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1. CENTRE PLANS AMNESTY SCHEME FOR EXPORTERS

The amnesty scheme could benefit about 1,000 odd exporters, while it could also result in the immediate flow of tax revenues to the Centre due to the resolution of the disputes. To regularise export obligation (EO) default cases under the Export Promotion Capital Goods (EPCG) and Advance Authorisation (AA) schemes, the government is examining an amnesty scheme for exporters, under which they may be required to pay applicable customs duty but get some relief on interest and escape penalties fully, sources told FE. The amnesty scheme could benefit about 1,000 odd exporters, while it could also result in the immediate flow of tax revenues to the Centre due to the resolution of the disputes. Though the exact cost of the amnesty scheme for the government or benefits to the exporters could not be ascertained, it could well run into at least a few hundred crores. Tax revenue foregone by the government on EPCG and AA schemes in FY22 was Rs 11,700 crore and Rs 2,862 crore, respectively. Similar revenues were foregone in the previous years as well. The EPCG and AA schemes facilitate imports of goods for producing quality goods and services and enhancing India's manufacturing competitiveness. An announcement in this regard might be made in the upcoming Budget for FY24, the sources indicated. The EPCG scheme allows import of capital goods at zero customs duty for pre-production, production and post-production of export goods. It also covers certain categories of service providers. Exporters availing the benefit of the EPCG scheme are required to achieve an EO equivalent to six times the duties, taxes and cess saved on capital goods, to be fulfilled in six years reckoned from the date of issue of authorisation. Export obligation under the scheme should be, over and above, the average level of exports achieved by the applicant for the same and similar products, except for certain categories, as specified. Advance Authorisation (AA) is issued for the import of duty-free inputs against which the prescribed Export obligation (EO) was to be fulfilled within 18 months from the date of issue of the authorisation.

(Source: Financial Express)

2. POLY SPUN, PSF PRICES DOWN IN INDIA, CHINA'S LOCKDOWN PROVIDES RELIEF

Prices of polyester and polyester-cotton (PC) yarn declined in India as polyester fibre prices came down. The industry is switching to polyester from cotton to operate at limited loss or low margins. Industry sources said that Indian textile industry is relieved due to COVID restrictions in China, which are affecting the demand of polyester products. Reliance has cut prices of polyester staple fibre by ₹3 to ₹99 per kg, and after regular discounts, the prices worked out at ₹87-88 per kg. Cheaper fibre dragged down the prices of recycled polyester fibre to ₹75-77 per kg. A steep fall in polyester

fibre prices provided the much-needed relief to the textile value chain. “Polyester price cuts provided room for the industry to run with limited loss. Spinning mills are making loss from production of polyester yarn but the loss is lower than that of cotton yarn production,” a broker from Ludhiana told Fibre2Fashion. Before the recent fall, production of polyester yarn was profitable. Recently poly spun yarn prices eased by ₹2-5 per kg. According to trade sources, poly spun, and PC yarn eased by ₹2-5 per kg in Ludhiana. Surat market also noted a bearish trend. 30 count PC combed yarn (48/52) was sold at ₹203-213 per kg (GST inclusive) in Ludhiana, according to Fibre2Fashion’s market insight tool TexPro. 30 count PC carded yarn (65/35) was priced at ₹175-180 per kg. 30 count poly spun yarn was sold at ₹147-155 per kg. Recycled polyester fibre (PET bottle fibre) was at ₹75-77 per kg. Recycled polyester fibre fell by ₹2-3 per kg after price cut of virgin polyester staple fibre by Reliance Industries Limited. In Surat, Gujarat, 30 count poly spun yarn was traded at ₹130-131 per kg (GST extra) and 40 count poly spun yarn at ₹140-141 per kg. The prices came down by ₹2-4 per kg in the last few days after fibre prices declined. Reliance Industries Limited had decreased prices of purified terephthalic acid (PTA), monoethylene glycol (MEG) and MELT for the current week. On Friday, RIL fixed the prices as: PTA at ₹77.00 per kg (-1.50), MEG at ₹52.70 per kg (+0.50) and MELT at ₹84.14 (₹-1.12) per kg. Earlier, RIL had reduced the prices of PSF by ₹3 to ₹99 per kg for the current fortnight. North Indian cotton prices remained firm due to consistent but limited demand amid slow arrival. According to local traders, prices are increasing as farmers are reluctant to sell their stock at current prices which are not comfortable for the industry. But buyers are purchasing cotton with caution. Overall cotton arrival was at 23,000-23,500 bales of 170 kg. The prices increased by ₹50-70 per maund of 37.2 kg in the last few days. The natural fibre was traded at ₹6,550-6,650 per maund in Punjab, ₹6,450-6,550 per maund in Haryana and ₹6,750-6,800 per maund in upper Rajasthan and at ₹64,000-66,000 per candy of 356 kg in lower Rajasthan.

