



**COTTON
ASSOCIATION
OF INDIA**

Established 1921

ISO 9001:2015



News Relating to
**Cotton and
Textile Sector**

Date-21-10-2026

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Standard Descriptions with Basic Grade & Staple in Millimetres based on Upper Half Mean Length As per CAI By-laws								Rs. per Quintal	Rs. per Candy	Variation + (Plus) - (Minus)	Rs. per Quintal	Rs. per Candy	Variation + (Plus) - (Minus)
Sr. No.	Growth	Grade Standard	Grade	Staple	Micronaire	Gravimetric Trash %	Strength / GPT	2026-27	2026-27		2025-26	2025-26	
1	P/H/R	ICS-101	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0 – 7.0	4%	15	15297	54400	(N.C.)	N.A.	N.A.	
2	GUJ	ICS-102	Fine	22mm	4.0 – 6.0	15%	20	N.A.	N.A.		13779	49000	(N.C.)
3	P / H / R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	4%	26	18137	64500	(-700)	N.A.	N.A.	
4	M/M(P) /SA/TL/GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.0 – 3.4	4%	25	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
5	M/M(P)/SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	3.5%	26	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
6	P/ H/R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5 – 4.9	4%	27	18250	64900	(-700)	N.A.	N.A.	
7	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	27	N.A.	N.A.		18531	65900	(+700)
8	SA/TL/K	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	27	N.A.	N.A.		18362	65300	(+100)
9	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	27	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
10	R(L)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	4.0%	27	18278	65000	(-500)	N.A.	N.A.	
11	R(L)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	28	19093	67900	(-500)	N.A.	N.A.	
12	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	28	19122	68000	(N.C.)	18981	67500	(N.C.)
13	SA/TL/K	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	28	19009	67600	(N.C.)	18419	65500	(N.C.)
14	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	28	19206	68300	(N.C.)	N.A.	N.A.	
15	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	29	19346	68800	(+300)	N.A.	N.A.	
16	SA/TL/K/O	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	29	19150	68100	(-100)	N.A.	N.A.	
17	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	30	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
18	SA/TL/K/TN/O	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	30	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
19	SA/TL/K/TN/O	ICS-106	Fine	32mm	3.5 – 4.9	3%	31	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
20	M/M(P)	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	2.8 - 3.7	4%	33	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
21	K/TN	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	2.8 - 3.7	3.5%	34	26714	95000	(N.C.)	N.A.	N.A.	
22	M/M(P)	ICS-107	Fine	35mm	2.8 - 3.7	4%	35	N.A.	N.A.		N.A.	N.A.	
23	K/TN	ICS-107	Fine	35mm	2.8 - 3.7	3.5%	35	26995	96000	(N.C.)	N.A.	N.A.	
Note:1	Official spot rates are fixed and registered by CAI on the basis of average price inclusive of spot brokerage as per respective State Dharas, and for 15 days credit from the date of passing and cash discount @ 15% per annum, except for Northern area (excluding Lower Rajasthan), in which case spot rates fixed and registered are for payment terms: 7 days from the date of pressing at Upcountry Spot Markets ex-gin, excluding Tax. These rates are for domestic transaction only							Secretary					
2	P/H/R(U) ICS-202 (SG) rate is lower by Rs. 1000/ pc than Sr. no. 3												
3	Strength:Grams per tex (HVI Mode) (Prorate basis) a) 1 gpt pts lower Rs 500/pc b) 2 gpt pts lower Rs 1,000/pc c) 3 gpt pts lower Rs 2,000/pc d) 4 gpt pts lower Rs 3,000/pc												
4	Staple length : Upper Half Mean Length												
5	Gravimetric Trash Percentage												
6	Moisture by probe method maximum 9%												
7	Base Grade 'Fine' of bulk of the cotton of the staple length range of 29mm to (i) Colour grade 31/3 (ii) RD 75												
8	In Rates acceptable up to a maximum 5.50 Micronaire with proportionate discount @ Rs.150/- per point per candy over 4.9 Micronaire												
9	For M/M(P)/SA/TL/GUJ-Sr No. 4 are for 67 Rd												
10	For Northern Zone (P/H/R(U)-Sr. Nos. 3 and 6 are for 70 Rd												
11	For M/M(P)/SA/TL-Sr Nos. 5, 7, 8, and GUJ-Sr No.9 are for 74 Rd												
12	For R(L)-Sr. No. 10 is for 72 Rd and 11 is for 73 Rd												
13	For M/M(P) and K/TN-Sr Nos. 20 to 23 are for 70-72 Rd												

