



Increasing Export of Technical Textile

Why in News

Recently, the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry targeted a five times increase in the export of **Technical Textiles in three years**, from the current **USD 2 billion to USD 10 billion**.

Key Points

▪ Technical Textiles:

- Technical textiles are **functional fabrics that have applications across various industries** including automobiles, civil engineering and construction, agriculture, healthcare, industrial safety, personal protection etc.
 - Technical Textile products **derive their demand from development and industrialization in a country.**
- Based on usage, there are **12 technical textile segments**; Agrotech, Meditech, Buildtech, Mobiltech, Clothtech, Oekotech, Geotech, Packtech, Hometech, Protech, Indutech and Sportech.
 - **For example**, 'mobiltech' refers to products in vehicles such as seat belts and airbags, airplane seats; geotech, which is incidentally the fastest growing sub-segment, used to hold back soil, etc.

Conventional Textiles	Technical Textiles
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manufactured primarily for aesthetic or decorative purpose• Fiber (natural or synthetic) is usually first Spun into Yarn and then Yarn is Woven / Knit into Fabric	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manufactured primarily for performance or function rather than aesthetics• May be both woven and non woven, and is made out of primarily synthetic and some natural fibers

▪ Scenario of Technical Textile:

- The growth of technical textiles in India has gained momentum in the past five years, **currently growing at an 8 % per annum rate.**
 - It is aimed to hasten this growth to 15-20 % range during the next five years.

- The current world market is USD 250 billion (Rs 18 lakh crore) and **India's share in it is USD 19 billion.**
- India is an aspiring player with **USD 40 billion in this market (8 % Share).**
- The biggest players are the USA, western Europe, China and Japan (20-40% share).

▪ **Challenges:**

◦ **Lack of Awareness:**

- Benefits of technical textiles are still unknown to the larger masses of the country.

◦ **Development of Skilled Workforce:**

- Technical textiles **require different and high levels of skill sets** from workers which is currently absent in the domestic industry.

◦ **Lack of Research & Development:**

- One of the key issues that the Indian technical textiles industry is facing is the **lack of product diversification.**

◦ **Imports of Technical Textiles:**

- India **imports a significant amount of technical textiles consisting of cheap products from China** and hi-tech products from US & Europe. This signifies that the Indian technical textiles **industry is lacking scale and the capacities to manufacture high-tech products.**

▪ **Opportunities:**

◦ **Growth in manufacturing sector:**

- Technical textile primarily finds usage in various manufacturing industries such as **automobile, construction, aviation, etc.**

- Manufacturing sector has been **a pillar of growth for the Indian economy with many such industries registering double digit growth** over the last decade.
- Automobile sector is expected to grow at 12% rate over the next decade to reach an estimated production of 75 million vehicles in 2025.

◦ **Rising Importance of Healthcare & Hygiene:**

- With the ever-growing danger of pollution and diseases in the country, people are gradually shifting towards more hygienic and healthy ways of living which involves using **products like wipes, face masks, diapers, dental floss, earbuds, sanitary napkins etc.**

- All these products consume various technical textile items in different forms.

◦ **Increasing focus on Sports:**

- Sporting equipment, artificial turfs and composites, sportswear and activewear, sports footwear etc., all of these items consume technical textiles.

- This **growing fitness and sports phenomena** presents a big opportunity for technical textiles.

◦ **Increased spending on defence and security:**

- Government's **increasing focus on defence and security** has led to an increasing demand for technical textile equipment such as bullet proof jackets, high altitude clothing, gloves, shoes etc.

▪ **Initiatives Related to Technical Textile:**

- **National Technical Textile Mission:**

- It was launched with a total outlay of USD 194 Mn in February 2020 with a view to position the country as a global leader in technical textiles.

- **Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Textiles Sector:**

- It aims to promote the production of high value Man-Made Fibre (MMF) fabrics, garments and technical textiles.

- **Harmonized System of Nomenclature (HSN) Codes for Technical Textile:**

- In 2019, Government of India dedicated **207 HSN codes to technical textiles** to help in monitoring the data of import and export, in providing financial support and other incentives to manufacturers.

- **100% FDI under Automatic Route:**

- The Government of India allows 100% **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** under automatic route. International technical textile manufacturers such as Ahlstrom, Johnson & Johnson etc have already initiated operations in India.

- **Technotex India:**

- It is a flagship event organised by the Ministry of Textiles, in collaboration with **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)** and comprises **exhibitions, conferences and seminars with participation of stakeholders from across the global** technical textile value chain.

- **Amended Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme:**

- Objective is **to improve exports and indirectly promote investments in textile machinery.**
- Under **ATUFS**, technology upgradation and CIS are offered to entities that are engaged in manufacturing textile and technical textile products under the guidance of TAMC (Technical Advisory Monitoring Committee).

Way Forward

- The government and the industry need to **build a solid infrastructure to educate people about technical textiles**. This can be done by incorporating basic information about technical textiles in schools and colleges, conducting awareness programs such as roadshows and seminars, promotion through digital and social media etc.
- The government can **modify their manpower development schemes to align with the requirements of the technical textiles** industry.
- Young and aspiring entrepreneurs must take this opportunity and invest in **research and development of technical textiles** and reap its benefits in the coming years.

Source: TH