(Source: Fibre2Fashion)

3. DIGITIZATION OF MSMEs

The Government runs various programmes/schemes to boost business potential and to compete with other e-commerce large business entities through various digitalization initiatives for MSMEs such as Udyam portal, MSME Champions Portal, Government e-Marketplace (GeM), Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS), msmemart.com. In addition, MSME SAMBANDH for monitoring of procurement by Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) from Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) and MSME SAMADHAAN portals for filing applications regarding delayed payments. As on date 1.24 crore MSMEs are registered in Udyam Registration portal and further benefitted through various programmes. Procurement from Central Ministries / Departments / CPSEs made purchases about Rs. 95576 Cr. from MSEs under Public Procurement Policy (PPP) for MSEs and 21,360 applications filed by MSMEs have been disposed by MSEFC council. The information with respect to the status of revenue and profitability of MSMEs is not centrally maintained by Ministry of MSME. Under the MSME Champions Schemes ‘Digital MSME’ component has been included for digital empowerment of MSMEs in the country. The Ministry of MSME propose to support MSMEs through “Digital MSME” a component of MSME Champions Scheme to bring in digitization and digitalization and to make MSMEs digitally empowered and motivate them to adopt digital tools, applications and technologies in their production & business processes with a view to improve their competitiveness.

(Source: pib.gov.in)

4. BRINGING SUSTAINABLE DYEING TECHNOLOGY TO THE TEXTILES INDUSTRY

Developed in collaboration with Deakin University and supported by funding from the Innovative Manufacturing Cooperative Research Centre (IMCRC), the patented technology eliminates the need for water by applying dyes and functional coatings to textiles using plasma-enhanced chemical vapour deposition. Tom Hussey, CEO of Xefco, said in addition to saving water and preventing pollution, Ausora delivers an 86 per cent reduction in energy consumption and an 88 per cent reduction in chemical consumption compared with conventional wet processes. "Dyeing and finishing textiles is the most unsustainable aspect of the fashion industry, accounting for 20 per cent of global water pollution and 3 per cent of global carbon emissions. "Our collaboration with IMCRC, Deakin University and Proficiency Contracting has enabled us to address this challenge with a comprehensive solution for sustainably dyeing and finishing textiles." "After successfully demonstrating the process, we are now scaling up to our roll to roll systems. We are currently setting up a pilot manufacturing facility at Deakin University's ManuFutures in Geelong, which will enable us to refine the technology and facilitate commercial trials for customers in the new year," Hussey said. Dr Frank Chen, research fellow at Deakin University, said IMCRC's collaborative model allowed Deakin to integrate with Xefco and Proficiency Contracting throughout the project effectively. "By working as one team with one shared goal, we were able to address any challenges and harness our research expertise to advance the development of this exciting technology more quickly. "And as a result, we have developed a unique atmospheric plasma coating system that reduces the cost, complexity and environmental impact of textile manufacturing by eliminating wet dyeing and finishing processes." Dr Matthew Young, IMCRC's manufacturing innovation manager, said the project outcomes had the potential to catalyse meaningful change within the textiles and fashion industries, and placed Australia at the forefront of research into advanced sustainable fabric coating processes, potentially extending the life of garments. "The collaboration between Xefco, Deakin University and Proficiency Contracting demonstrates Australia's enormous research capability and serves as an exemplar of how industry-led innovation is helping to solve some of our world's most pressing challenges. "Xefco's technology will drive environmentally friendly and resource-efficient processes, reducing water consumption and pollution, and changing the way fabrics are dyed and finished in Australia and around the world."

