PLEXCONCIL - The Plastics Export Promotion Council

PLEXCONNECT™

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Building an Atmanirbhar Industry

Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020

Industry Watch – Trends & Innovation

Countryscape – Focus on Vietnam

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THE PLASTICS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

65 years
1955-2020
Empowering Lives through Plastics

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From the Chairman's Desk

In his clarion call to the country, the Hon'ble PM Shri. Narendra Modi stated that while we have been hearing for many years that the 21st century will belong to India, the current situation is an indication that not only does our nation need to combat the crisis but also resolutely move ahead, and prevail. Being self-reliant and vocal about local, Atmanirbhar Bharat aims to boost the economy, encourage domestic manufacturing & Make In India, attract investments and nudge the country into reviving economic growth in the coming months and years. Intent, Inclusion, Investment, Infrastructure and Innovation, are the five pillars that make up Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.

Bold reforms are the need of the hour and our economy needs a quantum jump and not just incremental changes. However, while the Rs. 20 crores stimulus may cushion our ailing economy to some extent, the ground reality remains that manufacturing, services, exports, etc have all been severely impacted and many of our pre-COVID challenges, especially in the MSME sector still remain as stumbling blocks to our growth. In this issue, we have highlighted the concerns of our industry and the challenges to our industry becoming Atmanirbhar. The issues were presented by eminent members of our fraternity to the Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce and we can only hope that these will be considered as they are very integral to the growth of our industry.

Advocating self-reliance doesn't mean that we cut off from the world and become anti-free trade. It simply means that we identify the key sectors where our country has the potential and capability to scale up. Our industry has all the necessary infrastructure to become a leading global sourcing hub while meeting domestic requirements. Hence then focus should be on building entire value chains that are not import dependent so that we can be more globally competitive and self-reliant.

The recently announced Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020 has been another significant development and with the introduction of Capital & Interest Subsidies, Long term lease of land, incentives, focus on solar energy for MSME's, single window clearances, etc., we are confident that the already flourishing state of Gujarat is sure to attract much more investment and growth in its industries. This issue highlights the key points from the policy as well as the industry's first reactions.

Meanwhile, during July 2020, India exported plastics worth USD 862 million, down 0.5% from USD 866 million in July 2019. Cumulative value of plastics export during April 2020 – July 2020 was USD 3.07 billion as against USD 3.53 billion during the same period last year, registering a negative growth of 13.0%.

In this issue, we also look at Vietnam under our Countryscape feature, some trends and development taking place around the word today as well as news and updates.

Finally, a nation's strength ultimately consists in what it can do on its own and not in what it can borrow from others. We have our dream and now all we need is to put the wheels in motion.

Until then, stay safe, stay healthy.

Warm regards,

Ravish Kamath
Chairman

Date: 01-07-2020 **Region: R.O. East**

Meeting Particulars: 'Web Conference on GST Day Celebration' – 1st July 2020

To celebrate the occasion of GST Day on July 1st, the Principal Chief Commissioner, CGST & CX, Kolkata Zone invited the Council to join the Web Conference. Representatives from the various chamber of commerce/Trade Associations joined in this conference. Mr. Amit Pal, COA Member (ER) & Mr. Nilotpal Biswas, RD joined the online Conference. Mr. Amit Pal, COA Member submitted his concern about the Risky Exporters.

Date: 03-07-2020 **Region: H.O. Mumbai**

Meeting Particulars: Webinar on "Boosting Business Through Social Media" on July 3, 2020

Plexconcil in Joint Association with Adfactor organized a Webinar to educate the Members of the Council on Boosting Business Through Social Media. The Webinar was Presided by Mr. Ravish Kamath, Chairman Plexconcil, Moderated by Mr. Ginu Joseph, Chief Editor & CEO, Modern Plastics, Emerald Groupe and Session was Presented by Dr. Samir Kapur, Director - North, Adfactors PR. The Members were informed about the importance of Social Media especially in the era of Pandemic where Digital Business is the new normal. The session also gave a hands-on for how to promote their business on Digital Platform using Social Media Tools, Meeting Buyers via Virtual Platforms and other services. Over 300 Attendees participated in the webinar via Virtual Meeting Platform and on Live Stream.

Date: 06-07-2020 **Region: R.O. North**

Meeting Particulars: Webinar on "Cyber Security in the Age of COVID-19" - 6th July, 2020

The New Delhi office organised a Webinar on "Cyber Security in the Age of COVID-19" in Association with Cyber Masters, in order to educate Members regarding online threats and the basics of keeping their Organizations safe as they increasingly use remote working tools, email, social media, internet banking etc. in their export business. Participants got an insight of how to do their export business securely while using various online tools, which are being increasingly used due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
The webinar, which was moderated by the Regional Chairman (North), Mr. Vikram Bhadauria, was well appreciated and attended by over 80 participants.

Date: 17-07-2020 **Region: R.O. North**

Meeting Particulars: Labels and Plastic Packaging in a Circular Economy: How to be Sustainable and Cost Effective- 17th July, 2020.

A webinar was organized by All India Plastic Manufacturers Association (AIPMA). The agenda of the webinar was essentially a Panel discussion on achieving sustainability and cost effectiveness in a circular economy. The panelists discussed about the current challenges faced in plastics recycling in India, the legal aspects covering recycling of plastics in India under the Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016, and about Extended Producers Responsibility (EPR). Amongst the challenges highlighted by the panelists, were the issues of lack of segregation of waste at source, no formalized channels for buy-back/collection of post -consumer waste, and the lack of the organized sector in this field. How labels in plastic packaging affect the recycling process, and effective ways to overcome this was also discussed.

Speakers at the webinar included Mr. Jagat Killawala, President AIPMA, Ms. Ritika Gadoya, Shakti Plastic Industries, Mr. Louis Rouhaud, Global Marketing Director, Arjobex, Mr. Arvind Mehta, AIPMA.
Mr. Sanjiv R. Dewan, RD, joined the online session.

Council Activities - July 2020

Date: 21-07-2020 **Region: R.O. East**

Meeting Particulars: Special e-Session on Should India and China be at Trade War? – 21st July 2020

A webinar (special E-Session) organised by Bharat Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata on or 21st July 2020. This e-Session was addressed by Ambassador Gautam Bambawale, Former Ambassador of India to China, Bhutan and High Commissioner of India to Pakistan. As per former Ambassador of India to China, India's economic resilience only way to take over China. After his address he interacted with the participants. Mr. Nilotpal Biswas, RD joined this Webinar.

Date: 31-07-2020 **Region: R.O. East**

Meeting Particulars: Webinar on 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Scheme for MSMEs' – 31st July 2020

A webinar was jointly organised by PLEXCONCIL(ER Office), CHEMEXCIL & Yes Bank. CA Charanjot Singh Nanda, made a detailed presentation on the scheme. Presentation was followed by an interactive session. Mr. Amit Pal, COA Member moderated the session.

Date: 01-07-2020 to 31-07-2020

Activity Particulars: Facilitated Members issues and concerns

Issues of members, pertaining to Duty Drawback, COO, were taken up with DOR/ EIA, for resolving the same. Inputs were also sought from members for furnishing information to the Commerce Ministry on various issues on which urgent inputs were sought by them. Clarification to members were also given on issues raised by them in the WhatsApp group formed for the benefit of members.

Representations made by Plexconcil in the month July 2020

Western Region

1. Representation made to the PFMS department for incorporation of port code INKPK6, same was done by them.
2. Representation to O/o Addl. DGFT, Mumbai for Rajiv plastics EODC issue
3. Representation to EDI department, JNPT for activation of Drawback account of M/s. Styles Baggage Pvt. Ltd
4. Representation to the Export Inspection council for issues raised by M/s. Flair Writing Industries Limited., same was resolved.
5. Representation to Shri. Vijay Kumar, Addl. DGFT - regarding EODC issue of M/s. Mayur Wovens Private Limited
6. Representation to GST council - Regarding accumulation of Transitional GST and ITC on Capital goods
7. Representation to Indian Institute of Packaging for IIP- application for UN certificate of M/s. Mechemo Industries, same was resolved.
8. Representation to O/o. DGFT for Amendment In Export Policy Of Textile Raw Material For Masks And Coveralls
9. Representation to O/o DGFT for MEIS benefits from DTA to SEZ supply
10. Representation to Ministry of Commerce and Industry and Commerce Secretary regarding non acceptance of MEIS application from 23.07.2020 by DGFT module.

Northern Region

1. Representation made to Shri N.K.Sinha, Joint Secretary (Drawback) – regarding long pending Duty drawback claims of M/s Vacmet India Ltd., Agra
2. Representation and follow up with O/o Addl. DGFT – regarding issue of old Shipping Bills pertaining to refund of GST, of M/s Intec Export (India) Pvt. Ltd., Delh

Embassy of India
Tokyo, Japan

Invites you for the

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PLEXCONNECT 2020

VIRTUAL B2B

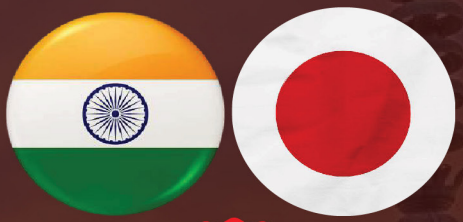
THE PLASTICS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

Sponsored by Ministry of Commerce Govt of India

with JAPAN
SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2020

Dear Member(s),

PLEXCONCIL in its commitment to help increase India's Plastics Exports and support the Indian Business houses and manufacturers to generate business is organizing a Virtual B2B with Japan buyers. The B2B is being organized with support from the Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan.



BUSINESS TO BUSINESS WITH BUYERS FROM JAPAN

S.No	HS Code	Description
1	3901	Polymers of ethylene, in primary forms
2	3901	Polymers of ethylene, in primary forms
3	3902	Polymers of propylene or of other olefins, in primary forms
4	3904	Polymers of vinyl chloride or of other halogenated olefins, in primary forms
5	3907	Polyacetals, other polyethers and epoxide resins, in primary forms; polycarbonates, alkyd resins.
6	3908	Polyamides, in primary forms
7	3909	Amino-resins, phenolic resins and polyurethanes, in primary forms
8	3910	Silicones in primary forms
9	3911	Petroleum resins, coumarone-indent resins, polyterpenes, polysulphides, polysulphones and other.
10	3912	Cellulose and its chemical derivatives, n.e.s., in primary forms.
11	3914	Ion-exchangers based on polymers of heading 3901 to 3913, in primary forms
12	3917	Tubes, pipes and hoses, fittings therefor, e.g. joints, elbows, flanges, of plastics
13	3919	Self-adhesive plates, sheets, film, foil, tape, strip and other flat shapes, of plastics, whether.
14	3920	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular plastics, not reinforced, laminated.
15	3923	Articles for the conveyance or packaging of goods, of plastics; stoppers, lids, caps and other.
16	3924	Tableware, kitchenware, other household articles and toilet articles, of plastics (excluding)
17	3926	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s.
18	420212	Trunks, suitcases, vanity cases, executive-cases, briefcases, school satchels, spectacle cases.
19	540720	Woven fabrics of synthetic filament yarn, incl. monofilament of >=67 decitex and with a cross.
20	5607	Twine, cordage, ropes and cables, whether or not plaited or braided and whether or not impregnated.
21	630532	Flexible intermediate bulk containers, for the packaging of goods, of synthetic or man-made textile materials.
22	901839	Instruments and appliances used in medical, surgical, dental or veterinary sciences, incl.

The B2B meeting will be scheduled in

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2020

The participation cost for the B2B meeting will be

RS. 15,000+ GST

(Rupees Fifteen Thousand plus GST)

APPLY BEFORE
SEPTEMBER 5, 2020

Interested Members are requested to apply to the Council with the attached form and send to the following email addresses:

PLEXSR@PLEXCONCIL.ORG
RUBAN.HOBDAY@PLEXCONCIL.ORG

For more details, contact:
+91 98400 53930

Embassy of India
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Invites you for the

PLEXCONCIL - The Plastics Export Promotion Council

PLEXCONNECT 2020

VIRTUAL B2B

THE PLASTICS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL

Sponsored by Ministry of Commerce Govt of India

with KOREA
SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2020

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS WITH BUYERS FROM REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Dear Member(s),

PLEXCONCIL in its commitment to help increase India's Plastics Exports and support the Indian Business houses and manufacturers to generate business is organizing a Virtual B2B with Republic of Korea buyers. The B2B is being organized with support from the Embassy of India, Seoul, Republic of Korea (South Korea).

S.No	HS Code	Description
1	390890	Polyamides, in primary forms
2	390940	Phenolic resins in primary forms
3	391000	Silicones in primary forms
4	392020	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of ethylene
5	392062	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular poly "ethylene terephtalate", not reinformced
6	392190	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported
7	392390	Articles for the conveyance or packaging of goods, of plastics
8	392690	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials
9		Other Made Up Textile Articles;
10	630532	Flexible intermediate bulk containers, for the packaging of goods, of synthetic or man-made textile materials
11		Prepared Feathers And Down And Articles Made Of Feathers And The Likes
12	670300	Human hair, dressed, thinned, bleached, or otherwise worked;

India International Plastics B2B with Republic of Korea is being scheduled in

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2020

The participation cost for the B2B meeting will be

RS. 15,000+ GST

(Rupees Fifteen Thousand plus GST)

APPLY BEFORE
SEPTEMBER 5, 2020

Interested Members are requested to apply to the Council with the attached form and send to the following email addresses:

PLEXSR@PLEXCONCIL.ORG
RUBAN.HOBDAY@PLEXCONCIL.ORG

For more details, contact:
+91 98400 53930

Embassy of India
Consulate Genera of India
Vietnam

Co-organizer
VCCI
The Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Invites you for the

PLEXCONNECT 2020
VIRTUAL B2B

THE PLASTICS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL
Sponsored by Ministry of Commerce Govt of India

Supported by
VPA
Vietnam Plastics Association

India-Vietnam Business Coorperation on Plastics & Polymer

24th SEPTEMBER 2020, THURSDAY

Dear Member(s),

PLEXCONCIL in its commitment to help increase India's Plastics Exports and support the Indian Business houses and manufacturers to generate business is organizing a virtual B2B with Vietnam buyers. The B2B is being organized with support from the Consulate General of India, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam and supported by the Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City Brance) and Vietnam Plastics Association (VPA).

S.No	HS Code	Description
1	3901	Polymers of ethylene, in primary forms
2	3902	Polymers of propylene or of other olefins, in primary forms
3	3903	Polymers of styrene, in primary forms
4	3904	Polymers of vinyl chloride or of other halogenated olefins, in primary forms
5	3906	Acrylic polymers, in primary forms
6	3907	Polyacetals, other polyethers and epoxide resins, in primary forms; polycarbonates, alkyd resins.
7	3909	Amino-resins, phenolic resins and polyurethanes, in primary forms.
8	392062	Plates, sheets, film, foil, and strip, of non-cellular poly"ethylene terephthalate", not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. those of poly"methyl methacrylate", Self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918); Rigid plain
9	392069	Plates, sheets, film, foil, and strip, of non-cellular polyesters, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, not worked or only surface-worked, or only cut to rectangular, incl. square, shapes (excl. polycarbonates, polythylene terephthalate and other unsaturated polysters, self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings in heading 3918); Rigid, Plain
10	39290	

India-Vietnam Business Cooperation on Plastics & Polymer being scheduled on

24th SEPTEMBER, 2020 (THURSDAY)

The participation cost for the B2B meeting will be

RS. 15,000+ GST

(Rupees Fifteen Thousand plus GST)

APPLY BEFORE
SEPTEMBER 5, 2020

Interested Members are requested to apply to the Council with the attached form and send to the following email addresses:

PLEXSR@PLEXCONCIL.ORG
RUBAN.HOBDAY@PLEXCONCIL.ORG

For more details, contact:
+91 98400 53930

INVITES

for the VIRTUAL B2B MEETING

(Buyer Seller Meet)

Egypt, Nigeria & Sudan

28 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

(Online platform will be open for 3 days)

Plexconcil in its commitment to help increase India's Plastics exports and support the Indian Business houses and manufacturers to generate business, is organising a virtual B2B meeting/Buyer-Seller Meet with Importers/Buyers from Egypt, Sudan & Nigeria. This B2B meeting is being organized with the support from the Indian Embassy / High Commission in Egypt, Sudan & Nigeria.

Focus Sectors *(Indentified based on global import)*:

- Pet Preforms, Caps & Closure
- Houseware items
- Plastic Pipes & Fittings
- Plates, sheets & films
- Packaging items
- Floor Coverings / Leather Cloth
- Raw Materials including Master batch
- Office & School Supplies
- Moduled & Extruded Goods
- Medical Disposables

Participation charges:
The participation cost for the B2B meeting will be **Rs. 15,000/- +GST** (Rupees Fifteen Thousand only + GST).

Interested members are requested to apply to the Council with the following details on or before **31st August, 2020.**

Application Form

Name & Address of the Company IEC No	
Products manufactured and exported *(Please attach high resolution photographs of your product)*	
Name of the Directors Mobile No/E-mail/Tel no:	
Membership renewal for 2020-21 (Yes/ No)	

Application:
Interested members are requested to fill-up the application form and e-mail to **nilotpal@plexconcil.org** on or before **31st August, 2020.**

Contact:
Mr. Nilotpal Biswas
+91 93310 78058

Building An Atmanirbhar Industry

India has faced the COVID-19 situation with fortitude and a spirit of self-reliance, demonstrating resilience and its ability to rise up to challenges and uncover opportunities even when the tide has been against the country. This is very evident in the fact that from zero production of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) before March 2020, India today has created a capacity of producing 2 lakh PPE kits daily, which is also growing steadily. The re-purposing of various automobile sector industries to collaborate in the making of life-saving ventilators is another such example.

The clarion call given by the Hon'ble PM to use these trying times to become Atmanirbhar (self-reliant) has been very well received and perceived as the step towards the resurgence of the Indian economy. The Five pillars that the Atmanirbhar Bharat programme focuses on include Economy, Infrastructure, System, Vibrant Demography and Demand. While the first phase begins with strengthening the MSME businesses, in a phase wise progress, Atmanirbhar Bharat ultimately aims to promote self-sustainability as a nation and enable reforms that would place the country on the path to long term growth.

The announcement of the Rs. 20 Lakh crore stimulus package, redefining the MSME, and manifold financial and economic benefits aimed at the MSME sector have all been aimed at kickstarting and boosting an ailing sector that has probably most borne the brunt of the economic crisis caused by the pandemic.

In his first major address on economy to India Inc. at the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) annual session in June, the Hon'ble Prime Minister urged the Indian industry to invest in robust local supply chains. Championing the call for 'Made in India, made for the World', the Hon'ble Prime Minister stressed on "sector-wise structural reforms" to revive growth and the urgent need to address some major challenges like the high logistics cost (double of international average), low R&D expenditure, skill mapping as well as quality and cost of power for the manufacturing industry. He envisioned a bold list of five 'I's - Intent, Inclusion, Investment, Infrastructure, Innovation as key pillars for the revival of economic growth.

However, while the stimulus package is expected to cushion the economy to some extent, a visibly shrinking GDP in the past 2 quarters, contraction in manufacturing, dip in exports and widespread loss of employment, has broader implications and amplifications for the rest of the economy.

Therefore, in addition to the five 'I's outlined, a critical 'I' that needs to be factored in is to 'I'dentify reforms that could be 'I'mmediately undertaken.

Atmanirbhar Bharat & Plastics Exports

In the past weeks, members of Plexconcil from across key product sectors undertook the responsibility and shared their views with the Joint Secretary, Department

of Commerce on the challenges faced by them as well as suggestions for the consideration of the Government on mitigating these challenges. These suggestions are aimed at truly embracing the spirit of the Atmanirbhar programme that would ultimately boost the manufacturing sector, improve domestic and global competitiveness as well as enhance Indian exports in the coming years.

India's Plastics Import/Exports

Plastic raw materials	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	USD Million	USD Million	USD Million
India's export to world	3,273.00	4,530.30	3,455.50
India's import from world	10,785.49	11,557.33	10,501.54
	-7,512.49	-7,027.03	-7,046.04

Value added plastics	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
	USD Million	USD Million	USD Million
India's export to world	5,346.40	6,236.10	6,280.80
India's import from world	5,182.89	5,703.03	5,522.56
	163.51	533.07	758.24

Advocating self-reliance doesn't mean that we cut off from the world and become anti-free trade. It simply means that we identify a few key sectors where the country has the potential and capability to scale up and be globally competitive. The idea is to build the entire value chain of that sector such that we are not dependent on others from raw material to semi-finished to finished goods.

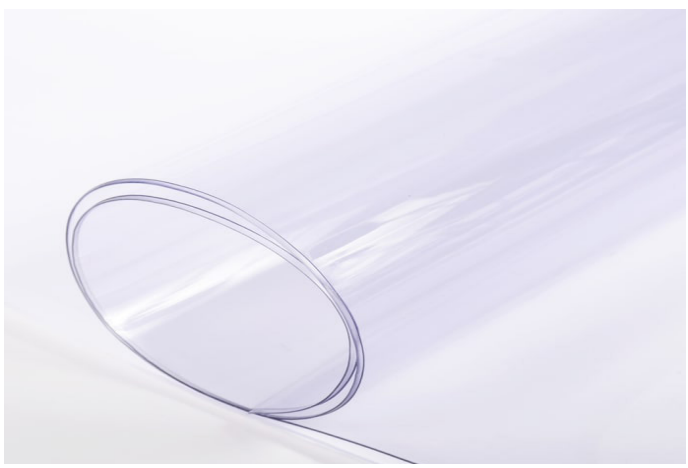
In this article, we share with you a synopsis of some of the issues that have been highlighted with the DoC.

PVC Films

Representation made by Mr. Arvind Goenka, RMG Polyvinyl India Ltd.

PVC films are produced from PVC resin, Plasticizer, Additives, Calcium Carbonate & Pigments. Produced from thickness 0.05 mm to 2.00 mm, these can be opaque, transparent, printed, embossed, flexible, or rigid.

PVC films can be used directly for: Blister packing of tablets, Waterproofing of civil structures, Produce electrical insulation tapes, Furniture film for doors, window profile, Reinforced films for use as Flex Banners for hoardings, etc. These can also be fabricated for Urine bags, Raincoats, Table Covers, Shower Curtains, PPE Coveralls, X-Ray barrier aprons, etc.



PVC films	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Value of Import from World	71.94	68.46	74.34	82.37	85.89
Value of Import from China	32.77	36.39	43.01	48.23	51.71
China's share in India's Import	45.55%	53.16%	57.86%	58.55%	60.20%
Value of Export from India	43.21	48.73	54.16	57.64	70.65

Challenges

- High Import dependency

One of the main reasons for excessive import is Custom Duty issues. Import duty on raw material PVC resin is 10% and that on PVC films is also 10%. Import duty on fabricated items from PVC film like table cover, raincoats etc is also 10%. This implies that right from polymer to finished goods, custom duty rate is same.

Preferential custom duties under ASEAN & SAARC FTA range from NIL to 5% which makes imports of finished goods highly competitive thereby discouraging local production of PVC films & fabricated goods.

There is no mechanism by Government to check under invoicing of import value for finished goods. PVC films are being undervalued under the garb of "stocklot" especially from China. Whereas customs assess PVC resin (HS code 3904) imports at PLATTS South East Asia prices which is one of the highest and at least 5-7% higher than China making domestic production of PVC films & finished goods un-competitive.

- High Cost of PVC Resin in India

PVC resin has been attracting a very high Anti-Dumping duty since year 2008. There is no benefit of preferential import duty derived under FTA for PVC resin imported under CEPA from Japan or under AIFTA from Thailand passed on to PVC resin consumers in India. As India is dependent on PVC resin imports, CIF offers to India are higher than to China.

- Disparity in Import Duty

In Budget 2019, Customs Duty on PVC resin was raised to 10% and duty on PVC Floorings (HS code 3918) was raised to 15%. However, duty on PVC sheets (HS code 392043, 392049, 392190) was left unchanged. PVC Floorings are being imported under the garb of PVC sheets as duty is lower on PVC Sheets by 5%.

PVC geomembranes are normally 2.00 mm thick, even thicker than PVC floorings but attract only 10% import duty, as against 15% for PVC Floorings. Indian producers of Geomembranes cannot compete with European origin goods as the import duty rate is low.

Recommendations for the sector

- Import duty on PVC sheets (HS code 3920) should be increased to 15% as has been the case for HS code 3918.
- Import of processed plastic goods under ASEAN & SAARC FTA may be suspended 1 year as it is not favourable to domestic PVC / Plastic processing industry.
- As China is dumping stock lot & rejected plastic goods in the country, Minimum Import Price (MIP) should be implemented on such imports @ 1.50 times the basic polymer prices.
- Imports of PVC raw materials, whether prime grade or off grade, if imported by actual users for captive consumption only should be assessed on invoice value (not on Platts prices).
- PVC resin production needs to be increased urgently in India. Suitable financial incentive should be given to the polymer producers to enable them to enhance their capacity or to attract new entrants to set up facilities. Import duty on polymers should not be increased as it will severely affect the survival of the downstream processing industry and will not help in creation of new capacities.
- Ongoing discussions to implement BIS marking mandatory on PVC resin should be discouraged as it will only benefit domestic Polymer producers and in no way will improve quality of finished PVC goods. The primary reason being that finished goods of PVC are made with a combination of raw materials where PVC resin may be between 30 to 60% by weight. Furthermore, India will be dependent on imports of PVC resin for atleast a

decade even if new projects are planned immediately.