ICE Cotton Futures: 20-10-2026

ICE COTTON CLOSE						20 Oct 2026
CONTRACT MONTH	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETTLE	CHANGE	Op. Int.
Cotton (CT) - Quote: Cents/Pound - Contract Size: 50,000 Pounds.						
Dec-26	80.13	81.24	79.91	80.88	▲0.75	1,66,189
Mar-27	83.50	84.52	83.26	84.18	▲0.75	1,01,402
May-27	85.17	86.18	84.91	85.86	▲0.77	60,703
Jul-27	85.46	86.64	85.41	86.32	▲0.76	35,459
Oct-27	80.08	80.24	80.08	80.09	▲0.74	26
Dec-27	79.04	79.59	78.96	79.37	▲0.29	33,174
Mar-28	80.00	80.00	79.99	79.99	▲0.34	2,452

Cotlook Index: 20-10-2026

91.15 (+0.20)

SKAAT to Spotlight Advanced Automation Solutions at India ITME 2026

Wednesday, 21st Oct 2026, by Mohan Raj, (Source: www.apparelvibes.com)

As textile mills look for ways to improve productivity, maintain quality and control costs, automation and modernization are becoming increasingly important. Coimbatore-based SKAAT Group is addressing these needs with its range of innovative retrofit solutions and digital technologies. The company is set to showcase its latest products and upgraded solutions at India ITME 2026.

In an exclusive interaction, Shruthi, Director of SKAAT Group, shared her views on the current textile industry scenario, the company's latest innovations and its plans for the future.

Supporting Mills Improve Productivity



Assessing the current business environment, Shruthi said textile manufacturers were adopting a cautious approach to investments due to fluctuations in material prices and uneven market demand. Instead of expanding capacity, many mills are focusing on modernizing their existing machinery to improve productivity and quality.

“The environment is cautious, but far from stagnant. Mills are becoming more selective about where they invest. Both in India and globally, we are seeing a shift from capacity addition towards modernizing existing installations. Our strength lies in automation and digital control, which help mills get more out of their existing machines,” she explained.

Shruthi, Director of SKAAT Group

Since 1999, SKAAT has been developing retrofit solutions that improve performance at critical stages of textile production. Its product portfolio includes digital slub systems for producing precise and repeatable slub yarns, injection and color slub attachments, and core-spun systems available in soft-core, dual-core and rigid-core configurations. These solutions help mills explore value-added and technical yarn applications.

The company’s latest linear bale plucker is designed to ensure consistent fiber opening and mixing, while reducing manual handling.

Improving Efficiency and Quality

Explaining how SKAAT’s solutions help manufacturers remain competitive, Shruthi highlighted the role of automation in improving consistency and reducing operational challenges.

“Our digital slub systems enable ring frames to produce more value-added yarns. Digital controls ensure faster changeovers and consistent quality from one lot to another. Similarly, our linear bale plucker automates fiber opening and improves mixing, resulting in better efficiency and more consistent output,” she said.

Sustainability through Retrofitting

SKAAT also sees sustainability as an important advantage of its retrofit solutions. By upgrading existing machines instead of replacing them, mills can extend equipment life and avoid the environmental impact associated with manufacturing new machinery.

“Sustainability is built into our retrofit models. Our systems help ring frames produce value-added products without requiring new equipment. Precise digital control in our slub and core-spun systems also reduces rework and yarn rejection, ensuring better utilization of every kilogram of fiber. Our linear bale plucker improves mixing and helps reduce fiber loss,” Shruthi noted.

She added that these solutions help mills respond to the growing sustainability expectations of global buyers while maintaining commercial viability.

Showcasing Innovations at India ITME 2026

At India ITME 2026, SKAAT will display upgraded versions of its product portfolio, including digital slub attachments, core-spun systems, injection and color slub attachments, and the linear bale plucker. The company will also showcase its expertise in robotics through solutions such as robopacking and autopiecing.

Visitors can meet the SKAAT team at Hall 11, Stall C26, where its technical experts will explain the solutions and discuss how they can address individual mill requirements.

Expanding Access to Digital Technology

Looking ahead, SKAAT aims to make advanced digital control more accessible to a wider range of textile mills.

