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1. **GOVERNMENT TEXTILE PROCUREMENT MAY INCLUDE RECYCLED MATERIALS**

As part of an action plan to strengthen the textile waste value chain and make India a global centre for circular textiles, the Centre may make it mandatory for a specific percentage of textile products purchased by the government to be made from recycled materials. According to officials, it intends to build textile recycling clusters and adopt Indian standards and certification for recycling. "We will look at government interventions based on short, medium and long-term targets and examine the scope of textile recycle products being made mandatory in public procurement," said an official. The officials added that the textiles ministry intends to evaluate the current situation of textile waste and the related industry in order to develop laws that would turn India into a hub for sourcing circular and sustainable textiles and apparel on a worldwide scale. Pre- and post-consumer waste generation as well as waste source identification will be part of the assessment. The ministry will also hire a consultant to conduct an examination of the present methods used by the sector to comply with circularity international standards. According to the source cited above, a thorough roadmap for scaling up technology to promote recycling is being developed. According to the source, the government is also attempting to quantify environmental effects including carbon dioxide emissions, water footprints, and energy usage. The action is consistent with the new Circular Economy Action Plan for the European Union, 2020, which lists textiles as one of the major product value chains facing numerous sustainability problems.

(Source: Apparel Resources)

2. **DTAB GIVES IN PRINCIPLE NOD TO NOTIFY SITRA'S LAB AS APPROVED TESTING LABORATORIES FOR MEDICAL TEXTILES**

The Drugs Technical Advisory Board (DTAB) has agreed in principle to notify the medical textiles testing laboratories of Coimbatore-based South India Textiles Research Association (SITRA) as an approved testing laboratory to conduct quality tests for medical textiles in the country. SITRA, a not-for-profit research organisation actively involved in carrying out research and development on conventional and technical textiles, has submitted a representation with the concerned authorities seeking Central government's recognition to their lab as Central Medical Device Testing Laboratory (CMDTL) for testing of bio-protective coveralls, surgical and medical facemasks, surgical gowns, surgical drapes, etc. Following its latest meeting held in May, this year, the Board said, "DTAB deliberated the matter and agreed in principle for the notification of SITRA for testing of medical textiles under the Medical Devices Rules, 2017. However, prior to that, the laboratory should be inspected by CDSCO to assess the facilities available in the laboratory". The CDSCO officials are expected to conduct the inspections in the Coimbatore testing facility soon. During Covid-19 pandemic SITRA was approved by the Ministry of Textile and accepted by MoHFW to Test

and certify Personal Protective Equipments (PPE) and coveralls to be used by frontline healthcare workers. The Association is also empanelled by BIS under Group 2 category for testing medical textiles such as coveralls, facemasks, surgical gowns, surgical drapes etc. The lab is accredited by National Accreditation Body for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) as per ISO/IEC 17025:2017 and is being used by the textile industry, observed the Board. It was also informed that currently there is no Central Medical Devices Testing Laboratory which has a facility for testing of medical textiles such as coveralls, facemasks, surgical gowns, surgical drapes etc. As per Rule 19 of Medical Devices Rules, 2017, the Central Government may, by notification, establish Central Medical Devices Testing Laboratory for the purpose of testing and evaluation of medical devices; or functioning as an appellate laboratory; or to carry out any other function as may be specifically assigned to it. The Central government may also designate any laboratory having facility for carrying out test and evaluation of medical devices as central medical devices testing laboratory for the purposes specified in sub-rule (1) Provided that no medical devices testing laboratory, shall be so designated unless it has been duly accredited by the NABL. SITRA has been designated as a Centre of Excellence (COE) for Medical Textiles by the Office of the Textile Commissioner, Ministry of Textiles (MoT), Government of India under Mini Mission I of Technology Mission on Technical Textiles (TMTT) in recognition of excellent research accomplishments in the field of Medical textile industries. It has set-up a state-of-the art facility for pilot scale manufacturing and quality evaluation of medical textile products and has a dedicated group of textile technologists as well as experts in allied fields like microbiology, biotechnology and polymer chemistry to carry out research, training and consultancy to the textile industry as well fast emerging medical textile domains. "The Centre has served as a backbone for many businesses in the Medical Textiles market by providing technical assistance to many domestic and international manufacturers right from concept to product. The Centre with its well-equipped competency for Medical textile testing, established dedicated laboratories to suit different functional requirements," says the Association's website.

(Source: Pharmabiz.com)

3. 12 COUNTRIES CENTRAL TO NEW TRADE PUSH PLAN; GOVT DECIDES TO GO BIG ON MARKETING EVENTS

The Ministry of Commerce and Industry has identified 12 countries for trade and investment promotion road shows in the coming months, and has decided to go big on marketing events globally as part of a major plan of action to push faltering exports, a senior official said. The road shows and marketing blitz are part of a plan that has been drafted by a task force of officials of Department of Commerce, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Invest India and Indian Missions abroad. The countries where the action will be concentrated include the US, Brazil, Canada, UAE, Saudi Arabia, UK, Germany, Sweden, Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and Russia, the official said. Before zeroing in on the target countries the task force had done an in-depth analysis of export-import trends, outbound investments trends and strategic engagements with over 20 countries. Out of the entire basket of exports from India, eight to nine commodity groups have been identified for the push in these markets. Some of the commodities include food, electronics and engineering. India has for long expressed its intention to be part of the global supply chains, especially in high-technology areas like electronics and information technology. "World trade is happening in value chains and for that manufacturing is required. The focus of the plan is whatever we make in India should have an export orientation," he said. As these 12 focus countries are also a big source of Foreign Direct Investment in the world and India, channels of

communications would be opened with some of the biggest companies there to encourage them to deepen their engagement with India, he added. "The idea is that both trade and investment strategy should be working in sync," the official added. The plan also involves sending teams from the Department of Commerce and Niti Aayog to the big global trade exhibitions where they would be organising buyer-seller meets. The plan also involves approaching 10 biggest organisers of trade exhibitions in the world and mounting large scale events in India too. The new exhibition grounds of Indian Trade Promotion Organisation are nearing completion and in coming months some big exhibitions and buyer-seller meets are being planned.

