durable, repairable, recyclable, and resource-efficient. Specific regulations like the upcoming Ecodesign for Sustainable Products Regulation will set mandatory requirements for textiles, including recycled content targets and restrictions on harmful substances. The EU Taxonomy provides a classification system for environmentally sustainable economic activities, influencing investment decisions.

US: While the US doesn't have a comprehensive federal ESG mandate like the EU, it's increasingly focusing on disclosures. The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) is pushing for standardized climate-related disclosures, impacting publicly traded apparel companies. Furthermore, California's SB 253 and SB 260 require companies doing business in the state to disclose their greenhouse gas emissions, pushing for greater transparency.

Asia: Asia, a major manufacturing hub, sees a diverse ESG landscape. Countries like India, Bangladesh, and Vietnam are facing increasing pressure from international brands and consumers to adopt better ESG practices. While regulations are evolving, initiatives like the Sustainable

Beyond Green: How ESG Is Reshaping The Global Textile Industry

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Apparel Coalition (SAC) and its Higg Index are driving industry-led efforts toward standardization and improvement. China, a dominant player, is incorporating ESG principles into its national development strategies, with guidelines for green manufacturing and social responsibility.

India: India's textile industry, a significant contributor to the nation's economy and employment, is increasingly recognizing the importance of ESG. While a comprehensive national ESG mandate is still evolving, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) requirements for listed companies, pushing for greater transparency on ESG performance. This is a crucial step, encouraging companies to integrate ESG factors into their operations and reporting.

Beyond sustainability and green chemistry

ESG goes beyond the traditional understanding of sustainability by integrating environmental concerns with social and governance factors. It moves beyond just 'green' processes to encompass a broader spectrum:

Environmental: This includes reducing carbon emissions, water consumption, and waste generation, promoting circularity, and using sustainable materials. It goes beyond just using organic cotton to encompass the entire lifecycle of a garment.

Social: This focuses on fair labour practices, safe working

India's textile industry, a significant contributor to the nation's economy and employment, is increasingly recognizing the importance of ESG. While a comprehensive national ESG mandate is still evolving, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) requirements for listed companies, pushing for greater transparency on ESG performance.

While ESG implementation can involve upfront costs, it also presents a compelling business opportunity. Consumers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, are increasingly conscious of the social and environmental impact of their purchases. Companies with strong ESG credentials enjoy a better brand image and attract loyal customers.

conditions, respecting human rights, promoting diversity and inclusion, and supporting communities. It addresses issues like living wages, worker safety in factories, and eliminating forced labour.

Governance: This involves ethical business practices, transparency, accountability, board diversity, and risk management. It ensures that ESG considerations are integrated into decision-making processes at all levels.

ESG recognizes the interconnectedness of these factors. For instance, a company might use recycled polyester (environmental) while ensuring fair wages and safe working conditions in its factories (social) and having a diverse and

independent board overseeing its operations (governance). This holistic approach distinguishes ESG from earlier, more limited sustainability initiatives.

Challenges and concerns

Implementing ESG in the textiles and apparel sector comes with its own set of challenges:

Supply chain complexity: The industry's complex and globalized supply chains make it difficult to trace materials, monitor working conditions, and ensure compliance with ESG standards at every stage.

Cost of implementation: Investing in new technologies, implementing robust traceability systems, and improving working conditions can be expensive, particularly for smaller manufacturers.

Greenwashing: The risk of 'greenwashing' where companies make misleading claims about their sustainability efforts, is a significant concern. Robust verification and transparency are crucial to maintain credibility.

Lack of standardization: The lack of globally standardized ESG reporting frameworks can make it difficult for companies to measure and compare their performance.

India-specific challenges: In India, the large number of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the textile sector presents a unique challenge. Many SMEs lack the resources and expertise to implement robust ESG practices. Moreover, the informal nature of parts of the industry makes it difficult to monitor and enforce ESG standards. Issues like water

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scarcity, particularly in textile clusters, add another layer of complexity to the environmental aspects of ESG.

A compelling business

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Consumers, particularly millennials and Gen Z, are increasingly conscious of the social and environmental impact of their purchases. Companies with strong ESG

credentials enjoy a better brand image and attract loyal customers. A 2023 study by McKinsey found “consumers are willing to pay a premium of up to 10 per cent for sustainable products. Moreover investors are increasingly incorporating ESG factors into their investment decisions. Companies with strong ESG performance are more likely to attract investment and secure better financing terms. Proactive ESG management can help companies mitigate risks related to environmental regulations, social unrest, and reputational damage. And implementing sustainable practices can often lead to cost savings through reduced resource consumption and waste generation.

For Indian textile companies, embracing ESG can unlock significant opportunities. It can enhance their competitiveness in the global market, attract foreign investment, and improve their access to international buyers who are increasingly prioritizing ESG compliance. Also, a strong focus on social aspects, such as fair labor practices and community engagement, can contribute to social harmony and create a positive impact on local communities.

Treading the future

The future of ESG in the textiles and apparel sector is promising, driven by increasing regulatory pressure, growing consumer awareness, and evolving investor expectations.

First technologies like blockchain will play a crucial role in enhancing transparency and traceability across supply chains, enabling consumers and brands to make informed decisions. Second the industry will move towards circular economy models, where textiles are designed for durability, recyclability, and reuse, minimizing waste and resource depletion. Third, collaboration among brands, manufacturers, NGOs, and governments will be essential to address the complex challenges of ESG implementation. And also, the development of globally standardized ESG reporting frameworks will enable companies to measure and compare their performance more effectively.