“Over the next five years, we aim to bring precision digital control not just to larger companies, but also to a wider base of mills. These technologies need to be accessible and affordable if mills are to remain competitive. Our focus will be on continued innovation, efficient service and stronger customer support,” Shruthi concluded.

ICE cotton extends gains as weak dollar, firm crude lend support

Wednesday, 21st Oct 2026, (Source: www.fibre2fashion.com)

Insights

ICE cotton December 2026 futures settled at 80.88 cents per pound, up 0.94 per cent, as a weaker US dollar and stronger crude oil supported export competitiveness and cotton's edge over synthetics.

Gains were capped by expectations of an accelerated US harvest, with USDA reporting 41 per cent picked, ahead of the five-year average.

Volume rose 14 per cent, but trade stayed subdued.

ICE cotton futures extended their gains for the second consecutive session on Tuesday, supported by a weaker US dollar and strength in crude oil prices amid escalating tensions in the Middle East. However, expectations of an accelerated US cotton harvest and subdued trading volumes limited the upside. The benchmark December contract remained within its recent narrow trading range despite closing above the midpoint.

The ICE cotton December 2026 contract settled at 80.88 cents per pound, up 0.75 cent or 0.94 per cent from the previous close of 80.13 cents. The contract gained 88 points over two sessions, while other contracts closed 8–77 points higher.



The December contract remained confined to its 11-session trading range of 79.23–82.25 cents, with a midpoint of 80.74 cents. Tuesday's settlement was 14 points above this level, indicating a modest improvement in buying sentiment. However, the contract continued to face resistance around 80.86–81.00 cents.

Trading volume increased to 38,788 contracts from 34,047 contracts in the previous session, a rise of approximately 14 per cent. Nevertheless, overall trading activity remained relatively subdued. The latest open interest and certified stock figures were unavailable. Previously

reported open interest had reached a record 398,469 contracts, while certified stocks stood at 15,129 bales.

The US dollar weakened against major currencies as declines in crude oil prices during parts of the session and in longer-dated US Treasury yields weighed on the currency. Market participants also assessed escalating US-Iran tensions and uncertainty surrounding sustained investment flows into US artificial intelligence stocks. A weaker dollar made US cotton more affordable for overseas buyers, supporting export competitiveness.

Crude oil prices experienced considerable intraday volatility following developments in the Middle East, with Brent crude reaching a fresh five-month high. Higher crude oil prices generally increase polyester production costs, potentially improving cotton's competitiveness against synthetic fibres.

However, market analysts said that expectations of an accelerated US cotton harvest during the week had restricted the market's upward movement. Increased arrivals of newly harvested cotton were expected to maintain pressure on nearby prices.

According to the USDA's crop progress report for the week ending October 18, the proportion of US cotton rated good to excellent improved marginally to 35 per cent from 34 per cent in the previous week. Cotton harvesting reached 41 per cent, ahead of the five-year average of 37 per cent, indicating relatively rapid crop movement into the supply chain.

Market sentiment remained cautiously positive as the weaker dollar, crude oil strength and two consecutive sessions of gains supported cotton futures. However, harvesting progress, limited trading participation and persistent sideways movement continued to constrain the market.

Traders are now monitoring whether the December contract can sustain a close above the 80.86–81.00-cent resistance zone, which could open the way towards 82.00 cents and the recent high of

82.25 cents. Immediate support is seen at 79.80–80.00 cents, followed by 79.23 cents and the 79.00–79.20-cent area. The recent major low of 77.05 cents remains a deeper support level.

The near-term direction will depend on movements in the US dollar and crude oil, developments in the Middle East, the pace of the US harvest and traders' positioning ahead of the December contract's first notice day on November 23. Indian textile mills are also expected to monitor import costs and price competitiveness against Brazilian cotton before making fresh procurement decisions.

This morning (Indian Standard Time), December 2026 cotton was traded at 80.79 cents per pound (down 0.09 cent). Cash cotton was traded at 7,863 cents (up 0.75 cent), while the March 2027 contract traded at 83.13 cents (down 0.05 cent). The May 2027 contract traded at 85.80 cents (down 0.06 cent), the July 2027 contract at 86.27 cents (down 0.05 cent), and the October 2027 contract at 80.09 cents (unchanged). A few contracts remained at their previous closing levels, with no trading recorded so far today.