- PVC scrap is non-existent in landfills in India as it is easily recycled. Government has not allowed import of Pre Consumer Virgin PVC scrap, which is a neat & clean scrap and is 100% recyclable. If allowed, it will reduce value of imports and boost exports of finished goods.
- Government should ensure that benefit of preferential import duty for PVC resin under CEPA & AIFTA FTA is passed on to PVC resin consumers in India and not pocketed by foreign suppliers and similarly re-negotiate these FTA which should favour export of Indian goods.
- To boost exports, Value addition in Advance Authorization should be reduced to "positive" from existing 15% for a period of 1 year.

Petrochemicals

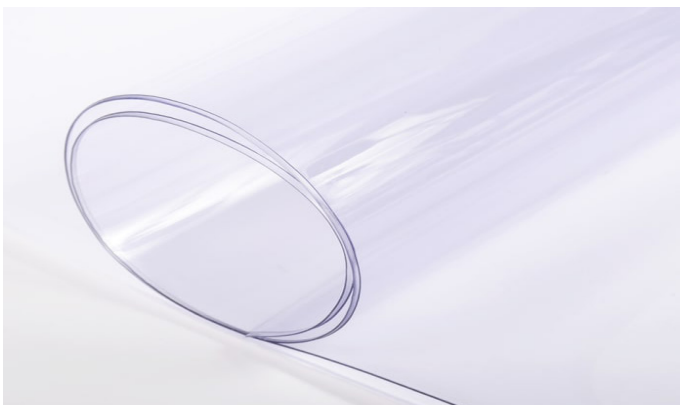
Representation made by Mr. Pradip Thakkar, Mechemco Industries

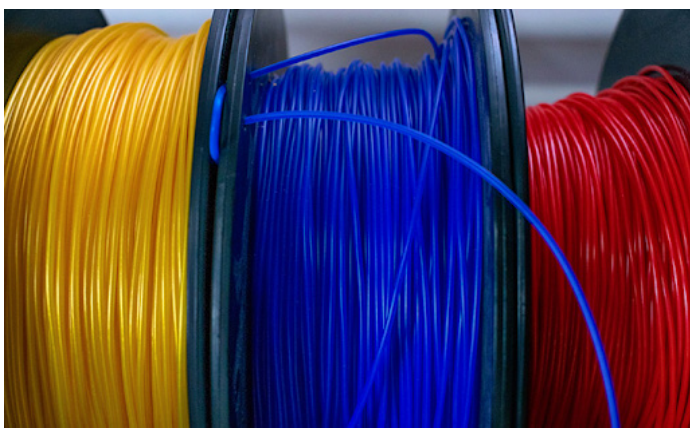
There are several types of petrochemicals being imported in India and this is primarily because India does not have sufficient domestic manufacturing capacity to produce any of these. In the 1960s and 1970s, the special investment by PSUs in refining and downstream cracking saw the production of several petrochemical products. However, as crude oil became more expensive and the need for petroleum as fuel outstripped petrochemicals demand, the focus shifted.

Some of the petrochemicals that are being imported are Styrene Monomer (HS code 290250), Maleic Anhydride (HS code 291714), Propylene Glycol (HS code 290532)

Challenges

Styrene Monomer (HS code 290250) is used for making polystyrene, expanded polystyrene such as thermocol, ABS, Styrenated rubbers, unsaturated polyesters, coatings, binders etc. Until a few decades ago, India had manufacturers such as Polychem Ltd., Synthetics & Chemicals Ltd., LG Polymers India Pvt. Ltd. These companies were operating their plants (of relatively small capacities) until the last 1990s but shut down as the business became unviable.





There is absolutely no producer of Styrene monomer in India.

Styrene Monomer		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
India's import from the world	Value – USD mn	1,015.28	1,063.51	861.74
	Qty – 000 T	789.27	817.78	876.92
	Price – USD/T	1,286.35	1,300.49	982.69
India's export to the world	Value – USD mn	5.96	9.62	4.70
	Qty – 000 T	4.52	6.53	4.37
	Price – USD/T	1,317.33	1,472.88	1,076.58

Maleic Anhydride (HS code 291714) is used for making coatings, surfactants, and unsaturated polyester resin. All the domestic manufacturers such as Adarsh Chemicals Fertilisers Ltd., Ganesh Anhydride Ltd. and Thirumalai Chemicals Ltd. have shut down their plants. It may be noted that all these plants were based on Benzene as raw material and present technology is to manufacture from Butane. Thirumalai Chemicals Ltd. closed its Indian unit and has set up in Malaysia.

There is no real manufacturer of Maleic Anhydride in India.

Maleic Anhydride		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
India's import from the world	Value – USD mn	66.55	88.57	66.16
	Qty – 000 T	52.63	69.92	66.94
	Price – USD/T	1,264.55	1,266.73	988.32
India's export to the world	Value – USD mn	0.35	0.15	0.27
	Qty – 000 T	0.23	0.09	0.17
	Price – USD/T	1,504.41	1,727.31	1,612.90

Propylene Glycol (HS code 290532) is used in pharmaceuticals, food & flavor and fragrance industries and also for the manufacture of polyester resins. Manali Petrochemicals Ltd. is the only Indian company that makes Propylene glycol but it has a very limited capacity. Manali Petrochemicals Ltd. mainly caters to the pharmaceuticals and food & flavor needs and has less focus on sale to those with industrial use.

Propylene Glycol		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
India's import from the world	Value – USD mn	76.90	98.87	77.08
	Qty – 000 T	57.33	66.50	67.37
	Price – USD/T	1,341.29	1,486.81	1,144.10
India's export to the world	Value – USD mn	2.66	3.45	9.32
	Qty – 000 T	1.12	1.70	5.93
	Price – USD/T	2,381.66	2,033.23	1,570.49

Masterbatches

Representation made by Mr. Vikram Bhadauria, ALOK Masterbatches

Titanium Dioxide (HS code 320611) is one of the ingredients used in plastic, paint, rubber, cosmetic, textile, Ink, pharma and paper industry. There are two grades - Rutile & Anatase. There are only three TiO2 manufacturers in India due to which the domestic demand has to be met through imports. India imports TiO2 from China, Germany, Mexico, USA, Taiwan, Russia, Singapore, Malaysia, etc. India imports 12% of China's total TiO2 production.

Producers of Titanium Dioxide in India are:

Kerala Minerals & Metals Limited- State Owned

- Grades - Rutile Grade
- Production Capacity- 48000 TPA
- Utilized Capacity - 35000 TPA

Travancore Titanium Products Limited- State Owned

- Grades - Rutile & Anatase
- Production Capacity- 14500 TPA
- 95% Anatase and 5% Rutile

Kilburn Chemicals Limited (VVTi Pigments Pvt. Ltd.)

- Grades - Anatase Grade
- Production Capacity- 14500 TPA

Titanium Dioxide		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
India's import from the world	Value – USD mn	630.46	683.05	673.06
	Qty – 000 Kg	233,340.77	244,220.77	262,467.41
	Price – USD/T	2,701.89	2,796.85	2,564.36
India's export to the world	Value – USD mn	22.16	28.44	22.62
	Qty – 000 Kg	13,102.54	17,135.87	17,261.20
	Price – USD/T	1,691.28	1,659.68	1,310.45

Challenges

- TiO2 Supply

India has vast deposits of TiO2 ore, yet we import approx. 80% of our requirements from other countries. Out of the 80%, an estimated 55% is imported from China & remaining 45% from the rest of the world.

Raw Material of TiO2 comprises Ilmenite (Ore), H2SO4 & HCl. Ilmenite (FeTiO3) is an important and the most abundant mineral ore of titanium and occurs in India along the coastal or beach sands of Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala states. HS Code of ilmenite : 261400

Major Exporters from India are Cochin Minerals & Rutile Ltd., IREL India Ltd (Government), Jayesh Industries Ltd, etc. Major Importers are Japan, Republic of Korea, China & Belgium.

Mining of ilmenite is regulated through IREL India Ltd.

In 2019-20, India exported 35% (qty) of its total export of Ilmenite ore to China.

Two years ago, the Government decided to allow only the Indian Rare Earths Ltd (IREL), a Government undertaking falling under the ambit of the Department of Atomic Energy, to produce & supply the mineral (Ilmenite).

Ilmenite		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
India's export to the world	Value – USD mn	71.57	55.14	67.52
	Qty – 000 Kg	262,257	144,372	251,329
India's export to China	Value – USD mn	31.24	15.83	16.82
	Qty – 000 Kg	120,060	65,074	87,352

It can be seen that export quantity of Ilmenite and import quantity of Tio2 are similar but in value terms the imports are 10 times higher. Countries like China are highly benefitting from India as they source their raw material and sell the processed material, both with India.

- Import Dependency on China

PBT Resin (HS 39079920) is not manufactured in India and is largely imported from China as the cost is 10% lower as compared to the rest of the world. Reason for not being produced in India - Mainly used in semi-conductor industries which are primarily in Taiwan/China

UV Stabilizers (HS 38123990) is not manufactured in India and is largely imported from China as the cost is 20% lower as compared to the rest of the world. Reason for not being produced in India - Huge capacities in China making other countries non-competitive. Raw materials supply chain also needs to be established.

Dyes (HS 32041700) – India has very limited production and not all grades manufactured in country. Besides the cost of Indian manufactured Dyes is 20% higher than Chinese imports for many grades. Imports from other parts of the world for these products is at least 50% higher. Reason for not being produced in India - Huge capacities in China making other countries non-competitive. Need good ETP also. Raw materials supply chain also needs to be established.

Anti-oxidant (HS 29182990) are manufactured by only One manufacturer in India that not only barely meets 30% of the requirement, but is also is 20% higher in cost as compared to import from China. Globally the cost of the product is 50% higher than China. Reason for not being produced in India - Huge capacities in China make other countries non-competitive. Need good ETP also. Raw materials supply chain also needs to be established.

Optical brighteners (HS 32042090) are not manufactured in India and are imported from China. China manufactured products are 50% lower than global prices. Reason for not being produced in India - Huge capacities in China make other countries non-competitive. Need good ETP also. Raw materials supply chain also needs to be established.

Suggestions

For a TiO2 plant to be commercially viable, it should have production capacity of 200,000 MT. Setup of per MT production costs is approximately USD 2500 & tentative investment in the said capacity project would be approx. USD 500 million. Hence the Government should look into capacity expansion of existing state-owned units.

Capital intensive sector requires support from the Government in terms of Land Acquisition, Policies etc. which should be considered.

In 2007, Tata's Rs 2500 crore proposed project in Tuticorin (TN) was put on hold by the ruling state Government citing local political reasons. Manufacturing, infrastructure, etc should be ideally excluded from political ambit.

Plastic Films

Represented by Mr. J Nair & Mr. Amlekar, Garware Polyester

Plastic films are traded under HS codes 3919, 3920 and 3921. While India may be considered a large exporter of plastic films, it is also a big importer. In 2019-20, India's total trade in plastic films was valued at USD 3.4 billion with imports of USD 2.0 billion and exports of USD 1.4 billion.

Data analysis and discussions with members of council revealed that some types of plastic films for which India is hugely dependent on imports are:

- Other self-adhesive plates sheets film incl. Protection film and Polyester liner film (HS code 391990)
- Plates sheets film of polymethyl methacrylate or PMMA (HS code 392051)
- Plates sheets film of other plastics incl. TPU Film (HS code 392099)
- High clarity polyester films (HS code 39206290)
- BOPP liner film (HS code 39211900)

It is important to mention that certain Indian manufacturers import plastic films so that they can be further processed into higher value-added films for re-exports.

Major producers in India are Jindal Poly Films Limited, SRF Limited, Vacmet India Limited, Ester Industries Limited, Cosmo Films Limited, Garware Polyester Limited, Polyplex Corporation Limited, Uflex Limited, Chiripal Poly Films Limited and Bilcare Limited.

Sun Control Films for application on car window

These are products that qualify under mission “ATMANIRBHAR INDIA”. Garware is a 60 years plus Indian company that has been a pioneer in the field, a leading major exporter and has been contributing the country’s economy over the years. Some of the advantages offered by the product include:

- Sun control film blocks harmful UV and IR rays reducing medical risks.
- Application of films reduces carbon emission to the environment by 44 lac mt per year.
- Sun control films help in saving foreign exchange (12000 crs per year) in crude oil and pays govt revenue on taxes and duties. (100 crs per year)
- The product is approved by ARAI and supported by worldwide medical research institutes
- Sun control film are used in many developed countries and confirms to all standards and legislations, rules.
- The industry supports the Government’s mission of “Make in India” and “Atmanirbhar”
- This industry employs many indirect labours/ ancillary service such as tinters for application of the film on cars.
- Application of film to be considered as one of the ways of tinting car windows
- Sun control films are not black film even though it maintains the VLT level mentioned in the rule book. It has numerous other advantages.

In the national interest we appeal to make / add clarifications in the MORTH under CMVR 1989.

Overall Challenges & Suggestions

Challenge - Manufacturing of most kind of plastic films are completely non-polluting in nature. Though these products are in Green Category of CPCB, different states have different rules for consent to establish and consent to operate. It requires a lot of effort and takes months to clear these hurdles.

Suggestion - If the Central Government / CPCB can create guidelines for exemptions / fast track permissions, the projects can be implemented faster.

Challenge - Most of the Industrial estates are now full and have no land for new projects. There is no choice but to go to rural area and set up factories. However, there are number of Local Bodies Viz. Gram Panchayat, Forest Dept, Mamlatdar Office, Town Planning office, Collector Office, etc. whose individual permissions are necessary.
Suggestion - If the Government can create a single window for all permissions for such Import substitution products, the implementation can be faster.

Challenge - Most Electricity Boards sell power at Rs 6.50 to Rs. 8.00 per KW. Most other countries have power rate between Rs. 2.50 to Rs. 3.00 per KW. Plastic is a power thirsty product and the cost difference can kill a project easily.

Suggestion - The Government is requested to give some form of power subsidy for import substitution products to create a level playing field.

Challenge - Majority of the plastic films being imported are high technology products. To set up local manufacturing unit for the same, the project outlay will be large.

Suggestion - The Government should come up with an input subsidy or other tax benefits for a 3-4 years period so that the relief will induce entrepreneurs to make such large investments without hesitation especially during times of difficult economic scenario worldwide that we face today.

Challenge - Plastic films manufacturers are also dependent on import of certain chemicals to manufacture specialty films like films for shrink label application.

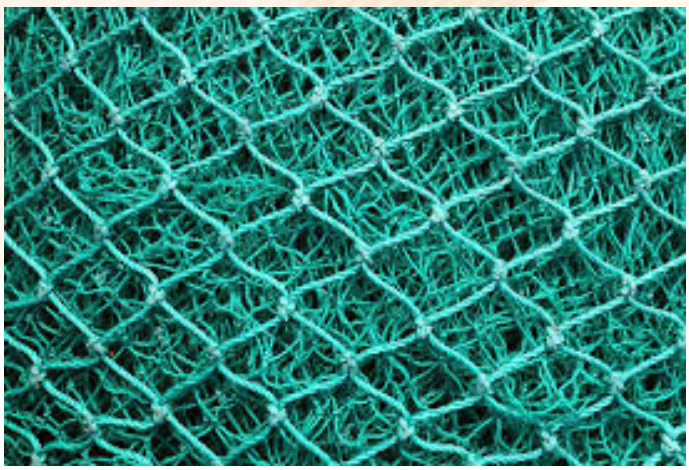
Suggestion - The import for these can be reduced if domestic manufacturing of these chemical is boosted.

Lastly, India has substantial capacity for BOPP and BOPET films and despite the high capacity, both of these products are also being imported into India (from ASEAN countries as duty free). The members have mentioned that plastic films being imported from ASEAN and China are of sub-standard quality and under invoiced under the garb of “stock lot”.

Cordage & Fishing Nets

Represented by Dr. S S Rajpathak, Garware Technical Fibres

Manufacturing of cordage & fishing nets requires Nylon High Tenacity UV Yarn (HS code 540219). At present Indian manufacturers produce high tenacity yarn but due to major demand by tyre cord industry, the fishnet or ropes yarn is not locally available and needs to be imported. It also requires various colouring and UV masterbatches raw material for which the Industry is again dependent on imports.



As a long term solution, the manufacturers of this product request major capital investment and buy back guarantee for such import dependency products so that Indian manufacturers will come forward and initiate greater production in India.

Nylon High Tenacity UV Yarn		2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
India's import from the world	Value – USD mn	65.71	65.96	60.21
	Qty – 000 Kg	23,762.61	21,205.87	21,206.81
	Price – USD/T	2,765.27	3,110.46	2,839.18
India's export to the world	Value – USD mn	1.46	1.33	6.16
	Qty – 000 Kg	482.05	492.86	2,023.50
	Price – USD/T	3,028.73	2,698.54	3,044.23

The post-COVID-19 world is expected to be more inward-looking in the short run and the immediate priority will be to handhold the domestic industry and polices are expected to be more reactive and vigilant to measures undertaken by different countries.

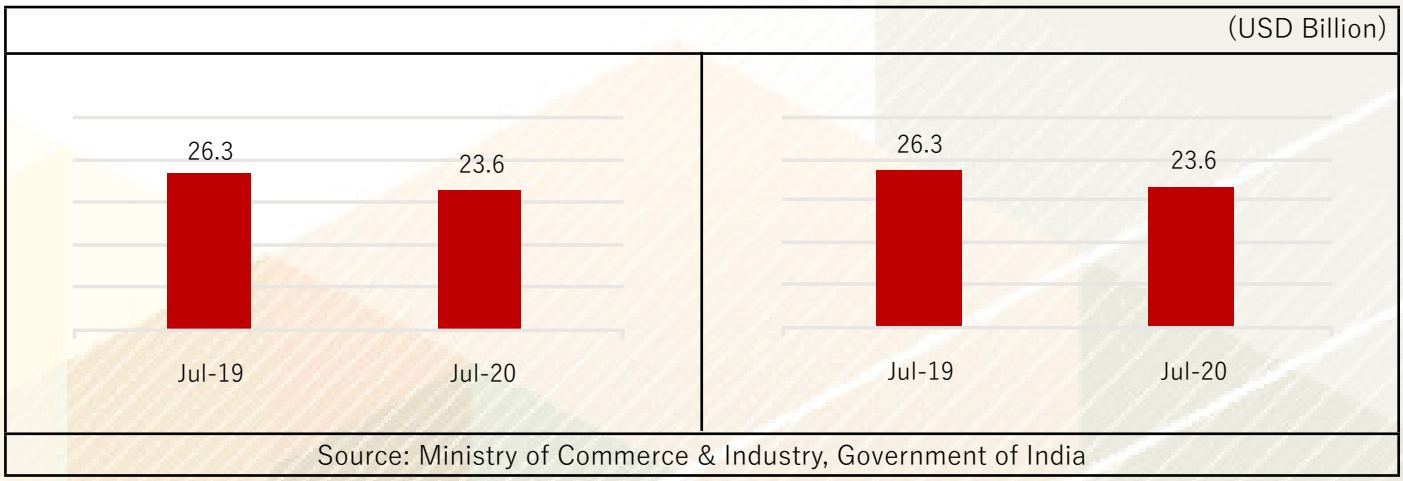
However, it is the perfect time for India to become more forward thinking, identify its own manufacturing capabilities and use this crisis as an opportunity to scale up and become a global manufacturing and sourcing hub. All in all, the post-COVID-19 world will be business as usual.

ANALYSIS OF INDIA'S PLASTICS EXPORT JULY 2020

TREND IN OVERALL EXPORTS

India reported merchandise exports of USD 23.6 billion in July 2020, down 10.2% from USD 26.3 billion in July 2019. Cumulative value of merchandise exports during April 2020 – July 2020 was USD 75.0 billion as against USD 107.4 billion during the same period last year, reflecting a decline of 30.2%.

Exhibit 1: Trend in overall merchandise exports from India



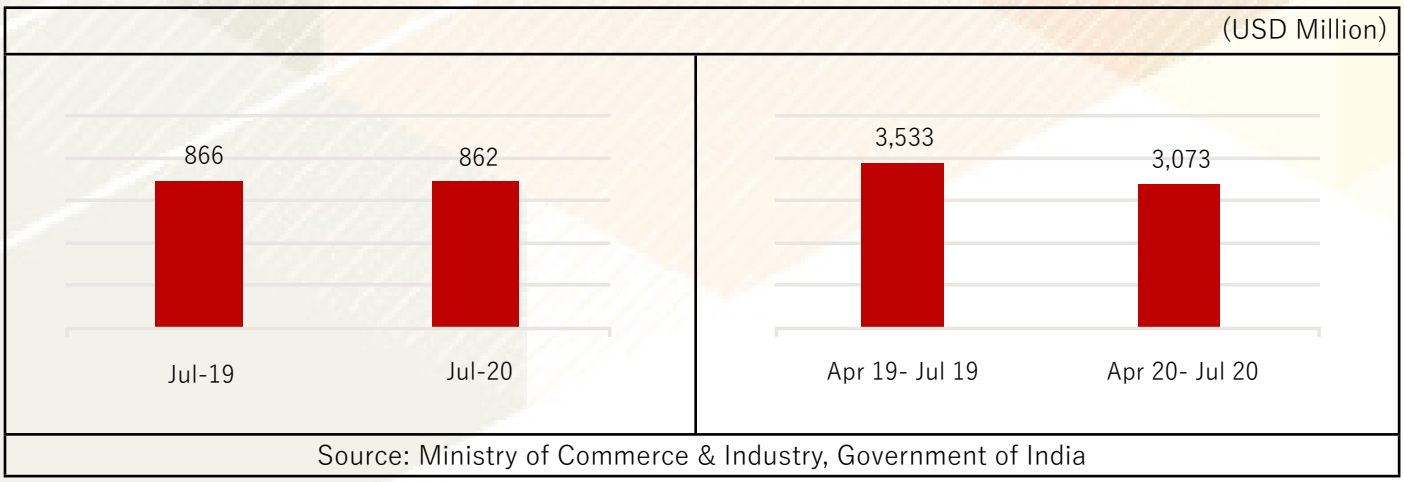
Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

Export Performance

TREND IN PLASTICS EXPORT

During July 2020, India exported plastics worth USD 862 million, down 0.5% from USD 866 million in July 2019. Cumulative value of plastics export during April 2020 – July 2020 was USD 3,073 million as against USD 3,533 million during the same period last year, registering a negative growth of 13.0%.

Exhibit 2: Trend in plastics export by India



Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

PLASTICS EXPORT, BY PANEL

In July 2020, as many as seven product panels, namely, Polyester films; Raw materials; Floor coverings, leather cloth & laminates; Pipes & fittings; Rigid packaging & PET preforms; Cordage & fishnets; and Human hair witnessed a positive growth in exports. Among the remaining panels, particularly Woven sacks / FIBCs had a very difficult month in July 2020.

Exhibit 3: Panel-wise % growth in plastics export by India

Panel	Jul-19	Jul-20	Growth	Apr 19Jul 19	Apr 20Jul 20	Growth
	(USD Mn)	(USD Mn)	(%)	(USD Mn)	(USD Mn)	(%)
Consumer & House ware	49.9	44.8	-10.3%	199.2	113.6	-43.0%
Cordage & Fishnets	14.9	16.0	+7.4%	55.5	45.1	-18.8%
Composites / FRP products	29.6	25.3	-14.7%	112.3	71.3	-36.5%
Floor Coverings, Leather cloth & Laminates	33.7	36.9	+9.4%	155.7	109.1	-29.9%
Human Hair & Related Products	20.9	26.1	+25.2%	92.3	74.2	-19.6%
Miscellaneous Products	136.4	128.0	-6.2%	563.3	387.2	-31.3%
Pipes & Fittings	14.9	17.8	+19.2%	63.5	44.4	-30.2%
Polyester Films	123.5	142.2	+15.1%	510.7	526.3	+3.1%
Raw Materials	297.6	307.7	+3.4%	1,267.5	1,369.0	+8.0%
Rigid Packaging & PET Preforms	30.2	32.1	+6.2%	107.3	95.9	-10.6%
Woven Sacks / FIBCs	97.1	68.4	-29.5%	335.5	196.8	-41.4%
Writing Instruments	17.5	16.8	-3.9%	70.4	39.9	-43.4%
	866.1	861.9	-0.5%	3,533.2	3,072.6	-13.0%

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

Export of **Consumer & house ware** products fell by 10.3% in July 2020. Major decline was witnessed in sales of Plastic moulded suit cases (HS code 42021220) to United States and Belgium, and that of Tableware and kitchen-ware of plastic (HS code 39241090) to China.

Cordage & fishnets continued its upward trend and witnessed 7.4% growth in July 2020 on account of improved export of Made up knotted fishing nets of man-made textile materials other than nylon (HS code 56081190) to Canada in particular.

Export of **Composites** fell by 14.7% due to lower sales of Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, nes (HS code 39269099).