In India, the focus on ESG is expected to intensify. The BRSR framework is likely to be strengthened, and more specific regulations related to environmental and social aspects of the textile industry are anticipated. Initiatives like the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC) and its Higg Index are gaining traction, providing platforms for Indian companies to benchmark their ESG performance and collaborate with global brands. The Indian government is also promoting sustainable textile practices through initiatives like the National Mission for Sustainable Textile Development. The rise of conscious consumers in India is also driving demand for sustainably produced clothing, creating a market incentive for companies to adopt ESG practices. A greater emphasis on skill development and capacity building will be crucial to enable SMEs to implement ESG effectively. Public-private partnerships and industry collaborations will play a vital role in accelerating the adoption of ESG across the Indian textile sector. ●●●



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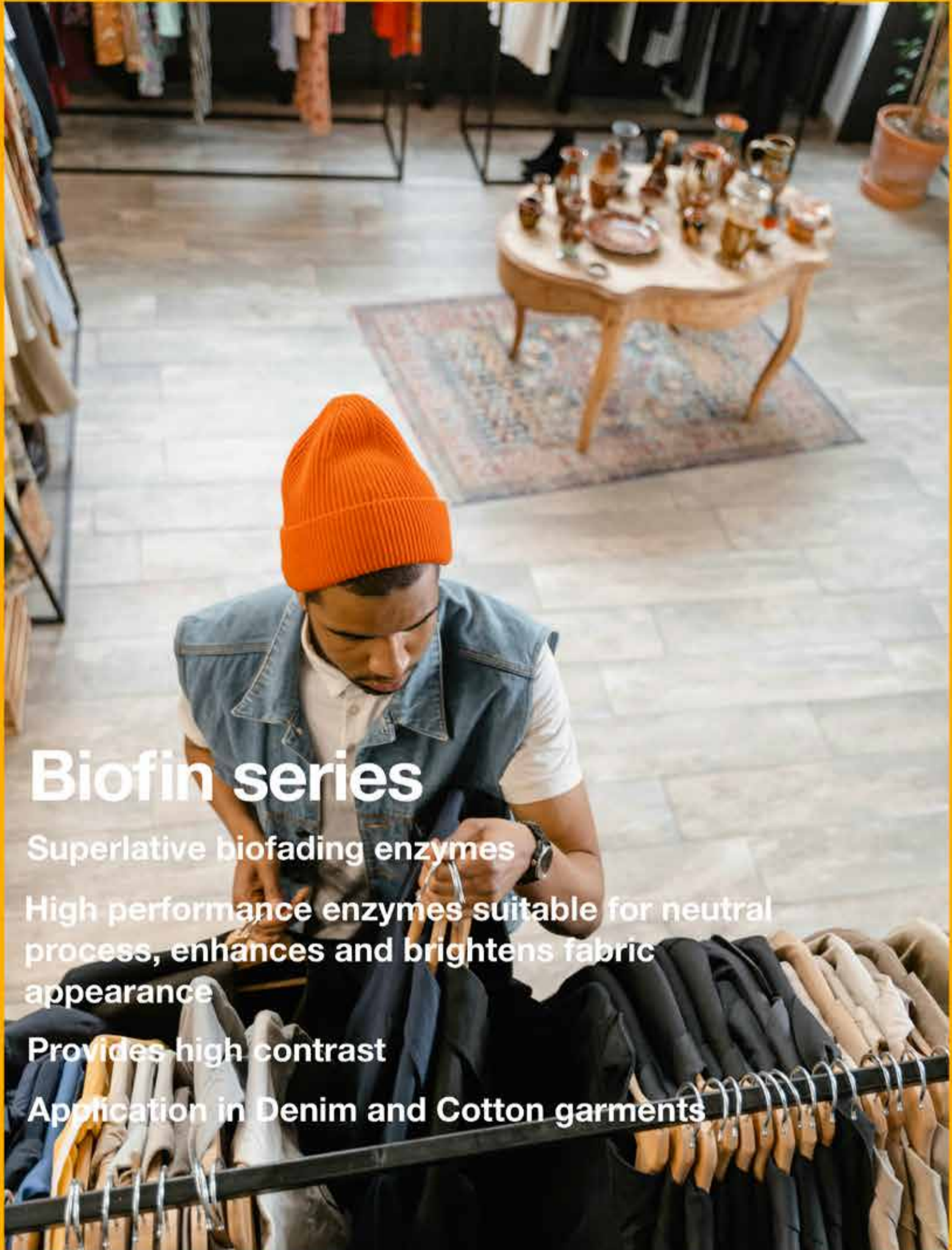
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Can India remain competitive in the global apparel market? Explore the challenges and opportunities facing the industry, including tech adoption and skill development.

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FASHIONATING WORLD

Adapting to advanced technologies is not merely a choice but a necessity for the Indian apparel industry to modernise, survive and thrive in the increasingly competitive global market.

Fast fashion, personalised clothing, and on-demand manufacturing require agile and responsive production systems, which can be achieved through technology adoption. Automated processes minimise human error, leading to higher quality and consistent output, shorter lead times, quicker response to market trends and faster delivery, enhancing customer satisfaction. And most importantly, automation optimises resource utilisation, reduces waste, and increases throughput, leading to higher productivity and improved profitability.