(Source: manmonthly.com)

5. ACRE UNIQUE INITIATIVE FOR COTTON FARMERS OF INDIA

The Alliance of Cotton & Textile Stakeholders on Regenerative Agriculture (ACRE) has been established by Solidaridad Asia, the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB), and regenagri to advance regenerative cotton farming practises in India. 'The Reclaim to Regenerate: Towards Regenerative Cotton Sector in India' event in Nagpur, Maharashtra, served as the official launch of the ACRE Alliance. According to the Alliance (ACRE), implementing a unique initiative will improve the livelihoods of over 500,000 smallholder cotton farmers and their communities in India while reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 1 million tonnes by 2030. Through this Alliance,

Solidaridad and CRB hope to foster a new, more systemic form of collaboration among stakeholders along the value chain, including farmer organisations, ginners, traders, buyers, brands, and agricultural and textile authorities. This collaboration will enable the necessary change in agricultural practices. Leading brands, buyers, and participants in the textile value chain who are committed to sustainability and value the principles of regenagri cotton attended the programme. The Nagpur Declaration, a call to action issued by the partners, asks responsible businesses to pledge their support for regenagri-certified cotton. Regenagri-certified cotton is sustainable, ensures fair value to farmers, and complies with national and international policy priorities, according to Solidaridad, CRB, and regenagri. They are confident that by collaborating with the stakeholder groups, they will produce 50,000 tonnes of regenagri-certified cotton in the next year, which will come from the fields of 10,000 farmers and be used by at least 10 fashion brands. Additionally, it is anticipated to encourage consumers, brands, and retailers to source cotton sustainably, assisting them on their path to net-zero emissions. One of the biggest exporters of cotton yarn is India, and cotton makes up 20% of industrial labour and 16% of industrial capital. However, cotton production is also connected to problems like farmer angst, environmental risk, and social and environmental injustice. For instance, the rainfall variability risk is growing for cotton monoculture in Gujarat and Maharashtra. Inorganic fertilisers and pesticides are frequently used carelessly during crop production, harming the area's biodiversity and the quality of the soil and water. As a result, many companies are now keen to promote ethical agricultural practises. To popularise regenerative agriculture, which promises better living conditions and ecological sustainability, Solidaridad, CRB, and regenagri have joined forces. In Vidarbha, Maharashtra, in 2020, Solidaridad piloted one of India's largest regenagri certification programmes, aiding 8,000 small farmers in implementing these practises. Solidaridad is currently collaborating with over 100,000 farmers in the area, which would reduce about 100,000 tonnes of GHG. HeskeVerburg, Managing Director of Solidaridad Europe, honoured some of the progressive farmers in attendance for their efforts. Because it strikes a balance between the needs of smallholders and the requirement to resurrect the natural systems for sustainable production, regenerative agriculture is now being considered as a viable alternative to conventional agriculture. By rebuilding soil organic matter, surface and subsurface carbon pools, and restoring degraded soil biodiversity which leads to carbon drawdown and water cycle improvement regenerative agriculture can actively contribute to reversing climate change. Simply put, it involves turning global agriculture from a degenerative to a generative system that produces agricultural products, stores carbon, and improves biodiversity on individual farms.

The Alliance of Cotton & Textile Stakeholders on Regenerative Agriculture (ACRE), which Solidaridad, CRB will jointly manage, and regenagri, aims to promote regenerative agricultural practices by:

- Supporting the scaling up of regenerative agriculture in cotton with the vision of making India the world's largest producer of certified regenerative cotton
- Improving methods/tools that balance smallholder benefits with environmental protection and improve soil health in various agro-climatic regions and landscapes where cotton is grown in India.
- Educating domestic and foreign users and consumers to demand regenerative cotton
- Regenerative agriculture success stories in cotton are being documented and shared.
- Supporting the expansion of certified regenerative cotton production in India to make it the largest producer in the world.