In case of **Floor coverings, leather cloth & laminates,** exports in July 2020 were up 9.4% due to increased sales of Textile fabrics impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with plastics other than PVC or PU: Other (HS code 59039090) to the United States.

Human hair & related products finally turned the corner and grew by 25.2% as exporters were able to finally make speedy shipments of Human hair, dressed, thinned, bleached or otherwise worked (HS code 67030010) to China.

Export of **Pipes & fittings** witnessed a growth of 19.2% due to higher sales of products like Other rigid tubes, pipes and hoses (HS code 39172990); Other tubes, pipes and hoses, not reinforced or otherwise combined with other materials (HS Code 39173300); Rigid tubes, pipes and hoses, and fittings thereof, of PVC: Other (HS code 39172390); Tubes of polyethylene (HS code 39172110); and Flexible tubes, pipes and hoses, and fittings thereof, of plastics, reinforced or otherwise combined with other materials: Other (HS code 39173990).

Polyester films continued its stellar performance with exports witnessing a rise of 15.1% in July 2020 on the back of strong growth in sales of Flexible, laminated plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastic (HS Code 39219096); Other self-adhesive plates, sheets, film, foil, tape, strip and other flat shapes, of plastics (HS Code 39199090); Other plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of Polyethylene Terephthalate, non-cellular and not reinforced (HS Code 39206290); and Rigid plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of Polycarbonates, non-cellular and not reinforced (HS Code 39206110).

Plastics raw materials returned to their positive territory in July 2020 due to higher export of Polypropylene (HS code 39021000) and Propylene copolymers (HS code 39023000) to China; and increased sales of Other Polyethers (HS code 39072090) to Singapore.

Rigid packaging & pet performs reported a positive growth of 6.2% due to higher export of Caps and closures of plastics (HS code 39235010), Box case crate of plastics nes (HS code 39231090); and Other articles for the conveyance or packing of goods, of plastics (HS code 39239090).

Export of **Woven sacks and fibcs** fell by 29.5% during July 2020 due to a huge decline in sales of FIBC to European countries like Spain, Netherlands, and Germany etc. Indian FIBC exporters have been denied MEIS / RoDTEP since August 2019 which is hurting their export competitiveness in the Global market.

Further, it is important to mention that the online system for exporters to apply for availing tax incentives under the MEIS scheme has been blocked since 23rd July, 2020 which is severely impacting the exporter's community in the country.

Export of **Writing instruments** slipped by 3.9%, mainly on account of a decline in sales of Ball-point pens (HS code 96081019) to the UAE and Algeria in July 2020.

Exhibit 4: Details of % change seen in top 50 items of export

HS Code	Description	Apr 19- Jul 19	Apr 20- Jul 20	Growth
		(USD Mn)	(USD Mn)	(%)
39076100	Polyethylene terephthalate): having a viscosity number of 78 ml/g or higher	267.6	-	NM
63053200	Flexible intermediate bulk containers	230.9	161.2	-30.2%
39021000	Polypropylene, in primary forms	160.5	324.9	+102.4%
39012000	Polyethylene with a specific gravity of >= 0.94	164.2	150.6	-8.3%
39232990	Sacks and bags, incl. cones, of plastics (excl. those of polymers of ethylene): Other	120.5	93.4	-22.5%
39011010	Linear low density polyethylene (LLDPE)	134.5	50.9	-62.1%
39269099	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s: Other	110.9	70.3	-36.7%
67030010	Human hair, dressed, thinned, bleached or otherwise worked	87.4	71.2	-18.5%
90011000	Optical fibres, optical fibre bundles and cables (excl. made-up of individually sheathed fibres of heading 8544)	93.0	58.7	-36.8%
48239019	Decorative laminates	66.0	49.8	-24.6%
39206220	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyethylene terephthalate, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. those of polymethyl methacrylate, self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Flexible , plain	71.7	81.4	+13.5%
54072090	Woven fabrics of strip or the like, of synthetic filament, incl. monofilament of >= 67 decitex and with a cross sectional dimension of <= 1 mm: Other	44.3	24.9	-43.9%
39269080	Polypropylene articles , not elsewhere	57.4	48.3	-15.9%
39232100	Sacks and bags, incl. cones, of polymers of ethylene	52.3	41.6	-20.5%
39076990	Other, polyethylene terephthalate	72.4	51.3	-29.1%
39239090	Articles for the conveyance or packaging of goods, of plastics (excl. boxes, cases, crates and similar articles; sacks and bags, incl. cones; carboys, bottles, flasks and similar articles; sppols, spindles, bobbins and similar supports; stoppers, lids, caps and other closures): Other	49.3	44.1	-10.5%
39219099	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. of cellular plastic; self-adhesive products, floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Other	60.5	36.0	-40.5%

39202020	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of ethylene, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Flexible , plain	48.2	80.4	+66.6%
39011090	Polyethylene with a specific gravity of < 0.94: Other	47.6	16.1	-66.2%
54072030	Woven fabrics of strip or the like, of synthetic filament, incl. monofilament of >= 67 decitex and with a cross sectional dimension of <= 1 mm: Dyed	41.5	5.2	-87.5%
90015000	Spectacle lenses of materials other than glass	48.4	30.3	-37.3%
96081019	Ball-point pens	42.4	24.2	-43.0%
39202090	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of ethylene, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Other	41.0	37.1	-9.6%
39046100	Polytetrafluoroethylene, in primary forms	41.9	31.6	-24.5%
90183930	Cannulae	30.7	28.3	-7.9%
39241090	Tableware and kitchenware, of plastics: Other	32.3	17.8	-44.9%
96032100	Tooth brushes, incl. dental-plate brushes	28.4	18.5	-34.9%
39069090	Acrylic polymers, in primary forms (excl. polymethyl methacrylate): Other	27.8	24.9	-10.5%
39206290	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyethylene terephthalate, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. those of polymethyl methacrylate, self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Other	25.9	36.5	+40.9%
95030030	Tricycles, scooters, pedal cars and similar wheeled toys; dolls' carriages; dolls; other toys; reduced-size ("scale") models and similar recreational models, working or not; puzzles of all kinds: tricycles, scooters, pedal cars and similar wheeled toys; dolls' carriages; dolls; other toys; reduced-size ("scale") models and similar recreational models, working or not; puzzles of all kinds: of plastics	24.1	17.6	-26.9%
56074900	Twine, cordage, ropes and cables of polyethylene or polypropylene, whether or not plaited or braided and whether or not impregnated, coated, covered or sheathed with rubber or plastics	24.9	20.6	-16.9%

59031090	Textile fabrics impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with polyvinyl chloride (excl. wall coverings of textile materials impregnated or covered with polyvinyl chloride; floor coverings consisting of a textile backing and a top layer or covering of poly"vinyl chloride"): Other	25.4	13.0	-48.6%
39206919	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polyesters, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, not worked or only surface-worked, or only cut to rectangular, incl. square, shapes (excl. polycarbonates, polythylene terephthalate and other unsaturated polyesters, self-adhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings in heading 3918): Other	25.2	24.6	-2.4%
59039090	Textile fabrics impregnated, coated, covered or laminated with plastics other than polyvinyl chloride or polyurethane (excl. tyre cord fabric of high tenacity yarn of nylon or other polyamides, polyesters or viscose rayon; wall coverings of textile materials impregnated or covered with plastic; floor coverings consisting of a textile backing and a top layer or covering of plastics): Other	17.2	31.6	+83.6%
39204900	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of non-cellular polymers of vinyl chloride, containing by weight < 6% of plasticisers, not reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, without backing, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. selfadhesive products, and floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918)	29.1	18.1	-37.8%
39140020	Ion-exchangers based on polymers of heading 3901 to 3913, in primary forms: Ion exchangers of polymerisation	23.1	21.1	-8.7%
39219094	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. of cellular plastic; self-adhesive products, floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Flexible , metallised	22.3	27.3	+22.6%
39219096	Plates, sheets, film, foil and strip, of plastics, reinforced, laminated, supported or similarly combined with other materials, unworked or merely surface-worked or merely cut into squares or rectangles (excl. of cellular plastic; self-adhesive products, floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Flexible , laminated	19.8	35.3	+78.7%
39199090	Self-adhesive plates, sheets, film, foil, tape, strip and other flat shapes, of plastics, whether or not in rolls > 20 cm wide (excl. floor, wall and ceiling coverings of heading 3918): Other	25.9	24.7	-4.7%
39072090	Polyethers, in primary forms (excl. polyacetals): Other	10.7	28.2	+163.3%

39241010	Insulated ware of plastics	18.1	9.2	-48.9%
39073010	Epoxy resins	23.1	10.4	-55.0%
39259090	Building elements for the manufacture of floors, walls, partition walls, ceilings, roofs, etc., of plastic; gutters and accessories of plastic; railings, fences and similar barriers, of plastic; large shelves, for assembly and permanent installation in shops, workshops, etc., of plastic; architectural ornaments, e.g. friezes, of plastic; fittings and similar products for permanent mounting on buildings, of plastic: Other	37.7	6.7	-82.1%
39095000	Polyurethanes, in primary forms	17.9	18.1	+0.9%
39100090	Silicones in primary forms: Other	20.7	12.3	-40.5%
39235010	Stoppers, lids, caps and other closures, of plastics: Caps and closures for bottles	15.8	14.9	-5.7%
39129090	Cellulose and chemical derivatives thereof, n.e.s., in primary forms (excl. cellulose acetates, cellulose nitrates and cellulose ethers): Other	18.1	17.9	-1.5%
39119090	Polysulphides, polysulphones and other polymers and prepolymers produced by chemical synthesis, n.e.s., in primary forms: Other	17.8	15.6	-12.3%
39031990	Polystyrene, in primary forms (excl. expansible): Other	19.7	13.0	-34.2%
39269069	Articles of plastics and articles of other materials of heading 3901 to 3914, n.e.s: Other	15.8	7.4	-52.9%

Source: Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India

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International News

Magnum launches new tubs made with recycled plastic

Last year, Magnum was the first ice cream brand to pioneer a new recycling technology and the first to use recycled plastic within the ice cream industry. Designed to tackle the impact plastic has on the environment, Magnum's new tubs and lids for its pints range are fully recyclable and made with recycled polypropylene plastic (rPP). The advanced recycling technology that makes this possible transforms previously unrecyclable plastic waste into a valuable resource. The rPP waste can be re-processed infinitely, as the closed-loop recycling method preserves the quality of the material, thus reducing the need for virgin plastic.

Initially, 600,000 of the new tubs were launched in Belgium, the Netherlands and Spain in 2019. This year, more than 7 million will be introduced across other European countries. And from 2021 onwards, the new packs will be rolled out globally. By the end of 2020, all Magnum Pints tubs in Europe will be produced with rPP, which means over 160,000 kilograms of recycled plastic. Our goal is that, by 2025, all Magnum tubs will be made with recycled plastic. The full roll-out across all European countries is another exciting step towards a more sustainable future.

As Julien Barraux, Global VP for Magnum, says, "We are proud to be one of the world's first ice cream brands to pioneer this ground-breaking technology. Through this new approach, we hope to lead the food and refreshment industry towards a more sustainable future, paving the way to a circular economy.

These days, consumers – rightly – expect all packaging to be sustainable. By keeping our plastic material in the loop, we are contributing to a healthier planet and preventing plastic pollution. With more in-home consumption due to Covid-19, the introduction of these tubs and their reduced impact on the environment becomes even more relevant as the world prepares for a new future."

A process didn't exist, so we helped develop one

Although there have been rPP options available for beauty and personal care products for some time, there were previously no solutions approved for use in food-grade packaging. So, we collaborated with SABIC – a global leader in diversified chemicals – to develop one.

The rPP used in Magnum is not obtained by traditional mechanical recycling, as this is not suitable for food contact packaging. We use an innovative recycling process that transforms the plastic waste into a resin with the same characteristics as virgin food-grade resin.

This new technology allows us to recycle low quality, mixed plastic waste that would otherwise most likely be destined for incineration or landfill. It is not currently possible to produce food-grade rPP with any other form of recycling system.

The move is part of Unilever's wider global packaging commitment to halve the company's use of virgin plastic by reducing its absolute use of plastic packaging by more than 100,000 tonnes and accelerating its use of recycled plastic by 2025.

Plastic has its place, but that place is not in the environment

The rate at which we are currently using the world's resources means that, before long, they will simply run out. We need to not only build recycling into our everyday routine, but also focus on new technology, to reduce

the use of plastics as a matter of urgency.

The circular economy aims to change how we make, use and ultimately dispose of materials. It ensures that the world can continue to support the needs of a growing population while, at the same time, reversing our current unsustainable levels of pollution.

Plastic is a valuable material. It is crucial for the safe and efficient distribution of products, and it has a lower carbon footprint than many alternative materials. So, it has its place. That place is inside the circular economy – where it is reused, recycled or composted. And where it is kept in a loop, to stop it from ever finding its way into the environment.

Source: Packaging 360

The Future of Sustainable Packaging: Dow introduces INNATE™ TF Polyethylene Resins for Tenter Frame Biaxial Orientation

Answering the industry needs of high performance, consumer convenience, and recyclability, Dow is excited to announce an innovative and revolutionary brand extension to the family of INNATE™ Precision Packaging Resins. INNATE™ TF Polyethylene Resins for Tenter Frame Biaxial Orientation are bringing commercial viability to a long-desired packaging goal: tenter frame biaxially oriented polyethylene (TF-BOPE) films.

Compared to traditional polyethylene (PE) films, the TF-BOPE film made with INNATE™ TF Polyethylene Resins for Tenter Frame Biaxial Orientation has higher mechanical properties and material rigidity, better optical and printing performance, and offers considerable sustainability advantages, including the potential for all-PE structures for recyclability.

Many valuable benefits

TF-BOPE films made using INNATE™ TF resins demonstrate many impressive properties valued across the value chain:

- excellent optical properties such as transparency and glossiness
- up to 80% less haze compared to traditional PE films
- twice the impact strength and tensile modulus
- three times the puncture resistance and tensile strength of traditional blown PE films
- excellent flex crack resistance, even under low temperature
- good tearability for convenience-in-use

A more sustainable packaging solution

INNATE™ TF Polyethylene Resins for Tenter Frame Biaxial Orientation offer distinctive physical properties which can enable material substitution, film layer elimination, and/or downgauging, to reduce overall packaging materials.

The TF-BOPE film can be used directly as the printed layer of the packaging, allowing a combination of PE functional layers to achieve an all-PE structure, making it more convenient for recycling and increasing the sustainability quotient.

Applications are already on the shelf

Collaborating with a variety of value chain members, such as Guangdong Decro Film New Materials Co., Ltd, CaiHua, NanCheng and KAIDA Group, commercial applications – including all-PE pillow pouches, recyclable SUP packaging, and liquid product SUPs – are now in the marketplace. Applications include rice bags, pet food bags, heavy-duty shipping sacks, liquid detergent pouches, and others. Case studies regarding some of these applications are available for review at www.dow.com/InnateTF.

More is to come through on-going collaboration. Asia Pacific marketing director for Food & Specialty Packaging, Dow Packaging and Specialty Plastics, Kodak Xiao, stated, “As one of the leading materials solutions providers to the packaging industry, Dow hopes to collaborate with key stakeholders across the value chain to promote innovative and sustainable packaging solutions, and promote the healthy and dynamic development of the industry. With its downgauging and recyclability potential, INNATE™ TF resins already offer answers to the plastic waste issue, and we believe more advantages can be found together.”

These successes come after more than a decade of efforts. According to Wu Chang, Asia Pacific director for Technical Services and Development (TS&D), Dow Packaging and Specialty Plastics: “Our Asia-Pacific regional R&D team engaged in intensive research into the future trends of the packaging market. This revolutionary product breaks through the limits of traditional PE products and showcases Dow’s futuristic and cutting-edge insights, as well as our strong R&D capacity.” Since the initial release in 2017, Dow’s TF-BOPE resins have earned three prestigious awards:an Edison Awards Gold, an R&D 100 Award, and the Ringier Technology Innovation Award.

Source: Packaging 360

TPEs Step Up the Game in Extreme Sports Equipment

Kraiburg's Thermolast K compounds are suitable for use in surfboard pads, mouth guards, helmets, knee pads, head lamp seals, and more. Cave diving, jet skiing, motocross, surfing, skydiving and boxing are extreme sports involving a high degree of risk and speed. Thermoplastic elastomers (TPEs) play key roles in ensuring the safety of participants.

TPE compound supplier Kraiburg TPE offers a range of Thermolast K TPE compounds that can be applied in extreme sports equipment. With properties to deliver durability, versatility, ease of coloring and soft-touch feel quality, TPEs are the right fit for improved functionalities and safety of use of sports equipment. End users benefit from the specialized fit, feel and look of the end products.

Sporting equipment

Several series in the Thermolast K have low temperature resistance down to -40° C. The compounds have excellent mechanical properties to boot. Moreover, the Thermolast K scratch resistance series features water and weather resistant properties, making it suitable for use in sports equipment applied in extreme weather conditions.

Good abrasion properties of the series are important for equipment like snow rockets hand handle and ski stick grips. Furthermore, the compound's hardness ranges from super soft (<10 shore A) up to 50 shore D; and it has features of durability and versatility allowing it to be widely used in extreme sports equipment.

Thermolast K compounds are suitable for use in various parts of sports equipment, such as surfboard pads, mouth guards used for boxing, helmets, knee pads, dampers for ski binding, head lamp seals, and goggle strips.

Thermolast K series TPEs have also been optimized for the extrusion process, such as film extrusion. They can also be processed through injection molding, and co-injection molding in combination with a wide range of thermoplastic materials such as polypropylene (PP), acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene (ABS), polycarbonate (PC), PC/ABS, polycyclohexylenedimethylene terephthalate (PCT), acrylonitrile-styrene-acrylate (ASA), styrene-acrylonitrile (SAN), acrylic (PMMA), and polyethylene terephthalate (PET).

The environmentally-friendly series of compounds are free of latex, PVC, phthalates and heavy metals and are also recyclable. Overall, product designers will marvel the flexibility and versatility of the compounds that allow for ergonomic and complex designs of sports equipment parts. The consistent colorability add to the enhanced appearance the TPEs provide to end products.

Source: Plastics Today

Strained US-China Relations Are Crippling COVID-19 Response Efforts, Says Medtech CEO

It would have made sense to pause the trade war to deal with the COVID-19 issues, said Gerald Commissiong, CEO of Todos Medical. "The reality is we needed a lot of stuff we didn't get . . . and right now [China] is still the only game in town."

Economist John Maynard Keynes famously said, "When the facts change, I change my mind." That thought came to me as I was reading an interview of Gerald Commissiong, CEO of Todos Medical, published by sister brand MD+DI. The conversation is largely about how the strained relationship between the United States and China has impacted the medical technology industry. Commissiong refreshingly doesn't mince words in laying out what he sees as a failed policy.

PlasticsToday has been an advocate of taking a tougher line with China, especially when it comes to unfair trade practices and robbery of intellectual property. We are also cheerleaders for reshoring or near-shoring manufacturing, when it makes sense. But the facts have changed. We are in the midst of a global pandemic and it is urgent that we respond effectively to COVID-19. As Commissiong points out in this interview, for many medtech OEMs, the supply chain that will allow us to do so passes through China. It would have made sense to pause the trade war to deal with the COVID-19 issues,

he told MD+DI News Editor Amanda Pedersen. “The reality is we needed a lot of stuff we didn’t get, and we still don’t have it, so we need to get it. And right now [China] is still the only game in town.”

Based in Rehovot, Israel, Todos Medical develops blood tests for the early detection of cancer and Alzheimer’s disease. It has recently focused on COVID-19 screening and diagnostic products through distribution agreements with a South Korean manufacturer and other initiatives.

And here’s a fun fact: Commissiong was a professional football player for the Calgary Stampeders of the Canadian Football League, possibly putting him in a league of one in the medtech C suite.

Some takeaways from the conversation, edited for clarity, are published below. You can read the full interview on the MD+DI website.

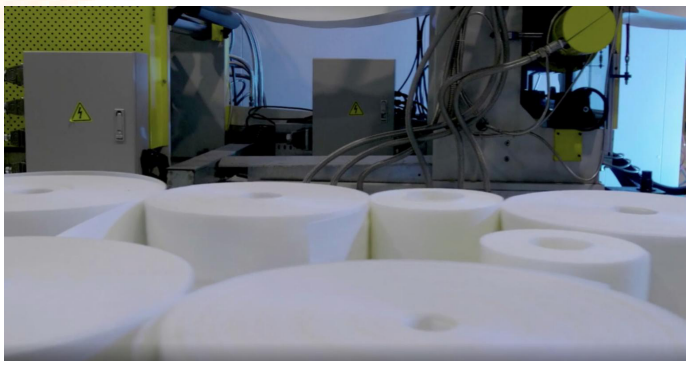
- The challenge is our supply chain is in China. As much as we want to say that it’s not there, that’s where it is, and if we don’t get stuff from there, I don’t know where we’re going to get it.
- Smaller companies rely on investment from China, and there seems to be a backlash against that, which I don’t personally understand. Why would you not take that money that will be used to develop [a product] in the US? It doesn’t make a lot of sense to me.
- If we could get the stuff in the U.S., we’re happy to buy it here, but if Thermo is quoting you six weeks or eight weeks and Roche is quoting you however many weeks but then your stuff never arrives and they tell you it’s going to take longer, it doesn’t really matter because you don’t have a business.
- There was no coordination in terms of implementing a strategy — the decisions related to which tests were going to be the ones promoted, I think that was a flawed strategy. Why didn’t they use the antibody tests that were available back then? Even if they weren’t great, not great is a lot better than doesn’t exist, which is what happened.
- One thing that’s clear is that these tariffs and the oversight on China is creating a blockage to getting what we need to increase our capacity to do more testing here. That is something that we really need to address.

Source: Plastics Today

Foamable PP an Affordable, Easy-Processing Solution for Automotive, Packaging

The material targets high-volume applications such as meat trays and microwaveable bowls, along with auto headliners, ducts, and floor liners.

ExxonMobil has introduced a new foamable polypropylene (PP) grade as an easily and affordably processed sustainable solution for high volume applications, including food and beverage packaging, industrial packaging, building products, and automotive parts. Achieve Advanced PP6302E1 is a high melt strength (HMS) grade that improves product stiffness by up to 30 percent, compared to standard HMS PP foam, for significant cost reduction opportunities.



“Historically, foam applications have been dominated by amorphous polymers such as polystyrene (PS), polyurethane (PU) and polyvinyl chloride (PVC). Foamed PP is a relatively recent advancement having been introduced only about 20 years ago, but it never gained much commercial traction,” said Olivier Lorge, Global Market Development Manager, Polypropylene, Vistamaxx and Adhesions Business, at ExxonMobil. “Customers can now challenge reality and rethink what’s possible for lightweight foamed PP parts in high volume applications because of the value-in-use delivered by our new Achieve Advanced PP6302E1. The commercial potential of foamable PP can now be pursued and fully realized.” Achieve Advanced PP6302E1 is said to be a viable alternative to PS foam (with accompanying VOC and monomer concerns), and paper- and paperboard-based grease-resistant packaging such as fast food wrappers that may be coated with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), which are being increasingly regulated. PFAS will be phased out voluntarily over a three-year period starting January 2021.

The new PP grade can reportedly eliminate trade-offs and set new standards for sustainable foamed PP parts by delivering value-in-use in a number of ways. For example, it is processable on existing PS foam lines with various blowing agents, reduces material use while delivering product integrity, and is recyclable in those communities where appropriate collection and recycling facilities exist.

"Converters, brand owners and OEMs can unlock opportunities in a range of applications that benefit from lightweighting and insulation while leveraging PP properties," said Lorge.

In food and beverage packaging, such as meat trays, microwaveable bowls/meals/trays, clamshells, and cups, Achieve Advanced PP6302E1 delivers stiffness and affordability. It also offers insulation properties and durable grease and moisture resistance even in high temperature applications like in the microwave and dishwasher. The packaging retains product content temperature during transit and comfort-touch surfaces are possible.

"As regulation and sustainability goals and preferences change, the food packaging industry is experiencing a shift from PS to PP, and it is a trend that is expected to continue," said Lorge "Plus, heat resistance for microwave-ability continues to be a key differentiating factor that makes PP a more attractive choice than PS."

In industrial packaging (such as boxes, dividers, and sheets), Achieve Advanced PP6302E1 offers toughness, temperature stability, moisture and chemical resistance, and lightweight installation. The stiff and durable packaging can be re-used and is well-suited to replacing corrugated sheet to protect valuable products.

In building products (such as insulation and concrete joints), Achieve Advanced PP6302E1 provides durability and flexibility for ease of installation. The products are thermally stable over a broad temperature range and moisture resistant for dimensional stability. Sound and thermal insulation properties create a more energy efficient and comfortable environment.

In automotive parts (such as headliners, ducts, floor liners), Achieve Advanced PP6302E1 delivers the stiffness that allows vehicle manufacturers to maintain performance properties while reducing weight and increasing fuel efficiency. The foam structure can also provide benefits such as heat insulation and sound dissipation for a more comfortable ride.