India's challenges and concerns

The adoption of advanced technologies in India's garment manufacturing sector faces several challenges. High initial investment is a major challenge, the cost of acquiring and implementing advanced machinery and software can be prohibitive, especially for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that constitute a significant portion of the industry.

Moreover, operating and maintaining sophisticated equipment requires specialised skills. There is a need for training and skill development programs to bridge the gap. What's more, traditional mindsets and a reliance on established practices can hinder the adoption of new technologies. Then there are infrastructure limitations. Reliable power supply and internet connectivity are crucial for running advanced systems. Infrastructure bottlenecks can pose a challenge. Job displacement is another major concern. While automation can create new, higher-skilled jobs, there are concerns about potential displacement of existing workers, particularly those with limited skills.

Despite the challenges, the adoption of advanced garment manufacturing technologies presents a compelling business case for India. By leveraging its existing strengths, such as a large workforce and a well-established textile

How AI, Robotics, Automation Are Reshaping Indian Apparel



► The present scenario is marked by a gradual adoption of advanced technologies. Computer-Aided Design (CAD) and Computer-Aided Manufacturing (CAM) are becoming increasingly common for pattern making, design, and cutting. While 3D printing is still in its nascent stages, its potential for creating customized designs and prototypes is being explored. Robotics, though less prevalent currently, is finding applications in areas like fabric handling and automated sewing.

► Despite the challenges, the adoption of advanced garment manufacturing technologies presents a compelling business case for India. By leveraging its existing strengths, such as a large workforce and a well-established textile industry, combined with advanced technology, India can position itself as a global apparel manufacturing hub.

industry, combined with advanced technology, India can position itself as a global apparel manufacturing hub. And modernised facilities and efficient production processes will attract foreign investment, boosting the industry's growth. Improved quality, shorter lead times, and competitive pricing will boost India's export competitiveness. According to official data, India's textile and apparel exports stood at \$40.8 billion in FY22.

A technologically advanced industry can better cater to the growing domestic demand for high-quality and fashionable apparel. And it will help in creating a skilled workforce as investing in training and skill development will create a pool of skilled workers, enhancing the industry's long-term sustainability.

Tech adoption by Indian companies

In fact some prominent Indian apparel companies have already adopted advanced technology and experienced positive change.

Shahi Exports, one of India's largest garment exporters, has invested heavily in CAD/CAM technology for pattern making, marker planning, and cutting. They've also implemented enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems for better production planning, inventory management, and supply chain visibility. These technologies

have enabled Shahi Exports to reduce lead times by 15-20%; improve fabric utilisation by 5-10%; enhance quality and consistency; increase production efficiency; gain better control over their supply chain.

Arvind Mills, a leading textile and apparel manufacturer, has embraced automation in its denim manufacturing facilities. They've implemented automated weaving, dyeing, and finishing processes, along with robotics for material handling. This has resulted in increased production capacity; reduced labour costs; improved product quality; enhanced sustainability through reduced water and energy consumption.

Raymond Group a top brand in the men's apparel segment, has adopted 3D body scanning technology in some of its retail stores. This allows for precise measurements and personalised tailoring, enhancing the customer experience, brand image and gaining a competitive edge in the retail market.

Similarly, Gokaldas Exports, another major garment exporter, has implemented lean manufacturing principles and integrated them with technology solutions. They've used software for production planning, shop floor control, and real-time data analysis. This approach has enabled Gokaldas Exports to streamline production processes; reduce waste and improve efficiency; enhance

productivity and profitability; improve on-time delivery performance.

Apparel Group India partnered with GreenHonchos to improve their e-commerce capabilities. They focused on website development, UI/UX improvements, and better integration with their technology infrastructure. This led to 30x increase in e-commerce sales; 30 per cent of total sales coming from e-commerce; improved customer experience and website performance; increased 'add to cart' rate by 12-14 per cent.

Future outlook

The future of garment manufacturing in India is linked to the adoption of advanced technologies. In future, there will be greater use of robotics, AI, and automation in all stages of production. Seamless integration of CAD/CAM, 3D printing, and other digital tools will create a connected and data-driven manufacturing ecosystem. Technologies that promote sustainable practices, such as reducing waste and conserving water, will gain prominence. 3D printing and other technologies will enable on-demand and personalized production, catering to individual consumer preferences. And the integration of garment manufacturing with Industry 4.0 technologies, such as IoT and cloud computing, will create smart factories with enhanced efficiency and connectivity. ●●●

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• What are your expectations from Bharat Tex, in the backdrop of the developments happening in Bangladesh and the US? How do you see the Indian industry performing given these developments?

Bharat Tex presents a crucial platform for India's textile industry to showcase its resilience and competitive edge. Amid ongoing geopolitical challenges reshaping global trade dynamics, India must prioritize value-added production, sustainability, and supply chain diversification to strengthen its strategic advantage in the textile industry. Innovation in textile technology, policy support and strategic global partnerships will be key to driving growth. Even PM Modi highlighted that in the last ten years, the size of India's textile industry has gone up from Rs 7 trillion to Rs 10 trillion, and the foreign direct investment that came into the sector between 2014 and 2023 is double of what came in the 10 years before 2014. Given India's strong domestic market and expanding exports, the industry is well-positioned to capitalise on shifting trade dynamics. Bharat Tex can accelerate this momentum by encouraging collaboration, highlighting innovation and reinforcing India's leadership in sustainable and high-quality textile manufacturing.