(Source: Financial Express)

4. BRUNEI-CHINA INAUGURATE MILESTONE MARITIME TRADE ROUTE

Brunei has inaugurated a container shipping route between its deep-water port, Muara, and China's Beibu Gulf Port in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. This marks the first shipping route of its kind between the Southeast Asian nation and China. Haji Mohd Amin Liew, Brunei's Minister of Finance and Economy, expressed during the ceremony that this new maritime line is key to the economic growth of Brunei. The route is expected to catalyse trade within the Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA) by simplifying imports and exports, as well as opening fresh markets. "In February 2017, Guangxi Beibu Gulf International Port Group Company Ltd and Brunei's Darussalam Assets formed a joint venture company to operate the Muara Port container terminal, injecting new vitality into the port," Xiao Jianguo, Chinese ambassador to Brunei, was quoted as saying by Chinese media Cai Lixin, the visiting vice governor of Guangxi, remarked that this development is a pivotal step towards enhancing cooperation between China and the BIMP-EAGA region. It also furthers the construction of the New International Land-Sea Trade Corridor. The establishment of the new route is viewed as significant for trade and economic collaboration between Brunei and China.

(Source: Fibre2Fashion)

5. GST COUNCIL TO TIGHTEN REGISTRATION RULES; PHYSICAL VERIFICATION TO BE MANDATORY IN 'HIGH RISK' CASES

In order to check fake registration, the GST Council is likely to reduce the time period to 30 days, from 45 days currently, for submission of PAN-linked bank account details of the person seeking registration with tax authorities. The Council, in its meeting is likely to provide for mandatory physical verification of the business premises of "high risk" applicants before granting of GST registration. Also, the GST Rules are likely to be amended to state that person whose business premises is being verified should not be present at the spot during the physical verification. The changes proposed by the Law Committee, comprising officers from Centre and states, with a view to contain fake registration under Goods and Services Tax (GST), would be considered by the Union finance minister-chaired GST Council. The central and state GST officers are currently undertaking a special drive to catch fake registration. During the drive so far, 17,000 GSTINs were found to be non-existent. Of this, 11,015 GSTINs have been suspended and 4,972 have been cancelled, while Rs 15,000 crore tax evasion have been detected. Sources said in light of several cases of unscrupulous elements obtaining fake/ bogus GST registration, it is desirable to strengthen the process of registration under GST by amending provisions of Central GST Rules, wherever required.

As per the existing GST Rules, a registered person is required to furnish details of PAN-linked bank account, which is in name of the registered person, within a period of 45 days from grant of registration or the date on which returns are due to be furnished, whichever is earlier. The Law Committee suggested that the time period be reduced to 30 days from the date of outward supplies of goods or services in GSTR-1 or using invoice furnishing facility, whichever is earlier. In case of a proprietorship concern, the Permanent Account Number (PAN) of the proprietor shall also be linked with the Aadhaar number of the proprietor. In 'high risk' cases, the Law Committee suggested that the registration shall be granted within 30 days of application, after physical verification of the place of business. The Committee was also of the opinion that the requirement of physical verification of business premises in the presence of the applicant poses "risk of manipulation by unscrupulous applicants making temporary arrangements in anticipation of the officer as well as risk of undue delays in case of wilful absence of the applicant". Accordingly, the Committee recommended to the Council that the requirement of the presence of the applicant for physical verification of business premises may be done away with, sources said. A final decision on the recommendation of the Law Committee will be taken at the 50th GST Council meeting.

(Source: The Economic Times)

6. ALL GST REGISTERED BUSINESSES WILL NOW HAVE TO GEOCODE THEIR ADDRESSES: GSTN

GST Network said it has geocoded 1.8 crore addresses of registered businesses and the functionality is now live for all states and UTs. Geocoding will help in finding out the exact location of the registered entity and check bogus registrations. The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) has already conducted a pilot for geocoding in a couple of states. In an update to businesses, GSTN said the functionality for geocoding the principal place of business address is now live for all States and Union territories. This feature, which converts an address or description of a location into geographic coordinates, has been introduced to ensure the accuracy of address details in GSTN records and streamline the address location and verification process. "GSTN has successfully geocoded more than 1.8 crore addresses of principal places of business. Furthermore, all new addresses post-March 2022 are geocoded at the time of registration itself, ensuring the accuracy and standardization of address data from the outset," GSTN said. Businesses can access the geo-coding functionality in the portal and the system-generated geocoded address will be displayed. Businesses can either accept it or update it as per their requirements. In cases where the system-generated geocoded address is unavailable, a blank will be displayed, and you can directly update the geocoded address, GSTN said.

(Source: The Economic Times)