Source: Plastics Today

Waddington Europe announces launch of two brand new 100 per cent recycled content food packaging material options

With sustainability and the environmental impact of packaging increasingly becoming a priority for the end consumer, Waddington Europe's in-house R&D team have developed the NOVOPURE and NOVOBLEND ranges to offer a competitive and cost effective recycled plastic solution to customers.

Waddington's premium NOVOPURE 100 per cent PCW rPET tray range is made entirely from post-consumer recycled household waste. The range of thermoformed trays, collation trays, punnets and pots are fully recyclable and suitable for packaging all food items including meat and fish, baked goods, prepared food, fruits and salads, as well as pet food.

Made from 100 per cent recycled content from a mixture of both post-consumer waste (PCW) and post industrial waste (PIR), The NOVOBLEND range offers customers the same superior shelf display, food safety and environmental benefits of the 'NOVOPURE' products but at a slightly lower price point.

Eduardo Gomes, managing director at Waddington Europe, said: "We're delighted to be in the position to bring this innovative new range of recycled plastic products to market. Waddington Europe is one of only a handful of suppliers on the market that can truly offer and maintain the supply of a reduced environmental impact 100% recycled plastic solution at a competitive cost."

"Our commitment to support recycling and the circular economy over the last few years has been nothing short of revolutionary. As the availability of the raw materials needed in the production of plastic increasingly becomes an issue, our new rPET range offers a viable alternative. In the past 12 months alone, we've managed to remove more than 28,000 tonnes of virgin plastic from our production pipeline as well as opening up more possibilities for infinitely recyclable, more efficient, affordable and sustainable products."

Source: British Plastics & Rubber

BASF/Idemitsu to shut down BDO plant in Japan

Japan's Idemitsu Kosan Co says it is terminating the joint venture agreement with German chemical firm BASF, BASF Idemitsu (BASF 67% Idemitsu 33%), involved in the production and sales of 1, 4-Butanediol (BDO) and will withdraw from the BDO business. The decision is due to a declining BDO market size in Japan and significant overcapacities in Asia due to recent investments into new coal-based BDO production sites.

BDO and its derivatives are essential chemical materials for the production of engineering plastics, polyurethanes, solvents and elastic spandex fibres.

Idemitsu says, "After considering our future strategy, we concluded that it would be difficult to continue the business going forward." The plant with a capacity of 25,000 tonnes/year located at Idemitsu's Chiba complex in Japan will cease operation in December 2020.

BASF said the decision is part of an ongoing global review of long-term options conducted by BASF for its assets in the BDO value chain. With production plants in Asia, North America and Europe for BDO and its derivatives, BASF says it will continue to offer BDO from its global sites to customers in Japan currently supplied from BIC.

"As one of the leading companies in the business with BDO and derivatives, we will continue to support our customers on a global basis with our high-quality products. The recent measure is part of our strategy to ensure that we further improve our competitiveness in the markets where we add long-term value to both our customers' businesses and to BASF," said Vasilios Galanos, Senior Vice President, Intermediates Asia Pacific, BASF.

Source: Plastics & Rubber Asia

Momentive sells consumer sealants business to Henkel; BASF enhances services in Asia through Solvay PA takeover

US silicones maker Momentive Performance Materials says it sell its Consumer Sealants business to conglomerate Henkel. The sale includes the GE-branded consumer sealants, sold through home-improvement centres, major retailers and hardware stores, while the GE-branded construction sealants product line will remain a Momentive product. Financial terms were not disclosed.

The proposed sale remains subject to customary closing conditions including regulatory clearances. Henkel's brands for the woodworking industry include Loctite/ Loctite Purbond, Technomelt PUR and Metylan.

Momentive said it will continue to manufacture the consumer sealants through 2021 at its facility in Waterford, New York, under a transition supply agreement. The company said the move away from consumer sealants will allow it to place a greater focus on its advanced silicones and specialty applications businesses.

Momentive also outlined a two-year vision to phase out basic chemicals production at its Waterford, New York site. The company said the move would position the facility as a sustainable, global centre specialising in advanced silicone technologies. These changes would not begin until 2021, continuing into 2022.

Meanwhile in other news, through the acquisition of the Solvay polyamide business, German chemicals firm BASF says it has enhanced its R&D capabilities in Asia Pacific with new technologies, technical expertise, and upgraded material and part testing services. BASF is planning to integrate the R&D centres from Solvay into its R&D existing facilities in Shanghai, China, and Seoul, Korea.

BASF says the enhanced capabilities will boost its position as a solution provider to develop advanced material solutions for key industries.

"Pursuing innovation in new products and applications is our goal. We will leverage the extensive know-how of the combined business to develop advanced customer-oriented material solutions, as well as to drive more projects with our customers," said Andy Postlethwaite, Senior Vice President of Performance Materials Asia Pacific, BASF. "Our offering will be further supported by additional production capacity and a more extensive product portfolio, which includes new high-temperature grades."

With the acquisition of the Solvay polyamide business, BASF now has its first UL certified lab in Asia, adding to BASF's existing labs, which have an ISO 17025 accreditation. As such, test data obtained from UL accredited labs can be used directly to apply for UL's Yellow Card which is a globally recognised certification on quality, safety, and performance of plastic products. This UL certified testing capability can significantly shorten the verification process, and thus the time-to-market of flame-retardant products.

The new lab, located in Shanghai, will be part of the company's comprehensive global R&D network and complement BASF's existing flame-retardant grade polyamide testing service, mainly for electronic and electrical solutions.

BASF says it has expanded its part testing capabilities with eight new tests in Shanghai, including electrodynamic shaker, burst, glycol circulation, oil separation, and stone impact. In the future, all related parts can be tested directly in Shanghai, which will make product development more efficient. It can also now evaluate final parts with its expanded testing expertise.

The enhanced facilities can enable in-depth evaluation of some unique features, such as aging resistance to heat, oil, and coolant.

"The strengthened capabilities in R&D will help us give a quicker response to customers in Asia Pacific, speed up the time to market and be more competitive in the engineering plastics market," said Postlethwaite.

Source: Plastics & Rubber Asia

India News

Conclusion of US-India trade talks to be phase 1 of deal: Ambassador Sandhu

Indian Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu has made a strong case for conclusion of the ongoing trade negotiations which would become the first phase of a comprehensive bilateral trade agreement between the two nations.

Bilateral trade between India and the US, which touched USD 150 billion last year, has dropped 25 per cent in the first half of this year, he said at webinar organised by industry body Ficci. Sandhu observed that India's bilateral trade has been growing at the rate of 10 per cent on a year-to-year basis, reaching USD 150 billion in 2019. "Our bilateral trade has not been immune to COVID-19 as total trade between the two countries has reduced by nearly 25 per cent in the first half of 2020 as compared to 2019," he said.

The US is today India's biggest trading partner, but the real potential of the trade relationship is yet to be reached, he added. The Indian Ambassador to the US said the "first step in realising this potential is to conclude the ongoing trade negotiations which would become the phase 1 of a comprehensive bilateral trade agreement."

Such an agreement would reflect the full potential of bilateral and commercial relations, increasing bilateral investments and job creation in both the countries, he emphasised. India and the US are negotiating a limited trade deal with a view to iron out differences on trade issues to boost economic ties.

India is demanding exemption from high duties imposed by the US on some steel and aluminium products, resumption of export benefits to certain domestic items under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP), and greater market access for its products from sectors such as agriculture, automobile, automobile components and engineering.

On the other hand, the US wants greater market access for its farm and manufacturing products, dairy items and medical devices, apart from cut in import duties on some information and communication technology products. The US has also raised concerns over high trade deficit with India.

Source: Business Standard

Ease of doing biz: Govt proposes unified compliance platform for India Inc

India Inc may soon get a single online compliance framework for various regulatory requirements, according to an Economic Times report. The initiative by the government will help the companies to comply with all the regulations at one go. "The idea is to reduce compliance burden," a senior government official told the newspaper.

The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has started discussions with various regulators including the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi), and the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), on the possibility of creating a single platform or compliance forms with common data sources, the official told Economic Times. The official said that the move is expected to give a huge boost to ease of doing business in the country. The single platform system will integrate the MCA database and other regulatory bodies and cut down on duplication of filings. A new company now gets a permanent account number without making a separate application because of the integration of income tax and corporate affairs platforms as also nine more services including provident fund registration.

MCA is now looking to integrate various other platforms to ensure that companies don't have to make multiple filings with multiple bodies including the regulators. Trade Receivables Discounting System (Treds) for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is also being integrated. In the proposed single platform, there can be an auto-fill system that pulls the required data from MCA-21, an e-governance initiative to enable easy access to MCA services.

Source: Business Standard

IT refunds worth Rs 88,652 cr issued to over 2.5 million taxpayers

The Income Tax department on Friday said it has issued refunds worth Rs 88,652 crore to over 24 lakh taxpayers so far this fiscal.

This include personal income tax (PIT) refunds amounting to Rs 28,180 crore issued to over 23.05 lakh taxpayers and corporate tax refunds amounting to Rs 60,472 crore to over 1.58 lakh taxpayers during this period.

"CBDT has, so far, issued refunds of over Rs 88,652 crore to more than 24.64 lakh taxpayers from 1st April, 2020 onwards. Income tax refunds of Rs 28,180 crore have been issued in 23,05,726 cases & corporate tax refunds of Rs 60,472 crore have been issued in 1,58,280 cases," the Income Tax department tweeted.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) is the apex decision-making body in direct tax matters, administers personal income tax and corporate tax.

The government has emphasised on providing tax related services to taxpayers without any hassles during COVID-19 pandemic and to that end has been clearing up pending tax refunds.

Source: Business Standard

Indian PSBs face fresh capital shortages as coronavirus bites: Moody's

With already weak capital buffers, public sector banks in India will need external capital injection of Rs 1.9-2.1 trillion over next two years to restore loss absorption capacity, according to Moody's.

The most likely source of capital to plug these capital shortfalls is the government, despite its completion of a large recapitalisation just a few months ago. Uncertainty surrounding India's economic recovery and the ongoing clean-up of balance sheets are making it difficult for banks to raise equity capital from markets, rating agency said in a statement.

Alka Anbarasu, Vice President and Senior Credit Officer, Moody's, said PSBs dominate India's banking system, meaning any failure could jeopardise financial stability. The sharp slowdown in India's economic growth, exacerbated by the coronavirus outbreak, will hurt public sector banks' (PSBs) asset quality and drive up credit costs. The Non-Performing Loans (NPLs) ratio will rise to 14.5 per cent by March 2022 from 11 per cent as of March 2020.

Moody's expects retail and micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) will lead a rise in NPLs, delaying the ongoing clean-up of legacy corporate NPLs. The banks will require approximately Rs one trillion to build loan-loss provisions to about 70 per cent of NPLs,

and a similar amount to grow loans 8-10 per cent annually – faster than the four per cent recorded in fiscal 2020 and supporting economic expansion.

Moody's base case assumes a sharp contraction in the Indian economy in fiscal 2021, before returning to modest growth in fiscal 2021. Even before the coronavirus outbreak, the economy had already been growing at its slowest pace in six years, it added.

Source: Business Standard

MSME loans: Disbursements exceed Rs 1 lakh crore, says Finance Ministry

Banks' loan disbursement to mostly MSMEs under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) exceeded Rs 1 lakh crore since its roll-out on June 1, while sanctioned credit stood at over Rs 1.5 lakh crore, the finance ministry said on Thursday, highlighting the success of the programme.

As of August 18, public Sector Banks (PSBs) sanctioned loans of Rs 76,044 crore under the scheme, out of which Rs 56,483 crore was disbursed. Similarly, private banks dibursed Rs 45,762 crore, out of the sanctioned loans of Rs 74,715 crore, the ministry said.

Under the ECLGS, announced as part of the government's Rs 21 lakh-crore relief package in May, the Centre has pledged full guarantee for up to 20% extra, collateral-free working capital loans, subject to an overall limit of Rs 3 lakh crore. While the scheme was initially meant for only MSMEs, the government, earlier this month, decided to relax the eligibility criteria to cover professionals and enable a wider pool of businesses to benefit from it.

Not surprisingly, SBI led the pack of state-run lenders with disbursement of Rs 17,095 crore, followed by Punjab National Bank (Rs 7,197 crore), Canara Bank (Rs 6,556 crore) and Bank of Baroda (Rs 5,937 crore). The states that witnessed most of the disbursement by the PSBs were Maharashtra (Rs 6,007 crore), Tamil Nadu (Rs 5,694 crore), Uttar Pradesh (Rs 5,554 crore), Gujarat (Rs 5,159 crore) and Karnataka (Rs 3,590 crore).

The ministry also said, to soften the Covid blows to farmers, 1.22 crore Kisan Credit Cards have been sanctioned under a special saturation drive, with a total credit limit of Rs 1,02,065 crore. "This will go a long way in reviving the rural economy and accelerating agricultural growth," the ministry said.

While announcing the Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Package, the government had declared a concessional credit of Rs 2 lakh crore, which was estimated to benefit 2.5 crore farmers, including fishermen and dairy farmers.

Farmers who take loans through KCC card are also eligible for cover under the crop insurance scheme. No collateral is required for loans up to Rs 1.6 lakh from SBI. This drive came as a boost to kharif sowing, which typically starts from June, with the arrival of seasonal monsoon showers.

As for the ECLGS, after expanding its scope in August, the government had estimated that additional beneficiaries could be sanctioned guaranteed loans of about Rs one lakh crore, although there is no review of the scheme's overall credit limit (Rs three lakh crore).

As part of its expanded coverage, companies with an annual turnover limit of up to Rs 250 crore are now eligible to tap the scheme, against that of Rs 100 crore earlier, in sync with the revised definition of the MSMEs. Even individuals such as doctors, chartered accountants, lawyers, etc, who wish to take loans for professional purposes, are now covered under the scheme.

Similarly, eligible businesses with up to Rs 50 crore outstanding as of February 29, instead of Rs 25 crore earlier, can avail of the additional guaranteed loans. The government has earmarked a corpus of Rs 41,600 crore over the current and the next three financial years to implement the ECLGS. As many as 45 lakh units may benefit from the scheme, according to a government estimate.

Source: FE

UP Cabinet approves draft bill allowing MSMEs to start operations within 72 hrs of application, without wait for NOCs

To facilitate the setting up of more businesses in Uttar Pradesh, especially in the post-Corona times, the state's Cabinet has approved a draft bill that allows MSMEs to start operations within 72 hours after submitting their application, without having to wait for no objection certificates (NOCs) from various departments.

The Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (Infrastructure and Operation) Bill 2020, which would be tabled in the monsoon session of state legislature for approval,

proposes to exempt MSMEs from various approvals and inspections that are required for their establishment and operations in the initial years.

At present, one needs to get clearances from 29 different departments before being allowed to establish an MSME unit in the state. Interestingly, until now UP did not have its own MSME Act and was working on the basis of the central Act.

Speaking to FE, additional chief secretary, MSME, Navneet Sehgal said henceforth anybody willing to set up a new MSME unit can submit an application on a prescribed format and would be given approval within 72 hours. "An application can be made through a "Declaration of Intent" at the District Level Nodal Agency (DLNA), which will have to issue an acknowledgment within 72 hours of receiving the application. This acknowledgment certificate will remain valid for 1,000 days from the date on which it is issued. On the basis of this acknowledgement, one can establish their unit," he said, adding that the investor will then have 1000 days to get the necessary clearances after the first go-ahead. "The new law would help setting up of more MSMEs in the state, which in turn would help create employment opportunities. We have set a target to create about 15 lakh jobs in the next one year," he said. However, MSME units producing products like tobacco, gutka, pan masala, alcohol, carbonated drinks, fire crackers, plastic bags of 40 microns or less and other items that are banned by the government or marked by UP Pollution Control Board in red category will not be covered by the act.

Meanwhile, in another related development, MSMEs in UP will get a marketing assistance of up to Rs 5 lakh under the new start-up policy.

Addressing a virtual conference on "Role of Information Technology in transforming MSMEs' future during Covid-19" organised by PHDCCI, additional chief secretary (Electronics and Information Technology) Alok Kumar said the government has notified the new Start-Up Policy 2020, which is aimed at extending support and encouragement to start ups and incubation centres in the state. "Under the new policy, there is a window of up to Rs 5 lakh as marketing assistance to MSMEs," he said.

Source: FE

Exports are key to long-term demand creation: R Ramachandran, director of refineries, BPCL

"Going forward, we will be looking for opportunities to export for higher value creation as and when the market is attractive. On the longer term, we are actively looking at exports as an alternative opportunity for demand creation." Says R Ramachandran, director of refineries, BPCL

State-run oil refiner-cum-marketer BPCL, which is being privatised, has been balancing its refinery and petchem production during a period of demand destruction, and looking for export opportunities for higher value creation. R Ramachandran, director of refineries, BPCL, told Vikas Srivastava that the company was evaluating products such as very low sulphur fuel oil (VLSFO) and naphtha for exports and looking at global markets as an alternative opportunity for long-term demand creation. Edited Excerpts:

Q1. The inventory gains in Q1FY21 were mainly led by huge marketing margins of Rs 5/litre, while refining margins were badly depressed. How do you see the marketing and refining margins in the short-to-medium terms?

The crude prices appear to be range-bound at around $40-45 /barrel (bbl) in the short-term. While the gasoline and diesel margins continue to be low, and below the minimum levels for healthy GRMs, they have rebounded from the previous quarter lows. The resurrection of demand, especially in the diesel market, coupled with the enforcement of crude oil production cuts by Opec-plus would dictate the medium-term situation.

Q2. Covid-19 has impacted demand for petroleum products as there are still various areas under lockdown. What is the current throughput from Mumbai and Kochi refineries and where are the products getting consumed?

Our refineries have been operating in the range of 60 to 75% of their capacities. Besides the traditional lower demand during the monsoon, the lockdown in major urban cities has also impacted the current demand. However, we see a revival happening in relative terms in the smaller cities and rural areas. Gasoline, on the back of enhanced personal mobility, has shown robust demand in the last few months.

Q3. What is the ratio of exports to domestic consumption of refined products?

From a limited perspective of our company, we have been balancing the production with demand, and looking for export opportunities whenever economics are attractive. While VLSFO and naphtha have been products under consideration, export of diesel was limited due to lower differentials in the last quarter. Going forward, we will be looking for opportunities to export for higher value creation as and when the market is attractive. On the longer term, we are actively looking at exports as an alternative opportunity for demand creation.

Q4. Most of the companies have put on hold their capex on low priority expansions. What is BPCL's planned capex for FY21?

After the easing of lockdowns, we have revived our projects and the work at various sites are on with the protocols in place. We continue to place value in our strategic projects and our capital expenditure for them is in line with our plan of around Rs 8000-9000 crore across our group companies. We have, however, focused on projects with strategic intent and robust returns, including those in our petrochemical forays. Some of these are Atmanirbhar Bharat projects with complete focus on import substitution.

Q5. What is the total crude requirement for Q2FY21 and has there been any force majeure notices to suppliers in respect of lower demand and throughput rationalisation?

In line with the demand for transportation products, we expect a reduction of around 15-20% in crude requirement over last year. Traditionally, we have been operating with around 60-70% of our crude requirements from term contracts and the rest spot. We have enough flexibility to manage the demand variations through this strategy. Our major crude suppliers have also generally remained flexible in terms of supply during the period. We have not had any force majeure applications with the crude procurement sources.

Q6. With crude prices rising from the lows of $29/bbl to now around $45/bbl, have the discounts on premium crude fizzled away?

While the discounts we saw in the early parts of the last quarter are no longer existent today, the suppliers are varying the crude prices and premiums or discounts on month-on-month basis. As such, while the crude prices have gone up from the low levels of April and May, the discount on specific Asian premium, which refineries in India and other Asian countries have been disadvantaged, continue to remain.

Q7. Are we renegotiating any long-term contracts with US or West Asia since the spot prices have dropped substantially?

We do not operate long-term contracts on crude. With our term suppliers we work on yearly nominations and on prices which are benchmarked to published prices on monthly basis.

Q8. What is the outlook on demand and crude prices in medium- to long-term for FY21?

As stated earlier, with the crude oil demand projected to be lower by at least 10%, we expect the price to be around $40-45/bbl. Of course, Covid continues to remain the black swan in hazarding a prediction, especially in these volatile market situations.

Source: FE

From September 1, entry of imported toys in India only after quality testing: Ram Vilas Paswan

The government is in the process of making quality standards mandatory for 371 tariff lines ranging from steel, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and electrical machinery to furniture to check shipments of sub-standard and non-essential goods, including from China. BIS is the government's nodal agency that frames quality standards in coordination with the concerned ministries.

Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan on Friday said imported toys will be allowed to enter India only after complying with the mandatory quality norms from September 1 onwards. The government is in the process of making quality standards mandatory for 371 tariff lines ranging from steel, chemicals, pharmaceuticals and electrical machinery to furniture to check shipments of sub-standard and non-essential goods, including from China.

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is the government's nodal agency that frames quality standards in coordination with the concerned ministries. "The mandatory quality control standard (QCS) for toys will be implemented from September 1 onwards. BIS staff will be deployed at major ports to take the sample and test the product for quality," Paswan told reporters.

Besides toys, the QCS for steel, chemicals, electronic goods and heavy machinery as well as for food items like packaged water and milk products are in the process, he said. According to BIS Director General Pramod Kumar Tiwari, the implementation of the QCS for each product is being decided by the concerned ministry. For instance, the mandatory gold standard will come into force from June 2021. So far, 268 standards have been mandatory in the country and many are in the pipeline, he added.

Tiwari said that BIS staff will be posted at major ports to take the sample and test the product at the port itself. The shipments will not be stopped. He said quality check is done at two levels. One is at the source itself, wherein BIS officials go for physical inspection of a factory location from where the imported product is sourced abroad. The second level of quality check is done after the shipment lands here.

Source: FE

Govt finally operationalizes Rs 20,000 cr credit scheme for distressed MSMEs; here's how it works

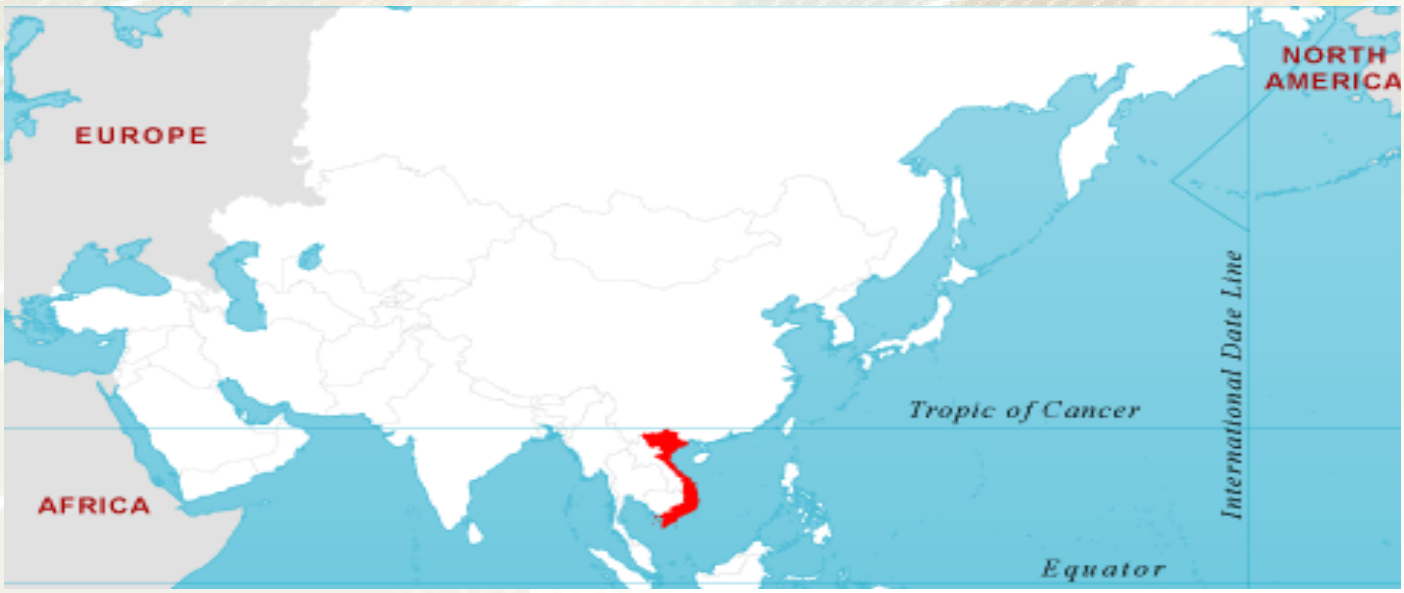
Nearly two months after the launch of Rs 20,000-crore subordinate debt scheme by MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari for distressed or NPA MSME accounts, the government on Wednesday operationalized it. The announcement was made by the MSME Ministry on Twitter. "All preparation is done. All PSU Banks and some Pvt Banks are on board. Contact your bank," the Tweet read. The scheme was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in May as part of the Rs 3.7-lakh-crore MSME package under the Rs 20-lakh-crore stimulus for Atmanirbhar Bharat campaign and to help businesses recover from the Covid impact.