• RSWM has a strong focus on sustainability, which is the theme of this year's Bharat Tex too. How do you see sustainability driving growth in this industry? What is really needed to make the industry and the

'TEXTILE RECYCLING IS ESSENTIAL FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE'



RAJEEV GUPTA, CEO, RSWM

supply chain truly sustainable?

The domestic textile market in India was valued at US\$ 110 billion in 2022. It is expected to grow to US\$ 250 billion by 2031. Sustainability is an important driver of growth in the textile industry, aligning with the increasing consumer demand for eco-friendly products and adherence to global environmental standards. However, recent controversies, such as fraudulent activities in organic cotton certification, have highlighted the need for greater transparency and integrity within the supply chain. To truly embrace sustainability, the industry must adopt rigorous

verification systems, ensuring that sustainable claims are backed by credible data and traceable processes.

For example, at RSWM, we have embedded sustainability into our long-term strategy through the Vision 2030 Framework. This commitment is reflected in our:

Increasing reliance on renewable energy.

The adoption of circular practices such as PET bottle recycling.

Development of eco-friendly products.

Ensuring that our operations align with the highest global environmental

and quality benchmarks.

To make the textile industry and its supply chain truly sustainable, the sector must enhance transparency by using technology, enabling traceability from farm to fabric. Embracing circular economy principles, including recycling and upcycling, can significantly minimise waste and reduce the industry's environmental footprint. Ethical labour practices and responsible resource management must also be given importance to, in order to ensure a just and sustainable ecosystem. By integrating these practices, the textile industry can drive meaningful change while remaining competitive in a market that increasingly values sustainability.

• Textile recycling is needed, but is also questioned many a times. Your views? How do you see textile recycling coming up in the industry in terms of intent and technological developments?

Textile recycling is essential for a sustainable future, yet it often faces scepticism regarding its feasibility, efficiency and impact. Concerns stem from the complexity of fibre separation, contamination in post-consumer textiles and the limited scalability of recycling technologies. However, with increasing global awareness of sustainability, the intent to make textile

PG 21



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WILL US TARIFFS ON CHINA BENEFIT INDIA'S APPAREL EXPORTS?

The US has imposed an additional 10% tariff on imports from China, leading to uncertainty among US retailers and buyers. These tariffs will make Chinese textiles and apparel costlier in the US market. Despite the ongoing tariff wars between the two nations, China still accounts for around 35-40% of total US imports of textiles and apparel. It should be noted though that this share has been dwindling over the last five years since the US started to curb imports from China for various reasons – trade imbalance, labour rights violations, and more.

Reacting to the tariffs, Steve Lamar, President & CEO, American Apparel & Footwear Association (AAFA) said: “Widespread tariff actions on Mexico, Canada, and China will inject massive costs into our inflation-weary economy while exposing us to a damaging tit-for-tat tariff war that will harm key export markets that US farmers and manufacturers need. We should be forging deeper collaboration with our free trade agreement partners, not taking actions that call into question the very foundation of that partnership,” said Steve Lamar, AAFA president and CEO.

“During this time of high inflation,

Highlights:

US tariffs will bring down China's apparel exports to that market

India has the best chance to win a bigger share of that shift

Indian exporters could earn better realisations in the US market

Will China divert its apparel exports to Europe and other markets, displacing India's position?

Will China start to supply more to the Indian market too?

Indian exporters will have to cautiously strategize to make the most of the US-China tariff wars

this is not the time to impose new costs on US supply chains. Instead, our industry needs tariff relief and commitment to smart trade policy and strong trade partnerships,” adds Nate Herman, AAFA senior vice president of policy. “We need to renew expiring and expired trade preference programs with our allies and strengthen the competitiveness of our free trade agreement with Central America to stem the tide of migration.”

While this may spell bad news for Chinese apparel exporters who may have to work with even smaller margins, and for the US consumer who may have to shell out more for clothes, it is certainly good tidings

for the Indian textile and apparel exporters.

India is today among the most stable and reliable textile and apparel sourcing partners globally. International retailers have been trying to bring down their dependence on China for some time now, and while Bangladesh was a good option, that hasn't remained so any more. As mentioned by Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh, India is set to become the world's preferred trade partner for many reasons – a booming economy, financial transparency, well developed financial markets, a complete textile value chain that is investing in modernisation and automation, improvements in infrastructure, a well skilled working population, and much more.

In 2023, the US alone used to contribute to 27% of the total apparel and textile exports from India which has now spiked by 6% compared to the preceding year.

The US International Trade Commission (USITC) underscores the vertically integrated textile industry and stable political environment in India as a lucrative destination for fashion-focused and high-value apparel sourcing in the nation.

In post-tariff hike context, India has immense potential to leverage the overseas market in not just textiles, home textiles, apparel, technical textiles, but also in textile machinery, a segment where Indian manufacturing is beginning to excel. Hopefully, as some textile and apparel production moves into the US, Indian textile engineering industry will be able to meet some of that demand. It however, needs to be borne in mind that the US requires heavily automated factories.

Indian apparel exporters will hopefully also be able to get better realisations in the US market as US buyers will have fewer suppliers to choose from.

Having said that, China will need to find markets for its existing textile and apparel capacities. It may be able to supply more to the European Union, displacing India's share in this market. India is set to become the largest apparel consumer by 2027. There are already reports of sizeable textile and apparel imports coming in from China. This could increase further.