- Facilitating cooperation between participants in India's cotton and textile value chains on regenerative agriculture in the country's various cotton landscapes
- Enhancing soil health and smallholder benefits in various cotton-growing regions and landscapes in India through the development of tools and/or mechanism(s)
- Educating consumers and users both domestically and abroad to demand regenerative cotton preserving and sharing cotton regenerative agriculture success stories tackling national and state-level regenerative agriculture and natural farming policy issues - building buyers' and brands' capacity and expertise to promote wider adoption of regenerative practices in the cotton and textile industries
- Establishing connections between initiatives focusing on carbon, climate, and biodiversity finance and cotton farmers who practice regenerative agriculture.

Solidaridad, CRB, and regenagri are collaborating to expand regenerative agriculture to larger landscapes and across crops, starting with cotton, because they are dedicated to effective and inclusive programmes on the ground. The National Mission on Natural Farming, a project of the Indian government, is partly supported by the ACRE Alliance. To coordinate the Alliance's plans with the BharatiyaPrakritik Krishi Paddhati Programme under the national mission to promote agrarian livelihoods and address climate change and biodiversity loss, Solidaridad and CRB will engage with government authorities. Dr. Shatadru Chattopadhyay, Managing Director of Solidaridad Asia, stated this at the Alliance's official launch: "Arable land larger than the size of England is abandoned every year due to land degradation; in other words, more rainforests or savannahs need to be ploughed to make up for this loss. The next development after sustainable agriculture is regenerative agriculture. According to Solidaridad, regenerative agriculture is the sustainable form of agriculture for this decade. "Regenagri has been doing great work in India where, as of October 2022, more than 40,000 farms are already certified under this programme," said Franco Costantini, CEO of regenagri. The partnership with Solidaridad and the Center for Responsible Business is a fantastic chance to scale up and deliver the positive impacts that stakeholders demand. "This partnership will create opportunities for cotton and textile buyers and brands to collaborate with producers/farmers to regenerate natural systems and mitigate climate change," said Rijit Sengupta, CEO of the Centre for Responsible Business (CRB). This initiative's demonstration that farmers can participate actively in achieving our nation's climate goals is one of its most compelling features.

(Source: Krishi Jagran)

6. CENTRE LIKELY TO ALLOW BUSINESSES TO USE PAN FOR SINGLE-WINDOW CLEARANCE

At present there are over 13 different business IDs like Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO), Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC), Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN), TIN, TAN and PAN, which are being used to apply for various government approvals. Commerce and industry Minister Piyush Goyal said that his ministry has already approached the department of revenue on the matter. "We are moving towards using one of the existing databases as the entry point, which is already available with the government...and most probably that will be the PAN number. So with the PAN, a lot of the basic data about the company, its directors, addresses, and a lot of common data is already available in the PAN database," Piyush Goyal told reporters here. The national single window system (NSWS) is aimed at reducing duplicity of information submission to different ministries, reduce

compliance burden, cut gestation period of projects, and promote ease of starting and doing business. NSWS enables the identification, applying and subsequent tracking of approvals for all integrated states and central departments. He said that use of PAN number will help auto-populate other application forms that will be received in the system and will help speed up the approval process and encourage more companies to apply on the system. The system currently accepts applications for 248 government-to-business clearance and approvals from 26 central ministries and departments, including states. So far 19 states/Union Territories, including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Goa, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, and Karnataka, and 27 central government departments are already onboarded the system, which was started in September last year and is under beta testing phase. The minister also informed that at present businesses are taking approvals for different policies including vehicle scrappage policy, ethanol policy, hallmarking of jewellery and Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) approvals. "We will be moving towards newer areas like all inspection approvals, country of origin approvals, export promotion council applications. At the next stage, these will come on the system," he said, adding that all applicants of the production linked incentive scheme are being encouraged to use the system. He was addressing the media after a review meeting on the National Single Window System in New Delhi on Monday. The meeting witnessed participation from 32 central ministries/departments, 36 states/UTs and industry associations. NSWS also helps in reducing data duplication and filling the same data in various forms using the auto-population module, he added. He pointed out that NSWS has received nearly 76,000 applications/requests so far and about 48,000 approvals had been granted. Renewal of licences would also be brought under NSWS soon starting with five ministries like commerce and industry, consumer affairs, food and public distribution and textiles.

(Source: NDTV)