According to the scheme, 2 lakh operational MSMEs, which are stressed and have turned NPA as on April 30, 2020, will be benefited. The owners of such MSMEs would be eligible to raise credit equivalent to 15 per cent of their stake (equity plus debt) in the business or Rs 75 lakh whichever is lower. Promoters would have to invest the debt raised in the business as equity to improve liquidity and maintain the debt-equity ratio, according to the MSME Ministry. While 90 per cent of the guarantee support for the amount will be under the scheme, the remaining 10 per cent would be contributed by promoters of the MSME. The scheme offers a 7-year moratorium for MSMEs for paying the principal amount while the maximum period for repayment would be 10 years.

"For the first time in India, funding for NPA MSMEs has been announced. So, MSMEs will also be out of the NPA stigma as well. It is a historical decision of Modi Government, due to which many viable NPA MSMEs will live with dignity with the new standard classification to them after getting this funding," Mukesh Mohan Gupta, President, Chamber of Indian Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (CIMSME) told Financial Express Online at the launch of the scheme. The association represents 1.10 lakh MSME members.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had earlier this month extended the restructuring of MSME debt until March 31, 2021, "provided the borrower's account was classified as standard with the lender as on March 1, 2020," a statement by the central bank had said. The government had earlier extended the period to December 31, 2020, from March 31, 2020, following Sitharaman's announcement in the budget that the government had asked the RBI to extend the same. MSME Minister Nitin Gadkari had in May said that the government may restructure 25 lakh MSMEs by December this year up from 6 lakh till March 31.

Source: FE



VIETNAM

Economic overview

Vietnam is located in Southeast Asia sharing land borders with China, Cambodia and Laos. It has an area of 330,967 square kilometres and a population of 95.5 million. Vietnam's robust economic expansion is a result of its sustained efforts to make the country a global manufacturing hub. In the recent past, Vietnam has benefitted immensely from trade diversion associated with rising costs in China and the US-China trade war. With continued foreign direct investment, greater industry diversification, and implementation of structural and fiscal reforms, the future prospects for Vietnam appear bright.

As of August 14, 2020, the S&P's rating for Vietnam is BB (stable); Moody's rating stands at Ba3 (negative); and Fitch has a reported rating of BB (stable).

Vietnam has forged trade agreements with Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guinea, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, South Korea, North Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Venezuela, and Zimbabwe.

The European Union Vietnam Free Trade Agreement (EVFTA) took effect on August 1, 2020.

Economic indicators		2017	2018	2019
Nominal GDP	USD Billion	220.4	241.3	261.6
Nominal GDP per capita	USD	2,353	2,551	2,740
Real GDP growth	%	6.8	7.1	6.5
Total population	Million	93.6	94.6	95.5
Average inflation	%	3.5	3.5	3.6
Total merchandise exports	USD Billion	267.3	299.5	318.3
Total merchandise imports	USD Billion	239.7	260.1	271.1

Source: IMF, TradeMap

Trade Overview

India and Vietnam enjoy cordial trade relations. Vietnam is among the top-20 trade partners of India. Within the ASEAN, Vietnam is the third largest export destination for Indian products and the fourth largest import partner.

In 2019, India and Vietnam engaged in bilateral trade worth USD 13.0 billion. During the year, India's exports to Vietnam were valued at USD 5.5 billion in comparison to India's imports worth USD 7.5 billion resulting in a trade deficit of USD 2.0 billion to India.

The major items of export from India to Vietnam are meat and fishery; steel; cotton; vehicles; and electrical machinery. Likewise, major items of export from Vietnam to India are electrical machinery; copper and articles thereof; inorganic chemicals; rubber and articles thereof.

Within plastics, the trade is in favour of India with exports worth USD 156.9 million to Vietnam and a trade surplus of USD 10.1 million. India's plastics exports to Vietnam stood at USD 157 million in 2019 and primarily comprise of:

- Plastic raw materials (80.0%)
- Plastic sheets, films, plates etc (4.5%)
- Writing instruments (2.0%) and
- Human hair & products (3.3%)

Vietnam's annual plastics imports are valued around USD 22.0 billion. Its plastic imports are largely catered to, by China (32.8%) and South Korea (21.9%). However, despite this, India has a good standing in some of the plastic product imports by Vietnam:

- Writing instruments – Market share of 4.7% share (Rank 3)
- Laminates – Market share of 3.0% share (Rank 5)
- Plastic raw materials – Market share of 1.4% share (Rank 11)
- Brushes (all kinds) – Market share of 0.5% share (Rank 10)
- Human hair & products – Market share of 27.1% share (Rank 2)

Trade Potential

Our internal research indicates that India's export of value-added plastics to Vietnam has the potential to grow by USD 4.6 billion. Product categories, within value-added plastics, that have immense export potential for export to Vietnam include:

Product Category	Vietnam's import from India	Vietnam 's import from world	India's export to world	Trade potential for India
	USD Million	USD Million	USD Million	USD Million
Plastic sheets, films, plates etc	7.0	2,334.7	1,371.0	1,195.3
Other moulded and extruded items	2.3	1,680.2	716.7	712.5
Medical disposables	6.8	503.5	660.9	487.7
Packaging items	1.8	513.8	790.7	376.2
Electrical items	3.3	968.4	172.8	169.5
House ware	0.1	221.6	206.7	156.7
Leather cloth	2.8	1,586.6	145.0	142.3
Self-adhesive sheets/films etc	1.4	989.2	125.1	123.7
Laminates	3.3	108.8	322.4	105.5
Writing instruments	3.2	68.2	210.6	55.3

Source: TradeMap, Plexconcil Research

Industry Speak

Amit Pal, Director, Kolor Impex & Plexconcil COA Member

Vietnam's recent FTA signed with the EU is expected to remove 99% of customs duties on goods traded between the region and the country. In your opinion, how would this impact Plastics exports to Vietnam?

As far as Plastics goods are concerned, over the years India has become a manufacturing hub for plastics supported by a strong machinery sector. We also have surplus raw material and cheap labour which give India an advantageous position compared to EU countries, especially in labour-oriented sectors in plastics exports to Vietnam. However, Vietnam's exports to EU is much more likely to see a boost. This is mainly because as a country, Vietnam is more forthcoming about accepting EU dictated terms in manufacturing, especially in regard to environment regulations and labour laws. EU has very stringent mandates about these issues, especially in environment concerns post the Paris Climate Convention. If Vietnam aligns themselves to EU requirements, trade between Vietnam and EU will definitely receive an impetus. EU countries are strong in precision engineering and machinery and Vietnam, and with the new agreement, Vietnam can import technology and machinery at much more competitive rates. This will be helpful in improving their product quality and output. With greater trade in other sectors too, Vietnam is likely to receive more investments that will result in overall GDP and economic growth for themselves.

Vietnam is emerging a strong contender as a sourcing hub as well as the destination for strategic partnerships and investments after China, especially since the COVID situation. In your opinion, what are the country's advantages over India?

One of the biggest strengths that Vietnam as a country has that it has a vision and it has been stable for the longest time now. Although a communist regime, the people of Vietnam are disciplined and have faith in the Government's policies. The Government itself is flexible and is focused on promoting Vietnamese businesses and growth of the economy. They plan ahead and hence design policies with the future in mind. The currency of the country has also been stable, and besides Singapore, Vietnam is the only Asian country to have preferential trade agreements. Japan and Korea which have been the other major export hubs besides China, are likely to see stiff competition from Vietnam both in terms of technology and international trade in the coming years.

In the writing instruments segment, Vietnam exports pens that are high in quality and attractively packaged. And even though their costs are slightly higher than Indian exports, the landing costs for Vietnamese products is lower than Indian products that attract higher import duties. It is hence very critical that India reconsiders and reviews its FTA as our products face high import duties and no matter how competitively priced we may be, we would lose on out if import duties on our products is high.

Which countries are India's major competitors in exports to Vietnam? What are the advantages offered by them?

China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Malaysia are our biggest competitors. These countries have successfully implemented economies of scale in production and hence they can supply the material at very competitive price. In India, most of the companies still do not have spare capacity for export to the extent that is demanded globally.

Vietnam is a major importer of polymers such as PE, PP, PET, PVC, etc. What is the export growth potential for value added plastics from India?

Vietnam has become a hub for plastic processing. We have very few labour-oriented plastics sectors where we can compete. In addition to the same, in our country, we also have the problem of labour unions, labour laws, etc. which we are hoping will change as we need to be a fitter production workforce and our manufacturing needs to be more agile if we have to compete aggressively on a global scale. China for instance has a robust industrial market that receives much support from their Government. In India, historically, the country has taken a protectionist stance in the import of polymer raw material products. Understandably, this was to protect the interest of domestic producers. However, today, such policies have forced manufactures and plastic processors to import many raw materials or procure them domestically at higher prices. All these factors together impacts the global competitiveness of our products, especially in the value-added plastics segment. Such policies must be reconsidered or we will lose our edge eventually. We need to embrace the changing market demands and align ourselves accordingly. Protectionism has proven to be detrimental to quality and growth in any situation.

What are the challenges faced by Indian exporters exporting to Vietnam?

The need of the hour is for our Government to review our preferential trade agreements and reconsider these as in the current scenario, our exports to ASEAN is more expensive. This is absolutely paramount and can't be stressed upon enough. Despite being our nearest neigh-

bours, breaking into Asian markets is much tougher as we have stiff competition from China, Korea, Vietnam, and Japan.

Absence of a Direct shipping line to Vietnam from most of the Indian ports is another major challenge. Any shipment from India goes through Singapore and Malaysia or China, Hong Kong or Taiwan. This is nearly 4 weeks in just shipping timelines. Direct shipping to Vietnam will allow our goods to be shipped in less than a week. China is able to ship consignments within Asia is 1-2 days. Such inordinate delays are often why importers do not prefer to buy from India and it is a loss of business for us. In the current situation, due to lockdowns globally, shipping movements through Chinese ports have further slowed down and this has exacerbated our shipping woes further. We need to have more efficient shipping companies and direct access to Vietnam.

Export procedures, documentation, etc need to be simplified and made more export friendly. Our paperwork can be tedious and many a times, like in the current situation, lack of procedural clarity causes unnecessary delays and is burdensome for exporters who are on stringent timelines for delivery of shipments.

How is the ease of doing business in Vietnam?

Vietnam is a very friendly trade partner. They are sticklers for rules and regulations and if, as an exporter, one has their paperwork in order, the process is extremely smooth. Any conflict or dispute is also very cordially settled. People are straight forward on the whole and transactions are very professionally handled. The people of Vietnam are hardworking. Women have a huge role to play in businesses and they generally are much more educated and speak the English language. The new generation has been quick to adapt and hence language is not such a barrier any more. People have a more global outlook and overall, everything is well streamlined. We ourselves do not face any problem for exporting our goods to Vietnam.

What are the measures needed to enhance exports to Vietnam?

We need to compete with Asian Tigers (e.g. Thailand, China, Korea etc) hence the Govt must incentivise our products with subsidies or otherwise it would be very difficult to compete.

AIFTA (ASEAN India Free Trade Agreements) needs to be reviewed as other ASEAN countries like Vietnam import products from China at a cheaper price than from India. Exports from India are taxed by Vietnam at higher percentage despite exporters furnishing the Certificate of Origin AI form issued by Export Inspection Council.

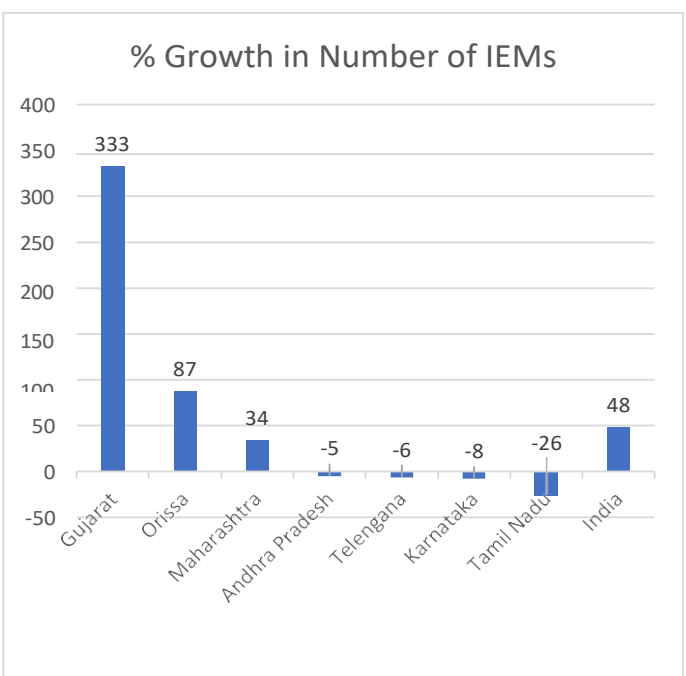
It is also very important that our country's leadership focus on establishing closer political, cultural and trade ties with the country. By doing so, we will be able to better understand their culture, country and their ethos. This is sure to help us identify and open up more opportunities for us as we will then understand their requirements better.

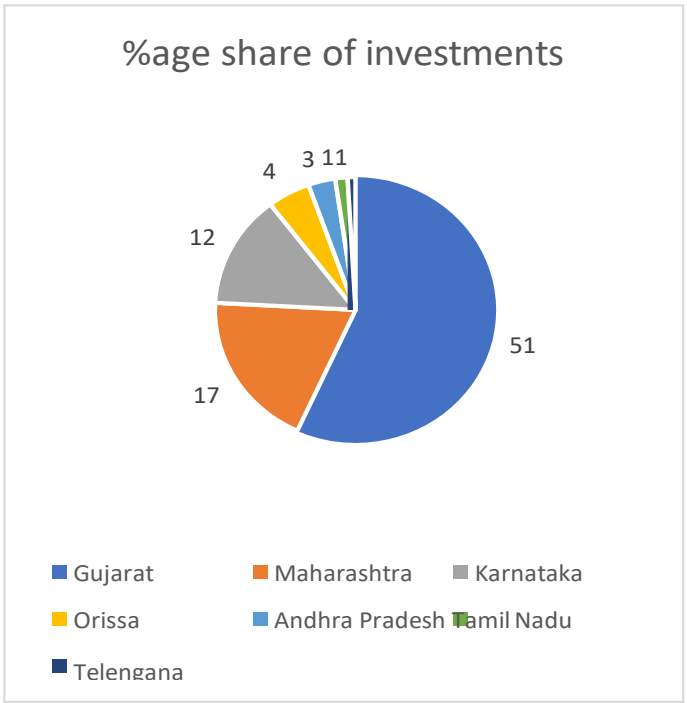
India also needs to adopt a more aggressive stance like China and we need to market ourselves better. Bilateral trade policies are much needed today. Our industry has been regularly highlighting our concerns and sharing data and feedback to the government. It is now time for concrete action and solid policies to be implemented. We need to do away with bureaucratic systems and become much more professional in our approach towards trade as a whole.

Industrial Policy 2020: Propelling Gujarat's Industries towards the Future

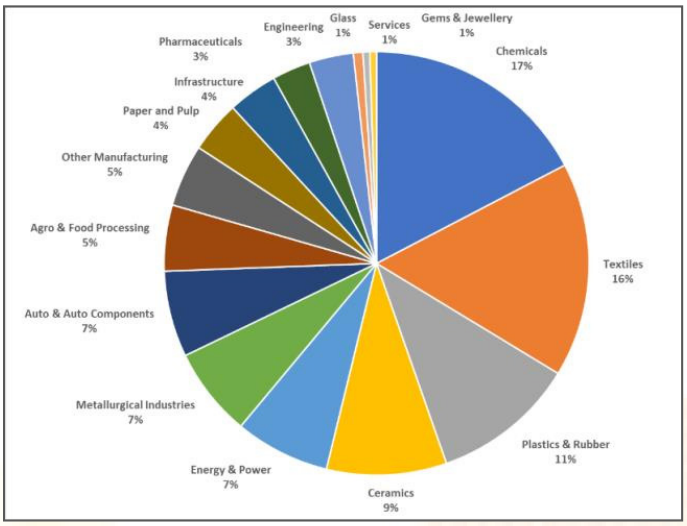
On August 7, 2020, the Gujarat State Government launched the "Industrial Policy 2020" that aims to provide Rs 40,000 crores subsidies to industries in the state in the next five years. The new policy has been formed to enhance the current growth rate and focused efforts have been made for supporting jobs, value addition across sectors, adoption of state- of-the-art technology, increase productivity with Industry 4.0 manufacturing, innovation driven ecosystem with focus on research and development so as to propel the state further towards "Atmanirbhar Gujarat". This will enable the shaping of a Modern Gujarat that spearheads the vision of a Modern India.

The Gujarat Industrial Policy, 2015 came to an end in 2019 though the government had extended the same until the date of release of new policy or 31st December 2020 whichever would be earlier. Having supported overall industrial development across the state, the success of the previous policy is demonstrated by the fact that today, Gujarat stands 1st in terms of nos. of IEMs (Industrial Entrepreneurship Memorandum) filed and actual investment reported for 2019 with ~51% share of IEMs filed in India in terms of value with a proposed investment of USD 49 Bn as per the data released by DPIIT, Govt of India. While India saw an increase of 48% in proposed investments (IEMs) in 2019, Gujarat recorded a growth of 333% over previous year.





Investments have also been in diversified sectors including textiles, chemicals, auto & auto components, plastics, energy & power, food processing amongst others



A Flourishing State

In FY 2019-20; Gujarat saw the highest national increment of 240% in FDI inflows from previous year as against a growth of 14% in FDI in India. Gujarat also has the lowest unemployment rate in the entire country @3.4% as per survey report by National Statistical Office, Govt. of India.

The number of MSMEs in Gujarat grew by 60% from 2014-2015 and currently, Gujarat is home to over 3.5 million MSMEs which are a major source of employment and also form an important part in the larger industrial ecosystem.

Gujarat stands first in India in terms of Industrial Output with ~17% of India's output and has been recognized as Best Performer State in State Startup Ranking 2018 by DPIIT, Govt of India. The State is also Ranked No. 1 in the Logistics Performance Index and LEADS Index by Ministry of Commerce, Government of India in year 2019.

Thrust Sectors

15 Thrust Sectors have been conceptualized with a view on global investment trends, the need for strengthening the integrated value chains, exports, policies by government of India, NITI Aayog etc. The thrust sectors have been categorized in two major groups i.e Core sectors & Sunrise Sectors. Core sectors include areas where Gujarat already has a strong manufacturing base and has the potential to accelerate further on a global scale. Sunrise Sectors are sectors which have a significant potential for technological advancement and can contribute to sustainable economic development. Thrust sectors will be given incremental incentives as part of the policy.

Core Sectors	1. Electrical machinery & equipment 2. Industrial Machinery & equipment 3. Auto & Auto Components 4. Ceramics 5. Technical Textiles 6. Agro & Food Processing 7. Pharmaceuticals & Medical devices 8. Gems & Jewelry 9. Chemicals (in designated area)
Sunrise Sectors	1. Industry 4.0 manufacturing 2. Electric Vehicle and its components 3. Waste management projects 4. Green Energy (Solar & Wind Equipment) 5. Eco-friendly 6. 100% export oriented units, irrespective of sector

The New Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020 Highlights

The new policy provides an average annual outlay of Rs 8,000 crore that is meant to provide incentives to the industries. The Subsidy amount has increased almost 3 times in the past five years showing an exponential growth. Considering similar growth patterns, it is expected that the average annual outlay for the New Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020 will be upto INR 8,000 crore.

Gujarat's strength is in its constant dialogue with its strong and diversified stakeholders, i.e. Industry, Industrial associations, chambers and academia and consistent efforts to have more balanced growth with respect to regions and sectors.

Delinking Incentives from SGST

Under the new policy, Gujarat will become the first state to "delink incentives from SGST". Since GST began to be implemented, companies were being compensated as per 'Net SGST' on goods sold within the state. There were several complexities in calculations of the tax of goods consumed within the state. Hence, Gujarat is the first state to undertake a bold decision to delink incentives from SGST. Now, up to 12 per cent of fixed capital investment (FCI) will be given to large industries for setting up manufacturing operations in the state in form of capital subsidy. As the incentive amount will now be more predictable and transparent, it will help industry in taking fast decisions. There is no upper ceiling on the amount of incentive to be given to any particular unit. This will help in grounding major investments in the state.

This benefit will be given over a period of 10 years subject to annual ceiling of INR 40 Crore. Unused subsidies will receive a further extension of 10 years with the same annual ceiling. If the eligible cash subsidy is not disbursable within period of 20 years due to upper ceiling of Rs. 40 cr per annum, the total entitlement of cash subsidy will be disbursed in equal installments of 20 years without any upper ceiling. Besides this, new industries will continue to get exemption from Electricity Duty for 5 years.

Long Term Leasing of Land

As high land costs have huge impact on cost of projects, the Government, in the new policy has decided to provide Government land to industries on a long term lease of up to 50 years. This lease will be six per cent of the market rate. The lease is further extendible as per prevailing policy. The industries will be able to mortgage the land.

Setting up of Industrial Parks

The policy also provides incentives to private developers for setting up private industrial parks on the state. The incentive will be 25 per cent of fixed capital investment up to Rs 30 crore. In case of Tribal talukas, the policy will support setting up of industrial parks at 50 per cent of fixed capital investment up to Rs 30 crore. This will support industrial infrastructure creation & developing last-mile connectivity.

Stamp Duty reimbursements will be given to developers (100% of Stamp Duty) and individual units (50% of stamp duty).

In order to promote clusters, financial assistance of up to 80% of the Project Cost upto INR 25 Crore for set

up of Industrial Infrastructure such as construction and upgradation of roads, warehousing facilities, fire stations, underground utilities, etc. will be provided. The policy will provide 80% of financial assistance upto INR 25 crore for Dormitory Housing in manufacturing clusters in order to provide better living conditions for labourers in industrial clusters.

Support for MSME

The policy focuses on promoting MSMEs with an aim to make domestic MSMEs globally competitive. The Government will support MSMEs in upgradation of technologies, adopting globally accepted certifications and in marketing their products internationally.

- MSMEs will be eligible for Capital Subsidy upto 25% of eligible loan amount upto INR 35 lakhs with an additional capital subsidy upto INR 10 lakhs if the eligible fixed capital investment is above INR 10 crores.

- MSMEs will be eligible for Interest Subsidy upto 7% of interest levied on term loan upto INR 35 lakhs per annum for a period upto 7 years. 1% additional interest subsidy to SC/ST Entrepreneur/ physically challenged entrepreneur/ Women entrepreneur/ Start Up in manufacturing sector.

- 1% additional interest subsidy to young entrepreneur below age of 35 years on the date of sanction of loan will be given.

- The policy includes interest subsidy upto 7% upto INR 35 lakhs per annum for a period upto 7 years to the Service sector MSMEs including those engaged in Financial Services, Healthcare Services, Audio Visual services, Construction related engineering services, Environmental services etc. Simultaneously, the state is working on a Service sector policy for large enterprises.

- The Government for the first time will be provide support to up to 65 per cent of the cost of acquiring Foreign Patented Technologies by MSMEs. However, the maximum support will be up to Rs 50 lakh. This will help raise the manufacturing prowess of our MSMEs making them globally competitive.

- In order to encourage MSMEs to market their products at a national & international level, the new Industrial Policy will provide fiscal Market Development Assistance to MSMEs @75% of stall rent upto INR 2 lakh for exhibitions in India and @60% of stall rent upto INR 5 lakh for exhibitions outside India.

- With an aim to further ease the process of utilizing rooftop Solar Power in MSMEs, the power cycle for calculation of consumption of units has been increased from 15 minutes to 7 AM - 6 PM. Also, for purchase of surplus solar power from MSMEs, the price has been increased from INR 1.75/unit to INR 2.25/unit. Additionally, existing industries who switch to Solar Power, Interest Subsidy will be provided on term loan.

- Besides these, Incentives will be given to MSMEs for implementation of Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Information & communication Technology, obtaining quality certifications including ZED certification, patent filing, Service line and Power Connection charges, Rent assistance etc.

Support for Start-Ups

For start-ups, the new policy increases the seed support from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 30 lakh. It also provides increased sustenance allowance and additional fiscal support. Additional grant of upto INR 10 lakh for startups with significant impact on society and upto INR 3 lakh per startup will be provided to enroll for national/international recognized acceleration programs.

The Sustenance Allowance has been increased from INR 10,000 per month for one year to INR 20,000 per month per startup for one year & INR 25,000 per month per startup for one year for start-ups having at least 1 woman co-founder.

Additionally, for mid-level Pre-Series A funding of startups, a separate fund shall be created under Gujarat Venture Finance Limited (GVFL). Besides this, the startups will get additional 1% Interest subsidy i.e. upto 9% on term loans.

Funding of upto INR 1 lakh per startup for trainings specific to “Managerial Training, Soft Skills, Marketing skills, Fundraising, Finance” on reimbursement basis and Mentoring assistance of INR 1 lakh per startup for recognized Nodal Institutes (maximum INR 15 lakh per annum per institute) will be given.

Ease of Doing Business

Dedicated "Relationship Managers" will be nominated by Industrial Extension Bureau (iNDEXTb) for investors as single point of contacts for all government related queries & approvals.

Investor Facilitation Portal (IFP) – Mega Online Permission: Almost 5 lakh applications have been processed from state Single Window: Investor Facilitation Portal (IFP). To further strengthen the Ease of Doing Business Environment in the state, a framework for "Mega Permission" is being prepared, which requires investor to submit only one application form for 26 different state related approvals and compliances to be processed in an expedited manner.