It will be a tight rope for Indian textile and apparel manufacturers and exporters who are investing in building up capacities. ●●●



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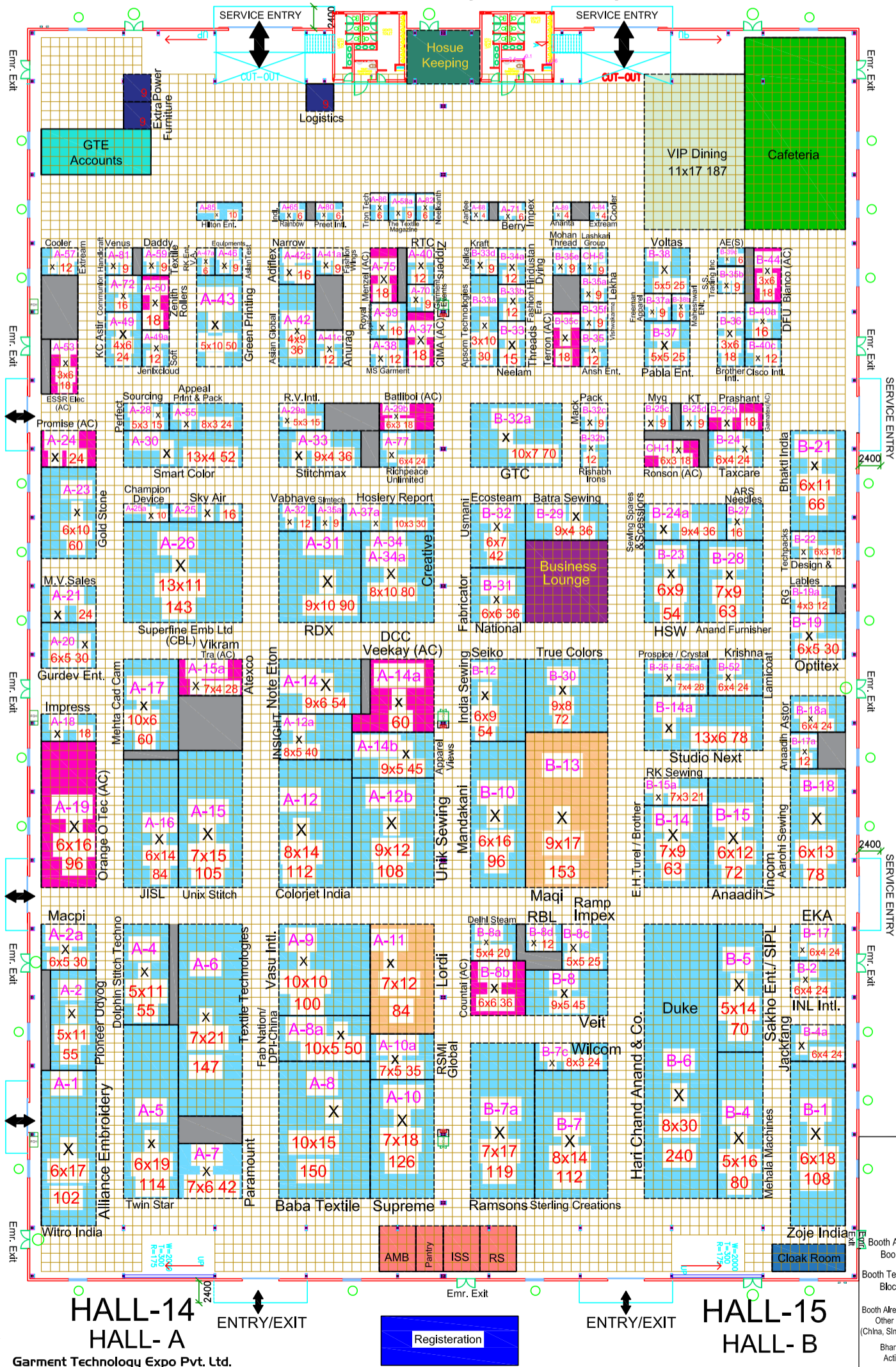


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TEXTILE ENZYMES MARKET TO REACH US\$ 847.6 MILLION BY 2032

Growth will be driven by the rise in demand for eco-friendly production processes in the textile industry.

The SNS Insider report indicates that, "The Textile Enzymes Market Size was valued at US\$ 528.1 million in 2023. It is expected to grow to US\$ 847.6 million by 2032 and grow at a CAGR of 4.42% over the forecast period of 2024-2032."

The growing demand for eco-friendly processing methods is one of the key factors driving the expansion of the textile enzymes market. As global awareness around environmental sustainability increases, both individuals and governments are placing greater emphasis on adhering to ecological standards. This shift is pushing the textile industry to find alternatives that reduce its ecological impact.

The textile sector, responsible for around 20% of industrial water pollution due to the use of harmful chemicals in dyeing and finishing processes, is now under greater scrutiny. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the use of chemicals such as ammonia, caustics, and acids in various stages of textile production contributes significantly to environmental damage.

In response to this growing concern, many governments have introduced stringent regulations, such as the European Union's REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation, and Restriction of Chemicals) legislation, which restricts the use of hazardous chemicals in production. This shift is encouraging manufacturers to adopt safer alternatives like textile enzymes.

Enzymes are not only environmentally friendly but also enhance the functionality of fabrics, meeting consumers' increasing desire for advanced textiles with additional features. For instance,



enzymes are used to produce wrinkle-resistant fabrics, improving the structure of fibres and making them more durable. They can also enhance the breathability and softness of textiles, increasing comfort and wearability. Additionally, enzymes play a role in extending the lifespan of textiles, contributing to their durability. As the industry works toward sustainability, innovations in enzyme treatments are playing a crucial role in addressing both regulatory pressures and consumer demand for high-performance, eco-friendly textiles.

By Source: Microorganisms Dominate the Textile Enzymes Market

Microorganisms, holding a 68% market share in 2023, lead due to rising enzyme demand, lower toxicity, and more efficient commercial production. Microorganism-based enzymes include bacterial, fungal, and yeast types, with fungi-based products like amylases, lipases, and proteases

seeing increased demand due to their significance in textile production.

By Type: Cellulase Enzymes Dominated the Textile Enzymes Market

Cellulose enzymes led with a 48% market share in 2023, enhancing textile abrasion and finishing processes. Amylase enzymes also saw rising demand for their efficient, non-damaging effect on fabrics. Enzymes like protease and pectinase contribute to fabric softening, pilling reduction, and de-sizing.

By Application: De-sizing Leads to Textile Enzymes Market Growth

The de-sizing segment accounted for 42% of market revenue in 2023, driven by advances in jeans and synthetic fabric finishing technologies. Enzymatic bleaching is also gaining popularity, replacing hydrogen peroxide for higher-quality, less-damaging results on fabrics like denim and cotton.

Regional Analysis Asia Pacific Leads the Textile Enzymes Market

Asia Pacific, holding 42% of the market share in 2023, dominates the textile enzymes sector due to its textile production leadership. Countries like China, India, and Bangladesh are key contributors, with China accounting for 30% of global textile production. Urbanization, rising disposable incomes, and demand for advanced textiles with enhanced features drive the region's growth. Enzyme treatments are increasingly utilized as part of eco-friendly innovations, supported by significant government investments in the textile industry to boost sustainability. This combination of high production, technological adoption, and environmental focus solidifies Asia Pacific's dominance in the textile enzymes market.

The textile enzymes market is experiencing significant growth, driven by the increasing demand for eco-friendly processing solutions and the rising need for functional, durable fabrics. Enzyme-based treatments are increasingly favored for their ability to replace harsh chemicals in textile production, reducing environmental impact and improving the quality of finished products. With applications in de-sizing, bleaching, and fabric softening, textile enzymes offer a sustainable alternative while enhancing fabric properties such as softness, breathability, and wrinkle resistance. As environmental regulations become stricter globally and consumer preferences shift toward sustainable products, the market for textile enzymes is expected to expand, with ongoing innovations supporting the demand for advanced textile treatments and technologies. ●●●

'Textile Recycling Is Essential For A Sustainable Future'

From pg 14

recycling a mainstream practice is stronger than ever.

The circular economy model is key to reducing environmental impact while maintaining high-quality production. Companies can embrace a zero-waste textile production approach, ensuring that no fibre waste is discarded. By recycling and reintegrating both pre- and post-production fibre waste into the manufacturing cycle, we can not only minimise waste but also enhance resource efficiency.

www.TextileExcellence.com

Technological advancements are rapidly addressing the challenges associated with textile recycling. Innovations such as chemical recycling enable the breakdown of blended fabrics into reusable raw materials. Additionally, closed-loop recycling systems are being developed to transform used garments into new fibres without degrading quality.

As sustainability takes centre stage in the textile industry, recycling will become a critical pillar of responsible manufacturing. With strong intent and

continuous technological innovation, the industry can scale textile recycling to drive long-term environmental and economic benefits.

• Your vision for RSWM?

Our vision for RSWM is to lead the textile industry with innovation, excellence and a commitment to global leadership. We strive to invest in cutting-edge technology, sustainable processes, and the growth of our people to deliver the finest and most diverse products worldwide. Guided

by integrity, ethics, and co-prosperity, we aim to create value that benefits our customers, employees, and communities alike. As we navigate an increasingly competitive global market, we remain dedicated to setting new industry trends while ensuring that our success is shared with all our stakeholders. As we move forward, we remain rooted in the belief that "We only take what we can give back," reinforcing our commitment to sustainability, responsible growth, and long-term value creation. ●●●

www.Bharat-tex.com

Trump's Tariffs On Canada And Mexico Are Delayed. Economic Turmoil Is Here

US President Donald Trump has delayed the 25% tariff he was set to impose on imports from Canada and Mexico, providing a 30-day reprieve for American retailers and manufacturers.

But the uncertainty generated by those levies, the 10% tariff he slapped on Chinese imports and the prospect of additional tariffs are already affecting the US economy as companies pause hiring and investment.

"The lingering threat of substantial new tariffs and possible retaliation from Canada and Mexico on US exports will cause many businesses small and large to hold back more on hiring and investing than they would have otherwise due to the elevated uncertainty," said Scott Anderson, chief US economist of BMO Capital Markets.

Is business confidence high now?

Sixty-seven percent of American executives said they were more stressed heading into 2025 than they were a year earlier, according to an online survey of 1,000 executives at companies with at least 10 employees. The poll was conducted November 25 to December 9 by Wakefield Research for Sentry, a business insurance company. And 47% of the company leaders said economic uncertainty was their biggest worry.

Forecasters say the tariffs will take a toll on the economy even if they're not passed along to consumers through higher prices.

'One thing after another'

For Stephenson's of Elkhart, a 92-year-old family-owned clothing store in Elkhart, Indiana, the trade war is the latest in a parade of crises, including the pandemic and a recent port strike that jeopardised apparel shipments, owner Danny Stephenson said. "It seems like the last five years we've had to come back from one thing after another," he said.