Centralized Inspection System: The state has also initiated the process for streamlining Central Inspection System to further bring transparency and facilitate ease of doing business.

Pipeline enterprises: New projects which are already under various stages of implementation will be eligible under the previous policy (Gujarat Industrial Policy 2015). Such manufacturing projects will need to commission within 1 year and common infrastructure projects will need to commission within 2 years from the date of release of New Gujarat Industrial Policy 2020.

A dedicated organization "GARUD" has been formed by the state government to ensure easy movements of goods inter & intra state and increase exports. The infrastructure created under this authority will support industries to incur less production costs and therefore will have a competitive edge against other developing economies.

Others – R&D, Sustainable Manufacturing & Skill Development

- Special Incentives to companies planning to relocate from other countries and set up operations and diversify in India.
- Development of new R&D or new product development institutions with support of INR 5 crores being offered to such private companies or institutions.
- Assistance for Contract/Sponsored research work from any industrial enterprise/Industrial association to recognized R&D institution / technical collages approved by AICTE, will be considered @ 50% of project cost, excluding cost of land and building, subject to maximum Rs. 50 Lakhs.
- 50% of capital subsidy upto INR 75 lakhs will be given to industries practicing at least 50% waste recovery through Zero Liquid Discharge as certified by GPCB.
- The policy will give Incentives to MSMEs @35% of cost of Plant & machinery and to large units @10% of cost of Plant & machinery (maximum: INR 35 lakh) for Implementation of cleaner production technology in place of existing process such as substitution & optimization of raw material, reduction in water consumption or energy consumption or waste generation.
- Support for Common environment infrastructure facilities increased from existing 25% to 40% of the project cost upto INR 50 crores.
- Assistance of up to 25% of project cost upto INR 25 crore for set up/ relocation / retrofitting of existing polluting industrial units into Green Industrial Estates.
- Common Boiler Project by SPV constituted by minimum 10 MSME's will receive incentives upto 50% of fixed installation cost upto INR 2 crore.
- The state will undertake a gap analysis of Skill requirement of industries & available workers across various sectors in the state. This will help create a roadmap for training local population in relevant skills and thus bridge the gap. The State will also give fiscal support in setting up Skill development Anchor institutes, specialized skill development centres, Skill upgradation centres etc. Besides this, the policy will give incentives for skill enhancement upto INR 15000 per person per training.

Industry Speak

Shyam Tibrewal, CMD, Mayur Wovens Pvt. Ltd

As per press note, Gujarat State Government is going to announce CS in the range of 4% to 12% and this subsidy will be disbursed over a period of 10 years. Hence annual CS would be in the range of 0.4% to 1.2% per annum for period of 10 years for the large project. As against that MSME units will get total interest subsidy of Rs 2.90Cr (Rs. 35.00 Lakhs per annum for 7 years + Rs.45.00 Lakhs CS), having project cost above Rs.10.00 Cr. This amount would be roughly would be 23% to 25% of the project cost. Furthermore, and based on this calculation, the subsidy amount would be available @ 12% (Maximum subsidy Rate) for project cost having about Rs. 25.00 Cr while this project would be works out to Rs. 72.49 Cr (Categogry-3 unit and @ 4% rate of subsidy).
This simple comparison shows that even maximum subsidy rate 1.2% per annum seems not very attractive in bringing investment in the state of Gujarat. Because previous schemes were more attractive as compared to upcoming scheme like Textile Policy -2012 & 2019, Labour Incentive scheme, i2i policy etc. Also, the subsidy amount is very little for those MSME unit which has project for more than Rs.10.00 Cr and above. To maintain its position as the number one State or Investment destination in the India, State Government requires more attractive schemes and we hope that Gujarat Government will review the same.

Jigish Doshi, Chairman & Managing Director – Vishakha Group and President, PlastIndia Foundation

The new Industrial Policy 2020 announced by the Government of Gujarat is very well appreciated as it encompasses all industry sectors and does away with favouring any particular sector. The policy aims at promoting overall economic activity and growth in the state, which I believe in the long run is beneficial to all industries in the State and the country at large. Gujarat is an industrious state and the policy meets most expectations. We particularly applaud the introduction of Capital Subsidy which new industries earlier did not enjoy but its introduction now makes for direct benefit to businesses setting up new ventures in Gujarat. With the upper limit being done away with, the Capital Subsidy is a great way to attract more investments into the state. Furthermore, the 7% Interest Subsidy is also a welcome move and we are heartened to see that this has also been made uniform for all industries unlike earlier when it was limited only to some industry sectors.

Capex, a major part of which is land acquisition cost, is often a huge point of concern for most new industries. By introducing a 50-year leasing scheme for the industrialists, the Government has addressed a major point of concern and the move is bound to improve investor confidence and result in more players coming into the fold. A single window clearance through the Mega Online Permissions and Investor Facilitation Portal are great steps towards strengthening ease of doing business in the state.

All in all, while the new measures announced are a great way to boost setting up of new industries, we believe that policies at both Centre and State levels also need to look into the challenges and grievances of businesses that have been impacted by the Covid situation or have been set up in the past one year just prior to the pandemic. As unfortunate as times are, our country and our industries have immense long-term growth potential and the good industrial policies will only serve as the beacon guiding them through the dark storms.

Vikram Pandya, Managing Director, Shankar Packagings Ltd.

The introduction of the provision of development of cluster specific industrial estates will help the plastic industry to get economies of common location. A special thrust has been given to MSME's in terms of capital subsidies as well as relief in SGST. Most plastic industries are MSME's and this feature should be of particular interest to them. Capital subsidies upto 12% of the capital cost without any upper limit and Interest subsidy on term loans is of special interest is likely to promote new investments in industries in the state. Furthermore, by providing long term lease on Government is also a good initiative and of special interest to the interest as companies now need to worry about huge investment in land. This comes as a major relief to new industries. The thrust for MSME's to generate roof top solar power is a special feature of this policy.

The policy's provisions are especially attractive for companies wanting to move their businesses into the state. Factor in the Single window clearance that has been made more comprehensive through the creation of a special portal; overall this is sure to help in ease of doing business.

The policy helps in addressing fundamental concerns of land, finance and interest and capital costs. It is directed at a sustainable industrial development. Cluster development will help in development of common infrastructural needs in a more focused way. In addition, the GoG is looking at easing of the rigid labour laws and these two taken together would have a definite positive impact in the long run.

In the present situation the benefits may take time to be visible since the current investment climate is dampened due to COVID. However, to have a good policy in place would mean that the state can reap immediate benefits as soon as the external situation becomes positive.

Know Your COA Member

Interview with G S Anil Kumar, MD, Jumbo Bag Ltd.

As a part of the then Rs.1500 million BLISS Group of companies, Jumbo Bag Ltd. was established in the year 1990. Started with an initial capacity of 720,000 jumbo bags (FIBCs) the company now has the capacity to manufacture over 3.6 million bags per annum, and this has propelled them to the position of one of the market leaders. As a world-class solutions provider in packaging, the company's portfolio comprises of different designs of FIBCs (Circular, U-panel, Baffles) Hygiene bags, Multi trip bags, tabular & form-ft liner bags. The FIBCs are available in Type A, B, C, D, UN Bags and 20-40 feet container liners and addresses applications that are custom-made for industrial purposes. The company attributes its success to its experienced & professional Board of Directors - with recognized leadership, and its employees' involvement that is based on the organisation's core principle. Today the company caters to a customer base spanning 5 continents. The company is also listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange.

Jumbo Bag Ltd. is a part of Bliss Group, established in the year 1966 that is built on values that come from a tradition of leadership spanning 5 decades and 3 generations. Over the years, with entrepreneurial family values nurtured by the Late Mr. Gorantla Ramalingaiah, Bliss Group manufactures variety of industrial packaging with different capacities ranging from 2 to 24,000 kgs. It was Bliss Group's Standard Packaging that introduced the first of its kind Jumbo Bags (FIBC) Flexible Intermediate Bulk Containers concept in the Indian market and also played a crucial role in creating awareness for the product.

What started as a company with just two employees and one administrative facility, with a net sales of Rs.1.7 million, the Group has grown with current net sales of Rs.5000 million, eight administrative offices, eight manufacturing facilities, four of which are vertically integrated spread across the country in addition to in-house R&D set up since 1984. The group also has to its credit a number of patented products with worldwide recognition while also having won numerous national and International awards. Presently, Bliss Group has diversified into Agriculture, Consulting, Construction, Development and Trading.

A second-generation entrepreneur, Mr. G S Anil Kumar is the Managing Director of Jumbo Bag Ltd. A professional CA Rank holder, Mr. Anil Kumar brings in his keen eye for numbers, sharp business acumen and a far-reaching vision that has added to the stupendous growth of the company. A philanthropist and a respected industry veteran, he shares his experience and knowledge with the hope to benefit the society at large.

Plexconnect in conversation with Mr. G S Anil Kumar.

From a being a CA Rank holder to an entrepreneur, tell us about your journey into the industry?

Being a chartered accountant cum entrepreneur has been a huge help. While course provides knowledge on a wide spectrum of subjects, on-ground learning as an entrepreneur only helped enhance my knowledge of dealing with practical situations.

I started my journey in 1992 after I completed my CA Articleship. Hailing from a business family and being given the opportunity to be involved in setting up a medium scale industry was an immensely exciting proposition and while we did start the process in 1992, it was not before 1995 that we finally commenced operations. The initial period was difficult as we faced a lot of hesitancy from banks in providing financing to set up a greenfield medium scale industry. We had to invest our own capital and it was only when we managed to complete 50-60% of our factory construction that we were then able to

convince IDBI Bank who eventually gave us the requisite financing. I was involved right from the loan tie up with IDBI, construction, collaboration with foreign company for work practices in FIBC etc., and under the guidance of my father and uncles, me and my cousin Ramraj had the opportunity to learn and implement many processes, ideas, etc. I am proud to say that our company and the industry has come a long way since then and today, not only just our company, but the FIBC segment itself has become the largest exporting segment within plastics after the raw material export.

Jumbo Bags have grown to over three times its manufacturing capacity since its inception. To what do you owe this huge success?

We have always believed in focusing on product quality, innovation and building a team of people who can deliver. When we started FIBC production, the concept of enforcing stringent quality control was not given too much attention. Removal of dust from bags is a very critical aspect of the production process as the bags have a very wide application that ranges from industrial/ general commodities to food to pharmaceutical. 20 years ago, we established our very own internal processes for stringent quality control, ensuring that every bag produced by us is thoroughly checked for quality and the quality standards were uniformly applied, irrespective of whether they were for exports or domestic consumption. This was a key distinguishing factor for our company. Our company has been ISO, BRC certified for much over a decade now and currently, we are also ISO 22000 certified.

Product innovation also played a significant role in our growth. We manufacture an entire range of FIBC bags that find use in a variety of industries. We also manufacture Dissipative FIBC and this is based on our own technology. While many manufacturers often use imported technologies, we have developed our own. Technology has been an important area of investment for us. We have never hesitated to invest in product development.
People are a company's most important asset. In our organization, we are firmly against poaching talent. We believe in recruiting experienced people from outside the FIBC industry and also recruit freshers in whom we invest heavily in training and grooming them. Over the years, our core team has subsequently trained newcomers and that is how we have been able to continually and effectively implement the processes involved in the manufacture of FIBC. Identifying the right skills, talent and expertise and then inculcating our values, traditions and learnings into our team is what makes us a strong workforce.

India is one of the leading manufacturer/ exporters of FIBC products? How has this industry evolved over the years?

I remember my father G Sudhakar and cousin Ramraj on their first trip to USA being asked – Can India really make FIBCs? In 1995, Turkey and Korea were the major exporters of FIBC globally and China was still emerging. Five years later, Korea had fallen out of the race but were setting up operations in China to keep their market share. India was at number 3 position then. Today, India is a leading exporter of FIBC, a position that we have held for past 5-6 years with over 150 major manufacturers/ exporters. The industry has been shifting from woven sacks to FIBC and with required capacities being added, we now hope to retain the major share in the global market. India is very competitive vis-a-vis China. As the largest global player today, this industry has really evolved in every sense.

What are the new opportunities for your industry segment? What are the changes that one is likely to see in coming years?

India will continue to be the major player in FIBCs at least for the next 5 years. The major opportunity for Indian FIBC industry lies in becoming a direct supplier to end users globally. The exporters still largely cater to distributors. The opportunities in selling directly to end users are immense and these opportunities must be capitalized upon now and going forward.

While we are the leaders when it comes to exports to USA and Europe, etc., there are huge opportunities in Japan and this market continues to remain untapped. Japan imports mainly from China and Vietnam as Japan has a better trade alignment with South East Asia. Japan is also a very traditional country and there exists a fair amount of rigidity when it comes to changing over to new designs. Opportunities in Japan remained untapped perhaps because we have enjoyed success in other parts of the world and have not focussed on the Japanese requirements. However, with a lot of Japanese companies now looking towards India since the onset of the pandemic and growing sentiments against China, I believe that the time is right for us to align ourselves to the market and capitalize on the trade potential in Japan. Anything with Japan takes time given their processes and even if one were to start today, it would be at least 2-3 years before orders started coming in.

On the other hand, other major changes that we could witness in coming years are greater product evolution within FIBCs which are now being made through fusion technology and greater automation in the industry.

The number of players from India has phenomenally increased over the years to an extent where we can regard Indian players as competing with each other apart from

having to compete with countries like China, Vietnam etc. We can also expect some shake-up in the industry over the next few years as there is no room for too many new players either. The new entrants are trying to lower the prices to get an entry into the market without realising the challenges and costs involved in manufacturing the FIBCs. Hence it is necessary to ensure right systems and cost structure if one were to sustain in the long run.

Besides being an entrepreneur, you are an active member of the Rotary Club, Plexconcil, IFIBCA, TAPMA, Madras Chamber of Commerce and the Editor of a magazine. What inspires you to take on these various roles?

I truly believe that it is important to be able to give back to the society. Being active in various organisations also gives one the opportunity to meet and connect with other people and share the knowledge and experience. This interaction, while it involves lot of time and effort, does make you richer in experience. My involvement through these various associations not only allows me to share my own experience and knowledge with my industry compatriots, but also gives me a chance to work for the society of which we are a part of. It keeps one grounded and is important to one's own personal growth.

Bliss Group is credited with introducing the first of its kind FIBC bags in India. How did this come about?

The introduction of FIBC was the brainchild of my father Mr. G Sudhakar and my uncles Mr. Radhakrishna and Mr. Ravindranath who worked together to make FIBCs initially out of HDPE fabric.

During a visit to an exhibition in Kolkata, they saw bags made of Jute. However, Jute bags were difficult to make and had their limitations and hence we tried making them from HDPE. This was not the best choice and, in those days, FIBC bags that were available, were imported. The HDPE bags could not be manufactured in the desired thickness so we had to make FIBC out of sandwiched HDPE fabric. It was then that we experimented and manufactured FIBC in India without relying on any overseas collaboration.

However, marketing FIBC bags in India was challenging as the bags were expensive and there were not many takers for the product. Since it was considered too expensive to invest, we toyed with the idea of hiring the bags on per MT basis and it was then that we entered into contracts with companies such as ACC, Gujarat Heavy Chemicals, etc to use our bags on a hire basis. Reusable FIBC bags that could be reused for 30 / 200 times or more depending on the preference and commercial terms with the user, were the options we had before us. So, by providing the bags, coordinating logistics and collection of bag after discharge and returning to the filling location, we ensured that the companies saved at 20 – 30% of their own packaging costs.

While this was a successful exercise, there was no scalability yet in the Indian market as the Indian manufacturers were averse to invest in equipment to mechanise. And hence, while the Indian market was small, there was huge demand from USA and Europe. That is when we decided to enter into exports and realigned ourselves to cater to the export market. My father and my cousin put lot of effort to promote Indian FIBC, build the confidence of the buyers from USA and once they received our first consignment, our company was on the roll. TPI which had a US collaboration and Jaicorp that was supplying to Reliance were the two other major players during the time. Both were catering to the domestic industry then.

Numerous awards, patents, a vast infrastructure and multiple manufacturing & administrative facilities later, what have been your key learnings through your journey?

The key learnings have been to keep improving the quality of the product and processes. Quality never fails to impress and processes are very integral to improving the overall efficiency of an organization that in turn has a positive impact on the performance of the company.

Exports is a lucrative business segment and a lot of effort is being made to increase awareness and encourage trade members to enter into its foray. What, in your opinion, is the reason for the slow adoption?

FIBC industry has been in the forefront of export and constitutes apart from polymer, the single largest segment in plastics for exports from India. India in fact has a distinguished place in the export of FIBC to the entire globe.

On the other hand, besides raw material exports, for most plastics, while there is fair potential to grow, sustainability can be a big challenge. The Chinese have also had a head start in most products and also immense support from Government. Chinese showcased themselves as the factory of the world inviting buyers whereas typically most of us travel abroad to sell. I believe that risk taking, lack of infrastructure and sufficient Governmental support could be a factor for a slow adoption. In order to make an impact in the world market, we need to invest in world class and world scale projects which I think we have been also reluctant upon. Injection moulded articles, for instance, in the USA is largely imported from China and we have not been able to make a mark there. We could probably work on that. Quality, capacities and price are keys to increasing exports, but one needs to have a long term vision for both sustainability and growth.

Besides being a successful entrepreneur, what are your other interests?

One of my greatest desires has been to contribute to the society. I initiated efforts and my family fully supported the establishment of a CBSE school in Ponneri District where our factory is located. We have over 1200 students from under privileged families getting quality education through Vivekananda Educational Society (NGO which manages about 30 schools in and around Chennai) at very nominal cost. This land has been donated by Jumbo Bag Limited and employees of our organisation are also provided waiver of fees for one term.

I have also been actively involved in women empowerment by providing them tailoring skills to make them self-employed and work from home and over 1000 women from Ponneri district have benefited from it.

What is your personal mantra? About your career and as an individual.

My mantra is to always remain positive and passionate towards whatever responsibility we have taken up without any personal expectation. Also, as an entrepreneur we must always be willing to invest, take meaningful risks and work with a burning desire to excel.

What would your advice to budding entrepreneurs or potential exporters?

I always believe that the world is a big place and we need to make our space. It is important for every budding entrepreneur to do his homework and slog it out especially in the first few years. It is not important to grow fast. It is important to lay a foundation on which you can build growth.

Regarding export of PPE medical coveralls for COVID-19 subject to quantitative restriction of 50 lakh units per month & the procedure & criteria for submission of applications & issuance of export licenses under export quota for PPE medical coveralls for COVID-19

Issuing Authority: Directorate General of Foreign Trade

Reference: Notification No. 16/2015-2020 & Trade notice no. 17/2020-21

Link for download : https://plexconcil.org/public/custom/files/circulars/1593610257.pdf

We wish to inform you that O/o DGFT has issued notification No. 16/2015-2020 & Trade notice no. 17/2020-21 regarding export of PPE medical coveralls for COVID-19 subject to quantitative restriction of 50 lakh units per month & the procedure / criteria for submission of applications & issuance of export licenses under export quota for PPE medical coveralls for COVID-19 respectively.

Notification No. 16/2015-2020 makes following amendment in the Notification No. 14 dated 22.06.2020 amending the Schedule 2 of the ITC (HS) Export Policy related to the export of Personal Protection Equipment as under:

Serial Number	ITC HS Codes	Description	Current Policy	Revised Policy
207A	392690 621790 630790 901890	PPE Medical Coveralls for Covid-19	Prohibited	Restricted (For monthly Export Quota of 50 Lakh PPE Medical Coveralls for COVID-19)

Other items that are part of PPE kits and listed in the description against Serial No. 207A in the Notification No. 14 dated 22.06.2020, however continue to remain prohibited for exports whether exported as individual items or as part of PPE kits and monthly quota shall not be applicable on export of these items.

Effect of this Notification:

Notification No. 14 dated 22.06.2020 is amended to the extent that PPE medical Coveralls for COVID-19, exported against the mentioned HS codes or falling under any other HS code, are now “restricted” for exports. A monthly quota of 50 Lakh PPE medical Coverall for covid-19 units has been fixed for issuance of export licenses to the eligible applicants to export PPE medical Coveralls for COVID-19 as per the criteria mentioned in Trade Notice. 17/2020-21.

All items that are part of PPE kits and listed in the description in the Notification No. 14 dated 22.06.2020, however, continue to remain “prohibited” for export whether exported as individual items or as part of PPE kits and monthly quota shall not be applicable on export of these items.

Please refer Notification No. 16/2015-2020 dated 29.06.2020 on https://dgft.gov.in/sites/default/files/Noti%2016%20Eng_0.pdf

Further DGFT Trade Notice No. 17 dated 29.06.2020 has outlined the procedure & criteria for submission of applications & issuance of export licenses under export quota for PPE medical coveralls for COVID-19.

Reference is invited to the DGFT Notification No. 16 dated 29.06.2020 restricting the export of PPE medical coveralls for COVID- 19 and fixing the export quota of 50 Lakh PPE Coverall Units per month.

In this regard, the application procedure and criteria for export of PPE Medical Coveralls for COVID19 is outlined as under:

1. Export of only 50 Lakh units of ‘PPE medical coveralls for Covid-19’ will be allowed every month.
2. Exporters may apply online through DGFT’s ECOM system for Export authorizations (Non SCOMET Restricted items) Please refer Trade Notice No. 50 dated 18.03.2019. There is no need to send any hard copy of the application via mail or post.
3. Only applications for export of “PPE medical coveralls .for Covid-19″ filed from 1st to 3rd day of each month will be considered for the quota of that month.

4. All the applications will be examined as per the Para 2.72 of Handbook of procedures and all approvals/allocations will be done by 10th of every month.
5. Validity of the export license will be for 3 months only.
6. The following requirements/eligibility criteria will be applicable for issuance of Export license:

- The firm applying should be a manufacturer of PPE Coveralls (Certificate of registration from the concerned Department/Authority to be supplied)
- Copy of Testing/Accreditation of PPEs medical coveralls issued to the firm from the laboratories notified/recognized by the Ministry of Textiles for this purpose.
- Finn shall either submit a copy of importing country's PPEs medical coveralls Standards Certificate obtained by it or a Copy of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) Certificate obtained by it, if the importing country does not insist on a Standard Certificate.
- Firm shall submit a Chartered Engineer's certificate certifying that the fabrics used in the PPE medical coverall were manufactured in India.
- A copy of the IEC of the firm.
- Only one application per IEC will be considered during a month.
- A copy of the Purchase Order/Invoice.
- All documents must be duly self-attested by the authorized person of the firm.

7. All the relevant documents as specified above must be submitted along with the online application to fulfil the eligibility criteria. Incomplete applications will not be considered for any allocation.

Trade Notice No. 17 dated 29.06.2020 is available on https://dgft.gov.in/sites/default/files/TradeNotice17_0.pdf

Regarding MSME:- www.udyamregistration.gov.in - a new portal for Udyam Registration launched by the MSME Ministry

Issuing Authority: Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises

Press Release Date: 30 June, 2020

Link for download: https://plexconcil.org/public/custom/files/circulars/1593604975.pdf

We wish to inform you that the Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has issued Notification Dated 26th June, 2020 regarding the new process of Classification and Registration of enterprises starting from 1st July, 2020. An enterprise for this purpose will be known as Udyam and its online Registration Process will be known as 'Udyam Registration'.

In this regard, the Ministry of MSME has now issued a press release dated 30th June 2020 regarding the launch of www.udyamregistration.gov.in - a new portal for Udyam Registration.

The portal guides the entrepreneurs step by step as to what they should know, what they should do. Government has organized a full system of Facilitation for Registration Process

Highlights of this process are reproduced as follows:

- MSME registration process is fully online, paperless and based on self-declaration. No documents or proof are required to be uploaded for registering an MSME.
- Adhaar Number will be required for registration.
- A Registration number will be given after registration. After completion of the process of registration, an Udyam Registration Certificate will be issued.
- This certificate will have a dynamic QR Code from which the web page on our Portal and details about the enterprise can be accessed.
- There will be no need for renewal of Registration.
- PAN & GST linked details on investment and turnover of enterprises will be taken automatically from the respective Government databases.
- MSME Ministry's online system will be fully integrated with Income Tax and GSTIN systems.
- Those who have EM-II or UAM registration or any other registration issued by any authority under the Ministry of MSME, will also have to re-register themselves.

- No enterprise is supposed to file more than one Udyam Registration. However, any number of activities including manufacturing or service or both may be specified or added in one Registration.
- Registration Process is totally free. No Costs or Fees are to be paid in this regard.

Members (specially MSMEs) are requested to take note of this New Udyam Registration portal and do the needful accordingly.

MSME Press release dated 30th June 2020 is available on
https://pib.gov.in/PressReleseDetailm.aspx?PRID=1635373

Regarding Turant Customs – Turant Suvidha Kendra and Other Initiatives for Contactless Customs

Issuing Authority: Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs

Reference: Circular No.32/2020-Customs dated 06.07.2020

Link for download : https://plexconcil.org/public/custom/files/circulars/1594123938.pdf

We wish to inform you that Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs has issued Circular for ***Turant Suvidha Kendra and Other Initiatives for Contactless Customs***

Under its flagship 'Turant Customs' programme aimed at providing a 'Faceless, Contactless and Paperless' Customs administration, Board has recently introduced a number of initiatives that leverage technology in order to enhance the efficiency in the Customs clearance processes thereby leading to speedy clearances, transparency in decision making, ease of doing business and very importantly, reduce physical contact in the prevailing pandemic situation.