The store, which specializes in garments for weddings and special events, buys 50% to 60% of its products from manufacturers that source their products from China, Stephenson said.

He hopes the makers will at least absorb half the tariff cost. His business, he said, already has dealt with pandemic-related worker shortages that have pushed up labour costs and sharply rising utility bills, both of which have narrowed his



US President Donald Trump is imposing import tariffs across the board, which analysts believe could slow down the US economy.

profit margins.

Still, "In an inflationary environment, we're not really in a position" to raise prices, Stephenson said, noting he competes with big-box chain stores that receive volume discounts. "At least initially, we would try to absorb it."

Stephenson also said he wants to create a hospitable environment for customers, who just recently have regained their passion for in-store shopping.

But to offset the higher costs, he said he likely would have to scale back price promotions and put off renovations of the more than century-old downtown institution. Recently, he decided to upgrade the building's facade and was planning to refurbish the interior this year.

"We may have to slow down or delay some of the projects," he said.

Across the economy, such delays could mean a softer job market and more slowly growing economy.

Are there tariffs on Canada, Mexico?

While the tariffs on China took effect, those on Canada and Mexico were deferred until March 4 after those countries agreed to draft plans to reinforce their borders to slow the flow of illegal drugs like fentanyl and immigrants who lack permanent legal status. Yet even if they reach a deal, the risk of tariffs for both countries is likely to hover until they join the US in a review of their 5-year-old free trade deal in mid-2026, Goldman Sachs said in a research note.

The 10% tariff on Chinese imports – also aimed at prodding that country to halt fentanyl crossings into the US – was imposed after a call between Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping aimed at averting the fees was canceled.

Chinese officials said starting

February 10, the country would hit the US with retaliatory tariffs of 15% on coal and 10% on crude oil, farm equipment and some vehicles.

Additional tariffs on imports from China, the European Union and possibly other countries are likely, according to Goldman Sachs and BMO Capital Markets. Some would address national security concerns while others would be aimed at closing the US trade gap with other nations, BMO Capital Markets wrote in a note to clients.

Oxford Economics estimates Canadian, Mexican and Chinese tariffs alone would raise the Federal Reserve's preferred annual inflation measure from 2.8% to 3% by year's end – nearly a percentage point above where it would have been absent the tariffs. Goldman and Moody's Analytics expect a half percentage point bump to inflation this year.

Oxford also expects the economy to grow 1.4% this year, well below the 2.6% gain it had expected, assuming the China, Canada and Mexican tariffs are imposed and remain in effect.

'I can either raise my prices or take less money'

Margaret's Boutique, a women's clothing shop in Decorah, Iowa, buys about 15% of its dresses, sportswear, jewelry, shoes and other items from Canada and 80% from China, said owner Kelli Winchester.

Winchester said she likely can absorb the 10% fee on Chinese imports or make it up on other products but a 25% tax on Canadian goods would have a deeper impact. "I can either raise my prices or take less money" in profits, Winchester said. Under the latter scenario, she said, "I'll have less money to buy clothing."

Well-known brand-name goods, she said, have thinner profit margins.

"I have no choice but to pass (the tariff) along" to customers. This week, she said, her suppliers agreed not to pass on the tariff costs to her this year, but she's worried she eventually could be hit by the higher fees or that shoppers coping with grocery price increases due to tariffs will spend less on clothing.

This month, Winchester had planned to hire additional employees to handle the brisk summer business she typically sees in Decorah, a tourist spot. But she's holding off for now. "I probably want to wait to see how this all gets implemented," she said.

'Tariffs just give us a reason to pause'

In some industries, the trade battle is inflamed by political tensions. Midwest Barrel Co. of Louisville, Kentucky, sells barrels – after they're used to age bourbon – to whiskey makers in 30 countries that distill their products in the containers for enhanced flavoring, said company CEO Jessica Loseke.

Loseke fears the barrels eventually could be socked with retaliatory tariffs by China, Canada and Mexico. She's also concerned about a 50% tariff by the European Union on American whiskey that's set to take effect March 31 in retaliation for US tariffs on EU imports during Trump's first term. Meanwhile, she noted, Canadian officials are pulling American bourbon and other alcohol from store shelves because of their ire over Trump's proposed 25% tariffs on imports from Canada.

Both developments will likely slow US bourbon sales in an already weak market, reducing the global supply of used bourbon barrels and driving up their price, Loseke said. That, she said, would further dampen her sales.

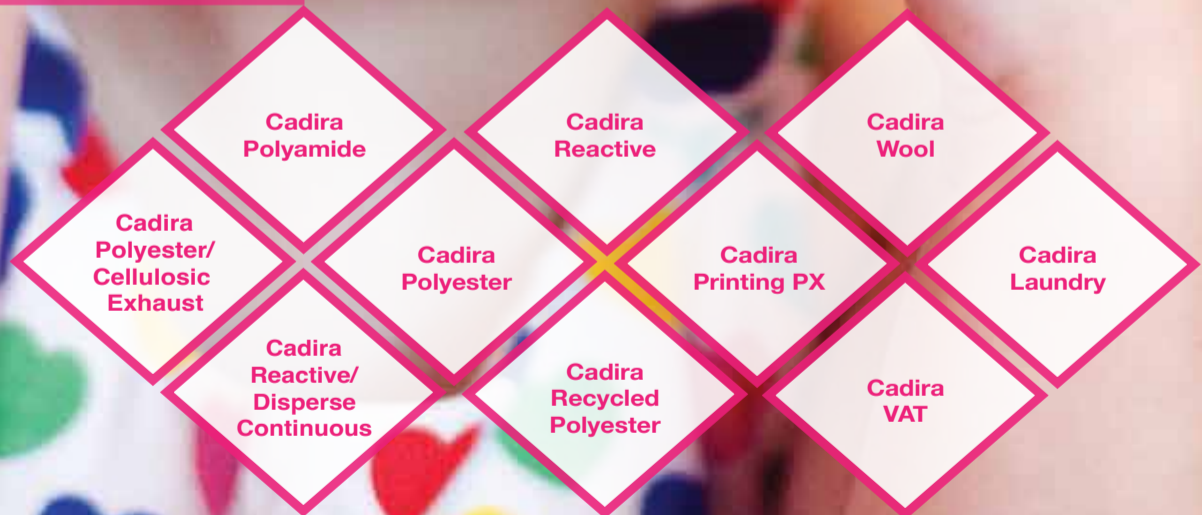
Loseke also has been affected more directly. A Canadian whiskey maker has suspended its barrel orders from Midwest. "They said they didn't want to do business with a company in a 'red' state" that helped elect Trump, Loseke said.

As a result of the turmoil, Loseke has shelved plans to replace two staffers who recently left the 22-employee company. "What these tariffs do is they create a lot of uncertainty across the global market," she said. "Tariffs just give us a reason to pause."

She added: "I don't want to bring somebody on and have to lay them off."

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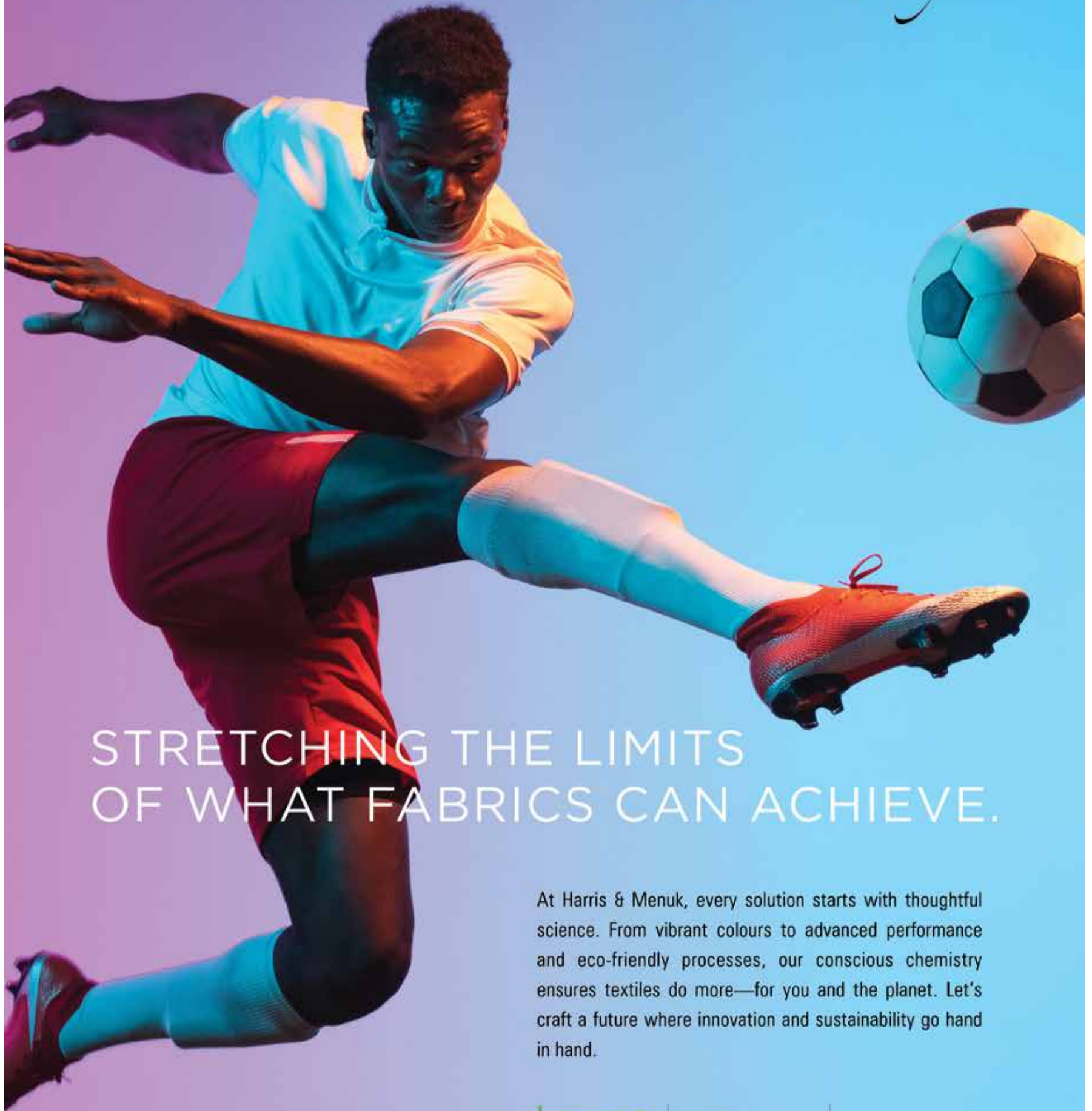


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