These initiatives include, amongst others, automated clearances of Bills of Entry, digitization of Customs documents, paperless clearance, Faceless Assessment and establishment of Turant Suvidha Kendra at Bengaluru and Chennai vide Circulars No.05/2020-Customs, dated 27.01.2020, No.19/2020-Customs, dated 13.04.2020 and No.28/2020-Customs, dated 05.06.2020 respectively.

Continuing with the aforementioned initiatives and with a view to further prepare the ground for applying the reforms pan-India, Board has now decided to take certain measures, which are detailed below.

Turant Suvidha Kendra (TSKs) in All Customs Formations:

The Principal Chief Commissioners of Customs/ Chief Commissioners of Customs are advised to set up the TSKs in all Customs stations by 15.07.2020. This step is being taken in advance of the pan-India rollout Faceless Assessment, which would be done in phases to be announced soon. To reiterate, the broad scheme of the TSK would be as follows:

(i) The document verification by Customs officers at Assessment and Customs Compliance Verification (CCV) stages would normally be based on the documents uploaded in the e-Sanchit, not requiring physical submission of documents. However, if in any exceptional situation the physical submission of documents is required by Customs, for defacement or validation, such submission would be made only at the TSKs.

(ii) Documents requiring verification during examination for validation with goods would continue to be done during examination, as at present.
(iii) One or more TSKs may be set up for the convenience of the trade.
(iv) Suitable procedures are to be devised for handling & safe keeping of the documents produced at TSKs. Ideally these documents should also be kept in electronic form

Registration of Authorised Dealer Code, Bank Accounts through ICEGATE:

Registration and Changes with respect to Authorised Dealer (AD) Code and Bank Account(s) for purposes of remittances and availing export benefits respectively at every Customs station can be now done online.

The detailed step-by-step guide is available on the ICEGATE portal - https://www.icegate.gov.in/Download/Bank_Account_Management_Advisory.pdf.

Automated debit of bond after Assessment
To do away with this requirement of importers or their representatives are required to physically visit Customs House for physical debit of Bonds after the Bill of Entry is returned (to the importer) for the payment of duty.

Simplified Registration of Importers/Exporters in ICEGATE
The registration help using functionalities are useful to the importers / exporters and would help them in their management of imports and exports. Some of these functionalities are Management of Bank Accounts, Ledger View, IGST Refund status, Query Reply etc.

The simplified registration on ICEGATE can be done easily in few moments by following the steps given on the link

https://www.icegate.gov.in/Download/Advisory_for_Simplified_ Registration_at_ICEGATE_v1.pdf

The Circular No. 32/2020- Customs Dated 06.07.2020 can be downloaded from

https://www.cbic.gov.in/resources//htdocs-cbec/customs/cs-circulars/cs-circulars-2020/Circular-No-32-2020.pdf

Members may take note of the above information.

Extension of validity of AEO certification for ease of renewal process (Modification in Circular No. 27/2020 dated 02.06.2020)

Issuing Authority: Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs

Reference: Circular No. 31/2020-Customs dated 30.06.2020

Link for download: https://plexconcil.org/public/custom/files/circulars/1594102620.pdf

This has reference to Para 5.1 Circular No. 33/2016-Customs dated 22.07.2016 amended vide Para viii of Circular 03/2018-Customs dated 17.01.2018, which relates to "Validity of AEO Certificate" and reads as "The validity of AEO certificate shall he three years for AEO-T1 and AEO-T2, and five years for AEO-T3 and AEO-LO"

Representations have been received by the field formations regarding the difficulties being faced by the AEO entities in renewing their existing certifications owing to the national References for extension has also been received from few entities as well.

Accordingly, the Board has decided to extend the validity of all the AEO certificates expired/expiring between 01.03.2020 and 30.09.2020 to 30.09.2020 except for those entities against which a negative report is received during this period. Accordingly, Circular No. 27/2020 dated 02.06.2020 stands modified as above.

Member can download the concern circulars from:

Circular No. 33/2016-Customs dated 22.07.2016
https://www.cbic.gov.in/resources//htdocs-cbec/customs/cs-circulars/cs-circulars-2016/circ33-2016cs-revised.pdf

Circular 03/2018-Customs dated 17.01.2018
https://www.cbic.gov.in/resources//htdocs-cbec/customs/cs-circulars/cs-circulars-2018/circ03-2018cs.pdf

Circular No. 27/2020 dated 02.06.2020
https://www.cbic.gov.in/resources//htdocs-cbec/customs/cs-circulars/cs-circulars-2020/Circular-No-27-2020.pdf

Circular No. 31/2020-Customs dated 30/06/2020
https://www.cbic.gov.in/resources//htdocs-cbec/customs/cs-circulars/cs-circulars-2020/Circular-No-31-2020.pdf

Regarding Streamlining of processes in System related to Bonds and First Check BEs

Issuing Authority: The Commissioner of Customs (NS-I), Mumbai Zone –II

Reference: P/N. 78/2020 dated 04.07.2020

Link for download: https://plexconcil.org/public/custom/files/circulars/1594097078.pdf

We wish to inform you that O/o of The Commissioner of Customs (NS-I) Mumbai Zone –II has issued P/N. 78/2020 dated 04.07.2020 regarding Streamlining of processes in System related to Bonds and First Check BEs

With the objective of further facilitating trade and streamlining procedures, particularly to overcome the scourge of Covid-19, following initiatives are being implemented in System w.e.f 6th July 2020:

1. Auto Debiting of Bond:

Currently, the importer (or the Customs Broker) has to necessarily approach Customs officers in the Bonds section for the debiting of bond(s), if any, after assessment of the Bill of Entry. This interface is also required for Bills of Entry otherwise facilitated by RMS without assessment. Continuing with the endeavours to mitigate physical interface, the facility of auto debiting of Bond has now been developed in the System. With effect from 6th July 2020, an importer does not need to visit Customs officers for debiting of any bond given in the Bill of Entry. If a valid bond is declared in the Bill of Entry at the time of filing, the same will be auto-debited by the System after the assessment stage. Only in cases where either a Bond is not given during filing or the balance available in the bond is not sufficient, necessary intervention by Customs officers will be required for debiting.

Trade is therefore encouraged to furnish bond details along with the Bill of Entry and to use Continuity bonds wherever possible so as to avoid the necessity to physically visit Customs Houses for registration or debiting of Bonds.

2. Streamlining of workflow in case of First Check BE:

a. Currently, a first check BE has to be activated by the appraising officer after it comes back from the Shed with the first check examination report. This adds one additional step and at times, creates delays in assessment of such consignments. Sometimes, the importer has to visit the assessing officer for the activation of the Bill of Entry. This becomes all the more challenging in the case of faceless assessment where the BEs gets assessed at some other port. Recently, the list of all BEs pending activation was being shown to the officer as a pop up so that necessary action can be taken suo motu. **Now, the need for activating has been done away with and the Bills of Entry will automatically come to the assessing officer's queue after being marked by the Shed officers with completed first check examination.**

b. Further, there was no facility earlier with the appraising officer to seek additional inputs from the examination officers in case the first check report is incomplete or not sufficient to assess BE. Now, in such cases, the AC can again mark the BE back to the examiner by entering "N" when asked to confirm whether assessment is complete. Only when "Y" is entered by the AC, the assessment will be considered as complete by System.

c. First check BE when comes to SUP queue, it sometimes comes with CFS code as FAC which may create issue in making it to INS. To resolve this issue, now first check BE would be routed to SUP with CFS code indicated as 'NOCFS' and the SUPDT/AO can exercise the already existing option in SUP role to enter the CFS code and send it to INS.

3. The above changes will be implemented in the System from 06.07.2020.
Members may download the Public notice from http://www.jawaharcustoms.gov.in/pdf/PN-2020/PN-78-2020.pdf

Regarding Credit flow to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector

Issuing Authority: Reserve Bank of India

Reference: RBI/2020-2021/10 FIDD.MSME & NFS.BC.No.3/06.02.31/2020-21 dated 02.07.2020

Link for download: https://plexconcil.org/public/custom/files/circulars/1594390485.pdf

We wish to inform you that RBI has issued above referred notification regarding Credit flow to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Sector.

Kindly refer to earlier RBI circular RPCD.PLNFS.BC.No.63/06.02.31/2006-07 dated April 4, 2007 - https://www.rbi.org.in/Scripts/NotificationUser.aspx?Id=3391&Mode=0 containing definition of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises as per Section 7 (I) of the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises Development Act, 2006.

Further, Government of India (GoI), vide Gazette Notification S.O. 2119 (E) dated June 26, 2020 https://rbidocs.rbi.org.in/rdocs/content/pdfs/IndianGazzate02072020.pdf, has notified new criteria for classifying the enterprises as Micro, Small and Medium enterprises. The new criteria will come into effect from July 1, 2020. The details are as under:

Classification of enterprises

An enterprise shall be classified as a Micro, Small or Medium enterprise on the basis of the following criteria, namely:

- A micro enterprise, where the investment in plant and machinery or equipment does not exceed one crore rupees and turnover does not exceed five crore rupees;
- A small enterprise, where the investment in plant and machinery or equipment does not exceed ten crore rupees and turnover does not exceed fifty crore rupees; and
- A medium enterprise, where the investment in plant and machinery or equipment does not exceed fifty crore rupees and turnover does not exceed two hundred and fifty crore rupees

Composite criteria of investment and turnover for classification

- A composite criterion of investment and turnover shall apply for classification of an enterprise as micro, small or medium.
- If an enterprise crosses the ceiling limits specified for its present category in either of the two criteria of investment or turnover, it will cease to exist in that category and be placed in the next higher category but no enterprise shall be placed in the lower category unless it goes below the ceiling limits specified for its present category in both the criteria of investment as well as turnover.
- All units with Goods and Services Tax Identification Number (GSTIN) listed against the same Permanent Account Number (PAN) shall be collectively treated as one enterprise and the turnover and investment figures for all of such entities shall be seen together and only the aggregate values will be considered for deciding the category as micro, small or medium enterprise.

Calculation of investment in plant and machinery or equipment

- The calculation of investment in plant and machinery or equipment will be linked to the Income Tax Return (ITR) of the previous years filed under the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- In case of a new enterprise, where no prior ITR is available, the investment will be based on self-declaration of the promoter of the enterprise and such relaxation shall end after the 31st March of the financial year in which it files its first ITR.
- The expression ''plant and machinery or equipment'' of the enterprise, shall have the same meaning as assigned to the plant and machinery in the Income Tax Rules, 1962 framed under the Income Tax Act, 1961 and

shall include all tangible assets (other than land and building, furniture and fittings).

- The purchase (invoice) value of a plant and machinery or equipment, whether purchased first hand or second hand, shall be taken into account excluding Goods and Services Tax (GST), on self-disclosure basis, if the enterprise is a new one without any ITR.
- The cost of certain items specified in the Explanation I to sub-section (1) of section 7 of the Act shall be excluded from the calculation of the amount of investment in plant and machinery.

Calculation of turnover

- Exports of goods or services or both, shall be excluded while calculating the turnover of any enterprise whether micro, small or medium, for the purposes of classification.
- Information as regards turnover and exports turnover for an enterprise shall be linked to the Income Tax Act or the Central Goods and Services Act (CGST Act) and the GSTIN.
- The turnover related figures of such enterprise which do not have PAN will be considered on self-declaration basis for a period up to 31st March, 2021 and thereafter, PAN and GSTIN shall be mandatory.

In case of an upward change in terms of investment in plant and machinery or equipment or turnover or both, and consequent re-classification, an enterprise will maintain its prevailing status till expiry of one year from the close of the year of registration. In case of reverse-graduation of an enterprise, whether as a result of re-classification or due to actual changes in investment in plant and machinery or equipment or turnover or both, and whether the enterprise is registered under the Act or not, the enterprise will continue in its present category till the closure of the financial year and it will be given the benefit of the changed status only with effect from 1st April of the financial year following the year in which such change took place. Other aspects relating to registration of enterprises, grievance redressal, etc. are mentioned in the Gazette Notification S.O. 2119 (E) dated June 26, 2020

Interview with Karnataka State Plastics Association, Bangalore

Interview with Mr. Vijay Kumar V, President, Karnataka State Plastics Association, Bangalore

Tell us about your association. What are its primary objectives?

Karnataka State Plastic Association was established in 1996 with the objective to extend support to Plastic Industries and traders of Plastic Products on policies, industry's responsibilities and to help the Government in formulating policies for the benefit of the plastic fraternity. When the Association was first conceptualized, the new rules regarding Plastics Waste Management and VAT were newly introduced. In fact, Karnataka was the first state in the country to have introduced VAT and the fraternity was much in need of guidance about its implementation and impact on the industry. By the year 1999-2000, we realized that a lot of work needed to be done to address the industry's concerns and many issues needed to be highlighted to the State Government and Central Government level. Also, the awareness amongst the trade was low as far as their own potential and opportunities were concerned. The Association was created to help industry members navigate and grow through the changing times.

It was also then that the four Southern states of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh with support from CIPET launched the IPLEX platform for the polymer industry in the Southern region. In those days, most international standard plastics/ polymer industry events took place in New Delhi and other cities, which were not easily accessible to especially the small and medium players in the segment. As it was difficult and involved high costs in travelling, itis was a lost opportunity for our industries members who for obvious reasons were unable to obtain new information on technologies, exports and global developments.

IPLEX was conceived to bridge this gap and to bring a platform that is of global scale to help the southern industries explore new ideas and business potential while attracting major buyers from across the country and globally. South has the distinction of having the maximum number of plastic converters catering to the packaging industry, especially FIBC as well as flexi packaging. The exhibition helped bring forth our strengths and in 2003, we hosted the first IPLEX exhibition in Chennai. We have completed 10 successful editions and the next editions are planned to be held in March 2021 in Cochin and November 2021 in Chennai again. Each of the four states hosts these exhibitions by rotation to support their local industries.

Our primary aim is to support domestic industries as well as promote exports. Our industry has immense potential and through our association's various efforts and initiatives, we focus on highlighting challenges, provide feedback to the State government on policy matters as well as encourage our members to explore new opportunities.

From which manufacturing/ export clusters or regions do your members chiefly belong to?

Our members represent all areas of manufacturing, traders, raw material suppliers/producers, exporters. We have 700 members from across the state of Karnataka, 80% of whom belong to Bangalore Urban and Rural Regions. This is about 1200 sq kms of area covered by us. We also have members from Mysore, Mangalore, Hubli, Dharwad & Belgaum which are the other indus-

trial hubs in the state. Bellary district is another import hub that has a large number of FIBC/ Woven Sacks manufacturers. We are affiliated with Karnataka State Small Scale Industries Association, a 74 years old association and the Federation of Karnataka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FKCCI) and we lend our support to these associations for the growth and progress of the polymer industry in the state. I am personally a member of the task force in FKCCI, a team that actively pursues all issues and concerns of the industry with relevant authorities.

What are the main categories of products that are typically exported from your region? And to where?

FIBC/Liners/Packaging Materials required For Garment Exports/ Engineering Products form the major products that are exported from the region. The region does however have vast capabilities in other polymer-based products too.

What are the global opportunities for your exporters/ manufacturers?

While on the whole, the demand for our products has been good, due Covid it's yet to pick up once again. The European market and Middle East have excellent potential to penetrate. In fact, SAARC region has great potential and while we already have excellent trade in Sri Lanka, Nepal & Bangladesh, we believe that we have many more opportunities in these countries. Monofilaments, Fishnets and cosmetic packaging & flexi packaging segments especially have huge demand in the SAARC region and we need to capitalize on these opportunities. Developing countries in African continent also are fertile export markets for our region.

What are the challenges faced by exporters from your region?

One of the major issues, exporters from the Karnataka face is the lack of adequate Port Facilities and raw material supplies. The nearest ports with all facilities are only available on the Eastern Coast, chiefly in Tuticorin, Chennai and Krishnapatnam. These cities are anywhere between 400 – 700 kms away and add to it inland transport, docking, sailing, etc., shipments take almost 3 weeks to reach especially ME or Europe. Not only does this cause an inordinate delay, but also adds to logistics costs. We have been requesting the Central & State Governments to create port facilities between Karwar and Cochin which are on the Western coast for a long time as we can then cut down shipment to 7 days. This will bring immense relief to not only existing exporters but also encourage a greater number of small and medium industries to enter into the export foray. It will also give us access to the Western continents.

On the other hand, processes for registration of forms by exporters are also tedious. Furthermore, enforcement of compliance such as BIS standards for small industries is expensive and can be a deterrent to such industries as certification from private organizations is often very expensive. While ensuring quality standards and certification is a must especially for exports, establishing centralized certification or testing facilities with organizations such as CIPET will allow such industries to comply with such certification & quality standards. CIPET has 132 centres across India and we have 2 major centres in Chennai and Bangalore. These are the best in Asia. By subsidizing testing costs, we can have globally recognized certification that is easily accessible to our industry. With the introduction of Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan and new definition of MSME, we do hope that many of these stumbling blocks will be removed for the MSME sector and we are happy that these points have been considered in the Atmanirbhar programme.

Currently, most of our raw material supply is from Reliance, GAIL, Haldia, etc. though MRPL in Mangalore has the potential to meet all our raw material requirement. Raw material from the other producers takes 7-10 days to reach us whereas from MRPL, we can receive these in 24 hours. There is excellent potential for polymer production in the state as it can cater to a wide range of product manufacturing in the state. This needs to be enhanced and encouraged.

What are the kinds of measures that you believe are needed to ease or improve export growth from your region?

The MRPL, the major Polymer Producer in Mangalore should support exporters demand and meet their requirements for raw materials. Recently, in association with Plexconcil, we have taken up the issue with the GoK to impress upon MRPL the need to improve raw material supply in the state. MRPL has requested for all data relating to our requirement and we are hopefully of better and greater support in coming times.

Secondly, the port connectivity in Western Coast should be high priority. We certainly need full-service ports on the Western coast to ease export logistics from the region. With ports on both Eastern and Western Coasts, all 4 state have the benefit to export from the nearest ports and this would greatly help in enhancing exports from the entire southern region.

Establishing Testing facilities for Quality certification with CIPET or equivalent at subsidized rates will encourage greater inclusion of smaller manufacturers into the export fold. It will also encourage manufacturers to produce high quality products for domestic consumption at competitive costs.

Ease of doing business, single window clearances, reduced paperwork, simplified procedures, etc are also necessary and we are hoping that these hurdles will be removed with the further implementation of Atmanirbhar Bharat programme.

Greater awareness amongst industry members with data regarding regions with export potential products in high demand, etc. are integral to educating members and promoting export growth.

How can Plexconcil support your association in achieving your export goals and help your member-exporters?

The Plexconcil can become a bridge between GoK and Exporters in the state and support us in our demands for improvement in policy decisions, infrastructure, and development of export zones nearer to the coastal belt. This will boast the export orders from the region. Plexconcil Chairman Mr. Ravish Kamath has initiated discussions with GoK with our support and in near future we foresee some issues may be resolved.

More interactive meetings should be organised for the industry to update on latest policies, benefits, technology, global demand, trends and opportunities. This should be done on a regular basis in order to encourage a greater number of manufacturers/ traders to enter the export industry.

4 Trends Impacting Plastic Injection Molding in 2020

With plastic injection molding being one of the most commonly-used plastic formation techniques with numerous industrial applications, the market is continually expanding and evolving. Custom made plastic injection molding parts present the perfect solution for numerous industries that are striving to produce a great volume of high-quality and cost-efficient parts. Such plastics are used in the production of complex and intricate shaped parts. The healthcare industry represents the fastest-growing application segment for the industry. Pregnancy test devices, blood sample analysis cuvettes, housings for needles are just a few of the preferred segments because of the lightweight, cost-effectiveness, and easy serializable properties that injection-molded plastic offers.

The rise of the demand for these kinds of items is spiked by several growth drivers. Volatile prices of the most used raw materials coupled with the growing environmental concerns regarding their disposal increased construction spending in emerging markets, and Government support in the form of tax benefits are just a few of the reasons directly connected to the rise of plastic injection molding. According to a report by Grand View Research, the global injection molded plastics market size was valued at a staggering $258.2 billion in 2019 and it's projected to grow furthermore. In this article, we look at some of the trends that are accelerating the steady progress of the plastic injection molding industry.

High-Performance Materials

One of the hottest trends within plastic injection molding makers is the use of lasting, corrosion-and-temperature resistant materials. As an example, manufacturers in the automotive industry are using these types of materials as a proven way to increase the longevity of components. This way, they are also lowering the weight of various parts of the finished product to improve the overall fuel efficiency of the produced vehicle. It's estimated that every 10% reduction in vehicle weight results in a 5-7% reduction in fuel usage.

In addition, the use of eco-conscious plastics continues to gain traction in the industry since they produce a lower level of consequences on the environment. The most commonly used plastic materials in the automotive sector include Polypropylene, Polyurethane, and PVC.

Responsibility to Recycle

Instead of recycling it in their land, the US and other developed countries have been sending their plastic waste to China for the past 25 years. Since reporting to the UN Comtrade Database began in 1992, nearly 106 million metric tons of the world's plastics set for recycling have been exported to China.

However, in 2018 China passed the National Sword Policy, banning plastic waste importing because of environmental policies and the hazardous effects on people's health. Now it's a growing trend for manufacturers and makers to generate a responsible recycling plan for the plastic scrap in an environmentally-friendly way.

Software Enhancements For Better Automation

Multiple software is offering updates and enhancements that improve the plastic part and injection mold designs, as well as the whole manufacturing process. This allows manufacturers to improve the design quality and accuracy of the parts from the very beginning and ensure lower costs and future savings.

The newest software programs also include the ability to simulate how melted plastic flows during the injection molding process, so makers are able to better predict manufacturing-related defects. Furthermore, the software will allow designers to evaluate and modify part manufacturability and make the necessary adjustments early in the design process.

Bigger Implementation Of Reinforced Plastics

As they typically exhibit low weight and high strength, the use of plastic composites is a growing trend for plastic injection molding makers in 2020. Typical fibers being injected into plastics include materials such as carbon-based fiber, glass, and aramid. The industries benefiting from usage of reinforced plastics products include aerospace, automotive, construction, power, nanomaterials, and more.

The use of such materials in manufacturing is an appealing trend because the per-product costs are greatly reduced while maintaining the much-needed part strength. In industries like automotive and aerospace, the reduction of part weight can increase the value of the final products through better fuel economy and improved aerodynamics.

Final Thoughts

Not all innovative ideas work out for various reasons, but the industry will continue to evolve with better technology, environmental conditions, and finer material specifications. Knowing the advantages of technology and the latest trends as well, it shouldn't take too much time before you implement plastic injection molding in your field of work.

Source: Industry Today

Overmolded Medical Device Components Meet In-Home Healthcare Demands

According to global aging data compiled by the United Nations, by 2050 1 in 6 people in the world will be over the age of 65. That's a dramatic jump from current statistics that place the same segment of the population at 1 in 11.

As a result — and in light of spikes in medical demand due to COVID-19 for all age groups — healthcare is rapidly shifting from clinics and hospitals to in-home care and smaller, non-traditional facilities.

Portable medical devices that monitor diagnostic and therapeutic data and aid in treatment of certain conditions are integral to this transition. Use of wearable technologies alone have increased by 26% globally2, and the U.S. medical device market has seen a 1.9% uptick in 2020 to $45.3 billion3.

The global need is evident, and the universal solution is found in injection-molded medical devices.

Plastic is lightweight and can conform to nearly any shape, which is beneficial to medical applications wherein portability and ease of use by inexperienced users or traveling healthcare workers is necessary. Portable medical devices also need to be durable and perform reliably. That's where custom injection molders that are experienced in overmolding make key contributions.

What's Overmolding?

Overmolding is a unique injection molding process that combines two or more molded plastic parts into one finished product to add or enhance certain characteristics. For medical applications that may mean covering a rigid device "skeleton" with a soft, flexible outer shell to:

- Reduce abrasions, waterproof a substrate, or improve chemical resistance
- Promote user-friendliness by improving overall feel and grip
- Deaden vibration and protect the device from drop impact

In addition to these product outcomes, brand and business advantages can be realized by partnering with an experienced custom injection molder for overmolding projects, including:

- Time and cost savings through simplification of an injection-molded part's bill of materials, as well as the inclusion of certain processes (e.g., adding gaskets, etc.) that would otherwise have to be done separately. The overmolding process can be very complex. An experienced molder can speed time to market by reducing the number of design iterations needed to get production ready.
- Better operational and brand identity since custom injection molders are familiar with the wide range of available plastics for medical applications, and can generally get them in a wide range of colors, materials, and textures. Colored plastics help users find key portable medical device features, and aid in general equipment organization. In addition, colored overmolded plastics enhance brand aesthetics without introducing additional elements and processes (decal printing and placement, etc.).

How does overmolding affect medical device performance?

Overmolded components provide attributes that build performance capabilities in a wide range of medical applications, including:

- Handheld devices: soft grips, vibration control, and abrasion resistance
- Surgical instruments: nonslip grips, chemical resistance, and biocompatibility
- nstrument housings: impact resistance, noise and vibration control, and improved aesthetics
- Monitors: impact resistance, noise control, and abrasion resistance
- Tubing or Luer fittings: liquid or gas seals
- Electrical connectors: insulation and color identification
- Syringes: chemical resistance, nonslip grips, and built-in seals

Empowering individuals and healthcare workers to administer in-home services requires medical devices that reliably perform, regardless of location or user familiarity. Overmolded medical components and portable medical devices solve today's challenges with an eye to future healthcare industry needs.

Source: Kaysun

5 Innovations In Plastic Recycling That You May Not Already Know About

AI Sorting

Have you ever tossed your Starbucks cup into a recycling bin and paused to think "was that for paper or plastic? Or both? And if I threw something in the wrong container, what happens later on when it's recycled?" Soon your mind is filled with images of a burning recycling facility, klaxons blaring, as the city is evacuated all because of the catastrophe you've caused by putting a plastic lid in the paper bin.

Maybe your imagination is a bit too vivid, but sorting garbage for recycling is indeed a major problem that takes an entire industry to solve.

A piece of plastic may be covered in dirt, ripped up, intermingled with paper or metal··· it's an engineer's nightmare. Thus far only humans have had the intelligence and dexterity to tell the difference between a solid plastic bathroom divider and the aluminum bracket bolted to its surface. However, humans are less known for their patience and are prone to quitting tedious and unglamorous jobs like garbage sorting.

In an ideal world, robotic arms would be positioned over recycling facility conveyor belts that effortlessly identify different types of materials, no matter how irregular, dirty and mangled they are, and proceed to sort them to their corresponding bins with a perfectly competent mechanical hand. While this scene sounds like something out of The Jetsons, it is fast becoming a reality. And it's being accomplished with none other than (buzzword alert) artificial intelligence.

Yes, AI is the perfect solution for garbage recycling due to the highly irregular and unpredictable nature of garbage. A sensor may only be able to identify a material's composition, but AI can identify its composition and configuration in varying circumstances using deep-learning algorithms that go far beyond simple if > then logic.

Plastic-munching Bacterial Species

Believe it or not, there are several different bacterial species that have been observed to eat non-degradable plastic and turn it into polyhydroxyalkanoate (or PHA). PHA is a polyester that is biodegradable. But before you get too excited about most of your dad's neckties being biodegradable, keep this in mind: the bacteria are limited in how much it can produce PHA up to a certain percentage of its cell weight. For gram-negative strains, this could be up to 80% of the cell's dry weight. But this would require an added process to eliminate endotoxins present in the outer membrane of these strains. Alternatively, gram-positive strains could be used to the same effect without the problem of endotoxins but with the tradeoff of a lower rate of PHA production.

Some scientists are working on developing genetically engineered bacteria strains that offer no compromises. Either way, when the time comes that you enjoy some finely crafted Taco Bell with a spork made completely of bacterial waste products, you'll be able to appreciate how much research went into these innovations in plastic recycling.

Depolymerization

Many people still don't know that plastic originates from oil. But if plastic comes from petroleum, what's to stop the process from being put in reverse? It turns out it's already happening. A company aptly named "Recycling Technologies" is utilizing a chemical process called thermal cracking to do so. Thermal cracking is typically part of the oil refining process, but Recycling Technologies is using it to break plastic back down into a material they call "Plaxx" which can be used for heavy oil products or remade into other plastics. While it isn't exactly the same as petroleum, the good news is that it seems to be even better. It's still under testing, but if successful it could potentially be used to power vehicles like heavy tankers.

With one Recycling Technologies machine capable of processing 7000 tons of plastics per year, the potential to catch up with the world's enormous production of plastic waste is no longer completely out of sight.

Microemulsion

Mixed materials present a notoriously difficult problem for recyclers. They are composed of multiple types of materials (eg cardboard and aluminum foil) that can't be recycled unless they are separated. Think items like the box cartons that you might see soymilk or soup in. It is largely cardboard but also contains plastic or aluminum foil components utilized for water-tightness and safety sealing that must be separated out before recycling. How can this be done in an effective way? That's where microemulsion can come in.

Microemulsion has been defined as "a system of water, oil and an amphiphile which is a single optically isotropic and thermodynamically stable liquid solution" (Danielsson, I.; Lindman, B. Colloids Surf.) One of the practical values of these systems is the ability of a microemulsion phase to exhibit an ultralow interfacial tension that provides for mobilization of separate oil or aqueous phases from solid ones even in suboptimal flow and pressure conditions. Thus microemulsions can be used in conditions where high shear stress cannot easily be applied, such as when attempting to mobilize crude oil from porous rock.

A company named Saperatec is attempting to use this technology for recycling materials like lithium-ion batteries, LCD panels, plastics composites and more. Using these substances to separate materials at the molecular level can make otherwise landfill-bound materials recyclable.

Triggerable Smart Polymer Material Systems

Much like microemulsion, one of the purposes of "smart polymers" is to make materials and textiles with plastic coatings or elements more effectively recyclable. However, this method approaches the problem from an even more fundamental standpoint – by enhancing the material itself from the outset in such a way as to make it triggerable by a designated means instead of adapting the processing mechanism to an existing material type. The type of trigger can come in the form of various means, including chemical, heat, microwave, the intensity of light or even humidity.

A company called Devan Chemicals has partnered with the EU to investigate the feasibility of this approach for creating more recyclable materials and is targeting up to a 75% decrease in landfill-bound materials that are presently considered difficult or impossible to recycle. If this is achieved, it may have the added benefit of creat-

ing a new market for processing and wholesaling these products.

Conclusions

We all heard the statistics on landfill waste and recycling: That if you stacked up all of the plastic bottles in landfills they would go past the moon. That we are on our way to having more pounds of plastic in the ocean than pounds of fish. That there are more plastic solo cups off the coast of New Jersey than there are atoms in the known universe. But where are the positive statistics?

Fortunately, some of these new innovations in plastic recycling (along with many that aren't listed here) are on the cusp of producing some very positive numbers. And that's a good thing because thus far plastic has proven to be quite useful in technological development. If researchers can make recycling processes like these more efficient then it won't be too long before we can enjoy more of the benefits without the downsides.

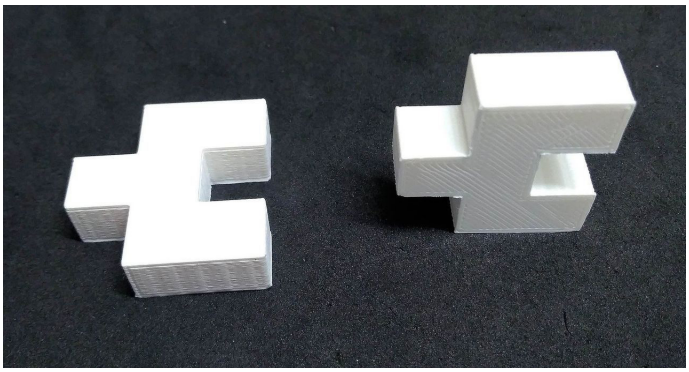
Source: ennomotive.com

Why plastic waste is an ideal building material

What if we turned the world's growing wastelands of disused plastics into a new kind of sustainable building? The disposal of plastics is a highly visible global problem – from the highest mountains to the deepest ocean trenches, waste plastic seems inescapable. In natural conditions, plastics are nearly indestructible, and yet they are discarded worldwide on a large scale: the world produces around 359 million tonnes of plastics each year. The environment cannot address their disposal at a speed fast enough to prevent harm to living beings.

This has led to a consensus that plastics are an unsustainable material. And yes, plastics are certainly an enormous problem, but they don't necessarily have to be.

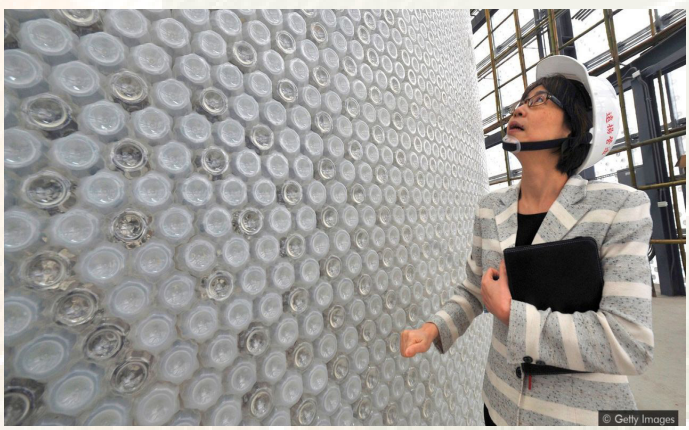
The main issue is not with plastic as a material, but with our linear economic model: goods are produced, consumed, then disposed of. This model assumes endless economic growth and doesn't consider the planet's exhaustible resources. But there are many ways we could set plastics on a different lifecycle – and one that I have been working on is turning disused plastics into a hardy, reliable and sustainable building material.



Most people believe that plastics recycling is severely restricted: that only a few types can be recycled at all. This is unsurprising. The proportion of plastics that are recycled is minimal. The UK, for example, uses five million tonnes of plastic each year, and only 370,000 tonnes are recycled each year: that's just 7%.

Plastics are strong, durable, waterproof, lightweight, easy to mould, and recyclable – all key properties for construction materials

But all polymers are, technologically, 100% recyclable. Some of them have the perfect cradle-to-cradle lifecycle: they can be used again and again to produce the same goods. Some plastics can be reused just as they are by shredding an object into flakes, melting it, and reusing.



Such recycled plastics may have lower mechanical properties compared to virgin plastics, because each time you melt and process a plastic, the polymeric chains degrade. But these properties can be recovered by mixing it to additives or virgin plastic. Examples of successful industrial recycling include PET, or poly(ethylene terephtalate), which is used to make soft drinks bottles, and polystyrene.

All of the rest can technically be reprocessed into new materials for different applications. In the final instance, any plastic waste can be shredded and used as filler for asphalt, or be pyrolysed – decomposed through heating – to produce fuel. The Japanese company Blest Corporation already sells a portable machine to convert domestic plastic waste into fuel in a simple, affordable way.

Working with the 'unrecyclable' waste and developing plastics alternatives to natural materials may reduce demand on the world's resources

The problem is that recycling much of this plastic waste is currently unfeasible and unprofitable. Polymers such as rubbers, elastomers, thermosets and mixed plastic waste are comfortably labelled as "unrecyclable" by the recycling sector. But the amount of these materials all over the world is frighteningly large and keeps on growing. What if this plastic waste could be used to produce something useful to society?

Many universities and entrepreneurs are attempting to do this. Most solutions target mixed plastic waste and suggest applications different from the original ones. For example, several groups have developed building materials made of plastic waste.

Plastics are strong, durable, waterproof, lightweight, easy to mould, and recyclable – all key properties for construction materials. So what if all of this plastic waste could be converted into building materials for low-income populations? Existing initiatives are promising, but not yet reproducible on an industrial scale.

I study plastic waste with the specific aim of finding interesting ways to remove it from the environment. Since 2009, I have developed a number of building materials made of post-consumer plastics mixed with different waste-stream materials. From agricultural wastes such as sugarcane bagasse – a by-product of the sugar industry in Brazil – and coffee dregs, to concrete waste and construction debris, compounded with recycled plastics, there are many ways to obtain materials to produce bricks, roof tiles, plastic lumber and other useful elements for building.

Our team is currently trying to develop a viable building block made of recycled plastics. We have prepared a range of prospective materials using a mix of virgin and recycled plastics – coloured PET bottles, polypropylene, polyethylene – and other local waste-stream materials, such as hemp, sawdust, concrete waste and red mud. We are currently adjusting the properties of the materials for the rotomoulding process, a plastics moulding technology that is ideal for making large hollow articles. We want to use the maximum amount of recycled plastics in this block. Blocks made of 25% recycled plastics have performed extremely well in mechanical tests. Next we'll try 50%, 75% and 100%.

We are also thinking about the aesthetics of the blocks. Blends of recycled mixed-colour plastics usually end up with a grey or black colour. To enable colour, we are preparing blends of virgin or recycled plastics to overlay the main bulk of the block.

So perhaps plastics are not necessarily the problem. They can be part of a pathway towards a more sustainable way of living. Using a natural or renewable resource is not necessarily environmentally friendly. The ecological footprint of a polymeric material is smaller than that of natural materials, which have a sizeable demand on arable land, clean water, fertilisers and regeneration time.

According to the Global Footprint Network, before the pandemic we were demanding 1.75 times the available resources of the planet. Working with the "unrecyclable" waste and developing plastics alternatives to natural materials may reduce this demand and leave a cleaner and more sustainable planet for the next generations.
Building materials made from recycled plastics are not yet widely used in the construction industry – prototypes have mainly been used for demonstrative installations. It will take political will and widespread environmental awareness to encourage more investment into the potential in plastics recycling.

But hopefully the tide is beginning to turn, as a consequence of the increasing pressure from public opinion about the plastic pollution matter. Thanks to the engagement of government and industry with the idea of a circular economy, it seems that there will be an opening in the market – and in people's minds – to welcome plastic initiatives to replace conventional building materials.
Source: bbc.com - Sibele Cestari is a research fellow in polymeric materials at Queen's University Belfast. This article originally appeared on The Conversation, and is republished under a Creative Commons licence. This is also why this story does not have an estimate for its carbon emissions, as Future Planet stories usually do.

Why become a Plexconcil Member?

Established since 1955, the Plastics Export Promotion Council, PLEXCONCIL, is sponsored by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Department of Commerce, Government of India. PLEXCONCIL is a non-profit organization representing exporters from the Indian plastics industry and is engaged in promoting the industry exports.

The Council is focused on achieving excellence in exports by undertaking various activities and initiatives to promote the industry. The Council undertakes activities such as participation at international trade fairs, sponsoring delegations to target markets, inviting foreign business delegations to India, organising buyer-seller meets both in India and the overseas etc.,

The Council also routinely undertakes research and surveys, organizes the Annual Awards to recognize top performing exporters, monitors the development of new technology and shares the same with members, facilitates joint ventures and collaboration with foreign companies and trade associations as well as represents the issues and concerns to the relevant Government bodies.

The Council represents a wide variety of plastics products including – Plastics Raw Materials, Packaging Materials, Films, Consumer Goods, Writing Instruments, Travel ware, Plastic Sheets, Leather Cloth, Vinyl Floor Coverings, Pipes and Fittings, Water Storage Tanks, Custom made plastic Items from a range of plastic materials including Engineered Plastics, Electrical Accessories, FRP/GRP Products, Sanitary Fittings, Tarpaulins, Laminates, Fishing Lines/Fishnets, Cordage/ Ropes/Twines, Laboratory Ware; Eye Ware, Surgical/ Medical Disposables.

Membership Benefits

- Discounted fees at International Trade Fairs and Exhibitions
- Financial benefits to exporters, as available through Government of India
- Disseminating trade enquiries/trade leads
- Instituting Export Awards in recognition of outstanding export performance
- Assistance on export financing with various institutions and banks
- Networking opportunities within the plastics industry
- Listing in PLEXCONCIL member's directory

THE PLASTICS EXPORT PROMOTION COUNCIL ADDED THE FOLLOWING COMPANIES/FIRMS AS NEW MEMBERS DURING JULY 2020. WE WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME THEM ABOARD!

SR.NO	NAME OF THE COMPANY	ADDRESS	CITY	PIN	STATE	EMAIL	DIRECTORS
1	NITYANAND UDYOG PVT LTD	6A, MIDC INDUSTRIAL AREA, HINGNA ROAD,	NAGPUR	440016	MAHARASHTRA	INFO@NITYANANDUDYOG.COM	GOVINDLAL N AGARWAL
2	HARDY SMITH DESIGNS PVT LIMITED	1014, GANESH GLORY, NEAR BSNL, S G HIGHWAY, JAGATPUR,	AHMEDABAD	382470	GUJARAT	H.PANCHAL@HARDYSMITH.ORG	HARDIK V PANCHAL
3	PACIFIC LAMINATES	PLOT NO A-2/34,GIDC INDUSTRIAL ESTATE , BEHIND HOTEL FOUNTAIN.	PARDI	396125	GUJARAT	EXCISE.PL@PACIFICGROUP.CO.IN	RUPESH P AGRAWAL
4	MONDAL HAIR ENTERPRISE	RAMNA DADPUR, DADPUR REGINAGAR	MURSHIDABAD	742189	WEST BENGAL	MONDALHAIRENTERPRISE@GMAIL.COM	IDMAHAMMED MONDAL
5	FAIHIM ENTERPRISE	BEGUNBARI,	BELDANGA	742133	WEST BENGAL	FAIHIMENTERPRISE@GMAIL.COM	MD HAYDAR ALI
6	AJM EXPORTS	RAMANA DADPUR PO DADPUR DADPUR	DADPUR	742189	WEST BENGAL	GOPAL742189@GMAIL.COM	JAYASHREE MALAKAR
7	JB POLYFILMS	S N 968,CHACHARWADI TEMPLE,PARIKH PACKAGING LANE, CHACHARWADI-VASNA, SARKHEJ BAVLA HIGHWAY SANAND	AHMEDABAD	382213	GUJARAT	SAGARSHETH8478@GMAIL.COM	ASHISH J TALATI
8	PRAYAN MATS PRIVATE LIMITED	AURAI ROAD, BANKAT SAROI BHADOHI SANT RAVIDAS NAGAR	BHADOHI	221401	UTTAR PRADESH	PRAYANMATS@GMAIL.COM	PRASHANT BARANWAL
9	SHASHWATI PLASTICS	70-Z, HOOTAGALLI INDUSTRIAL AREA	MYSORE	570018	KARNATAKA	VENU.DKV@GMAIL.COM	D K Venugopalan
10	UMAKRUPA PLAST	B-118, BILESHWAR IND. ESTATE, OPP. VEPARI MAHAMANDAL, ODHAV,	AHMEADBAD	382415	GUJARAT	MEHULPATEL056@GMAIL.COM	BHESANIYA R KAUSHIK
11	RAJESHREE ROPES PRIVATE LIMITED	PLOT NO - 78 , FIRST FLOOR CHITRA GIDC GIDC	BHAVNAGAR	364004	GUJARAT	RAJESHREEPOLYMERS@GMAIL.COM	MOHIT J HARIYANI
12	VANSH POLYPACK LLP	FLAT NO.03 GROUND FLOOR SBDAPPAR MG GALI	GORAKHPUR	273001	UTTAR PRADESH	VANSHPOLYPACKLLP@GMAIL.COM	RAMESH CHAND JAISWAL
13	FLUORO POLYMER PRODUCTS	PLOT NO I-50/2, PHASE-4, G.I.D.C. ESTATE	VITHAL UDYOGNAGAR	388121	GUJARAT	HASIT_99@YAHOO.COM	HASITKUMAR V UPADHYAY
14	SRI VAIBHAVA DURGA PLASTICS	184/2, KESANUPALLI VILLAGE, TURAKAPALEM ROAD,	NARASARAOPET, GUNTUR	522601	ANDRAPRADESH (NEW)	SRIVAIBHAVADURGAPLASTICS@GMAIL.COM	TULASI TANUJA MITTAPALLI
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16	ANJALI PLASTICS	5049 3 RUI MANDI SADAR BAZAR	DELHI	110006	DELHI	PLASTANJALI@GMAIL.COM	HARISH KUMAR JAIN

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18	SHRIVARI POLYPACKS	PLOT NO 35 UMIYA AUDHOGIK SAH. VASAHAT KAPSI, KHURD,	NAGPUR	440008	MAHARASHTRA	SR@UNIQUEEXIM.IN	SHRIDHAR ASHARAM PASARI
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21	SHRI PHARMA PACK	SY. NO.732/1, 736/4, 85 GALA NO. 3, AVIS UDYOG BHAVAN, GROUND FLOOR, RINGANWADA,	NANI DAMAN	396210	DAMAN & DIU	AMIT_MEHTA1919@YAHOO.COM	AMIT MEHTA
22	ARIHANT POLYSACKS	SURVEY NO.66/1,PLOT NO.60/1, DAN UDYOG INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, PIPARIA,	SILVASSA	396230	DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	PAWAN.MUNOT@REDIFFMAIL.COM	GANESH PATEL
23	ALLRICH BUSINESS CORPORATION	GAT NO. 448/1, PLOT NO. 50, TRIAMBAK NAGAR, MEHRUN,	JALGAON	425001	MAHARASHTRA	MANAGER@ALLRICH.CO.IN	PARIKSHIT C JAIN
24	ADVANCE FRP	04 GROUND FLOOR, AVINASH BHUVAN, DIXIT CROSS ROAD, VILE PARLE EAST,	MUMBAI	400057	MAHARASHTRA	ADVFRPVASAI@GMAIL.COM	ABHISHEK HEMANT BHIDE

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Company Name	Hans-Jürgen Thierfelder -Alles für Ihr Büro. Inh. Andreas Trautmann e. K.
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Email	info@thierfelder-buerotechnik.de
Phone No.	(+49) 3613731975
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Hans-Peter Krüger Büro- und Kommunikationstechnik ReComp
Address	Chausseestraße 14, 17498, Levenhagen, Germany
Email	info@recomp-online.de
Phone No.	(+49) 3834898281
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Hees Bürowelt GmbH
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Phone No.	(+49) 27148810
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Business Inquiries

Company Name	Heinr. Hünicke GmbH & Co. KG
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Email	info@buerokompetenz.de
Phone No.	(+49) 451589000
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Heinrich B. Schepers Buchdruckerei/ Verkauf
Address	Lange Straße 9, 26169, Friesoythe, Germany
Email	druckerei@hbschepers.de
Phone No.	(+49) 449192740
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Heinrich Buschmann GmbH & Co. KG
Address	Drubbel 17/18, 48143, Münster, Germany
Email	post@buschmann.de
Phone No.	(+49) 251285050
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Helmers & Peters GmbH
Address	Am Emsdeich 17, 26789, Leer, Germany
Email	info@helmers-peters.de
Phone No.	(+49) 491999490
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Henryk Walther PAPIER- & DRUCK-CENTER GmbH & Co. KG
Address	Katharinenstraße 14 / 16, 17033, Neubrandenburg, Germany
Email	info@walther-druck.de
Phone No.	(+49) 395560040
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Herberger Bürocenter GmbH
Address	Bruchsaler Straße 18, 68753, Waghäusel, Germany
Email	info@herberger-buerocenter.de
Phone No.	(+49) 72545020
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Hermann Jürgensen GmbH
Address	Mörkenstraße 11, 22767, Hamburg, Germany
Email	verkauf@hermann-juergensen.de
Phone No.	(+49) 403068870
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	HK-Ribbon Inh. Heinz Kindlein
Address	Celler Str. 66-69, 38114, Braunschweig, Germany
Email	shop@hkribbon.de
Phone No.	(+49) 531885010
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	HMS Vertriebs GmbH
Address	Oberer Schwärzbach 4, 78333, Stockach, Germany
Email	info@hms-vertrieb.de
Phone No.	(+49) 7771914444
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	HOFMANN & WÖLFEL BÜROORGANISATION GMBH
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Email	info@derbueromarkt.de
Phone No.	(+49) 374155880
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Horn & Görwitz GmbH & Co. KG
Address	Kaiserin-Augusta-Allee 14, 10553, Berlin, Germany
Email	info@horn-goerwitz.de
Phone No.	(+49) 30349840
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Horn Druck & Verlag KG
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Email	info@horn-druck.de
Phone No.	(+49) 72539875500
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Business Inquiries

Company Name	HORN GmbH Niederlassung Bayern
Address	Ennemoserstraße 4, 83700, Rottach-Egern, Germany
Email	bayern@horn-gmbh.com
Phone No.	(+49) 80226622092
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	HORN GmbH Niederlassung Sachsen
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Email	raden@horn-gmbh.com
Phone No.	(+49) 3526361007
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	HORN GmbH Niederlassung Thüringen
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Email	heideland@horn-gmbh.com
Phone No.	(+49) 3669154160
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Iden Großhandelshaus Berlin e. K.
Address	Wilhelm-Kabus-Straße 75, 10829, Berlin, Germany
Email	denleipzig@idena.de
Phone No.	(+49) 305470700
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	Industrie- und Werbedruck Tausch
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Email	werbedruck-tausch@t-online.de
Phone No.	(+49) 6209797517
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	INNOVA PRÄSENTE ® KG
Address	Gewerbestraße 14, 79227, Schallstadt, Germany
Email	info@innova-praesente.de
Phone No.	(+49) 766440250
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	IQM TOOLS GmbH Innovative Qualitätsmanagement-Tools
Address	Großes Tal 6, 78086, Brigachtal, Germany
Email	info@iqmtools.de
Phone No.	(+49) 772128305
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

Company Name	ISL - Industriehandel & Service GmbH
Address	Am Airpark 4, 06217, Merseburg, Germany
Email	shop@industriehandel.de
Phone No.	(+49) 3461521521
Product Enquiry	Writings instruments
Others	Trade lead received from Embassy of India in Berlin, Germany.

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