Maharashtra Cotton Crop Hit by Drought, Yields May Fall Sharply

Sunday, 20th Oct 2026,, Yash Chouhan, (Source: www.smartinfoindia.com)

Cotton Crop Affected by Lack of Rain in Maharashtra; Significant Drop in Yield Expected



Reports indicate that the cotton crop in several cotton-growing regions of Maharashtra—specifically in Marathwada and Vidarbha—has been adversely affected by a lack of rainfall and high temperatures. Insufficient soil moisture has hindered the growth of cotton plants. In many areas, there are reports of cotton bolls bursting prematurely. Consequently, farmers fear a decline in production and significant financial losses.

Crop Growth Stunted by Lack of Rainfall

According to available information, some cotton-growing regions did not receive adequate rainfall for an extended period during August and September. This led to a depletion of soil moisture, which impaired the development of cotton bolls. Amidst high temperatures in October, there are reports that cotton harvesting has begun earlier than usual in some areas.

Farmers state that the lack of water has caused cotton plants in many fields to wither. This raises concerns that the upcoming harvest will result in lower yields.

Significant Decline in Yield Per Acre Expected

Narayan Atole, a farmer from Ambhora Jahagir village in the Mantha taluka of Jalna district (Marathwada), noted that in a typical year, his fields would produce eight to nine quintals of cotton per acre. However, due to the lack of rain this year, the yield is expected to be only two to three quintals per acre.

Meanwhile, farmers in other affected regions have reported a yield of one to one-and-a-half quintals of cotton per acre during the first round of harvesting. It should be noted, however, that the quantity obtained in the first round does not necessarily reflect the total yield for the entire season.

Difficulty in Recovering Cultivation Costs

The prospect of reduced cotton production has heightened the financial concerns of farmers. Having already invested in seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, spraying, and labor, farmers may find it difficult to even recover their cultivation costs, given the lower-than-expected yields. The affected farmers have demanded that the state government conduct a survey of the fields, carry out a proper assessment of crop losses, and provide financial assistance to eligible farmers at the earliest.

Kadi Cotton Auctions Open on Dussehra

Sunday, 20th Oct 2026,, Yash Chouhan, (Source: www.smartinfoindia.com)



Gujarat: Cotton Auction Begins at Kadi Cotton Market Yard on Dussehra; Over 800 Maunds Arrive on Day One

Kadi (Gujarat): On the occasion of Dussehra, the new cotton season's trading and auctioning commenced at the Sardar Patel Cotton Market Yard in Kadi, Gujarat. On the very first day of the season, an arrival of over 800 maunds of cotton was recorded at the market yard. During

the auction, prices ranged from ₹700 to ₹1,933 per maund, depending on the quality of the cotton.

Farmers Arrive with Cotton from Surrounding Regions

With the start of the new season, farmers from Kadi and surrounding areas—including Viramgam, Detroj, Patdi, Sanand, Surendranagar, Patan, and Becharaji—arrived at the market yard with their cotton produce. The commencement of the auction generated significant enthusiasm among both farmers and traders.

Prices varied based on the quality of the cotton. Higher-quality produce fetched better prices, fostering a positive atmosphere in the market.

APMC Officials Present at the Auction Launch

The inaugural event was attended by APMC Chairman Govind Patel, Vice-Chairman Himanshu Khamar, Secretary Kamlesh Trivedi, and several other directors. Local ginning mill operators and cotton traders also participated in the proceedings.

Cotton Arrivals Expected to Increase by Diwali

The start of cotton trading at the Kadi Market Yard is expected to boost business activity within local ginning and oil mill industries. It is anticipated that cotton arrivals will accelerate in the coming days, with operations at local mills expected to ramp up by Diwali.

Kadi is one of the major cotton trading hubs in Gujarat. In addition to cotton from within Gujarat, the market also receives supplies from Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. During the peak season, it is reported that over 400 vehicles arrive at the yard daily. The start of the new season has brought enthusiasm among farmers, traders, and those associated with the ginning industry. However, cotton prices in the coming days will depend on market demand, quality, and the volume of arrivals.

Government to Stay Live on Mobile: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan Launches New Portal for Farmers

Monday, 19th Oct 2026, (Source: www.pib.gov.in)

Farmers to Access All Agricultural Schemes on Their Mobile Phones: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Farmers to Get Direct Access to Government Assistance Without Visiting Offices: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Single Portal for All Ministry Services to Empower Farmers Digitally: Union Agriculture Minister

Advancing Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of Digital India and his commitment to farmers' welfare, Union Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan today formally launched the upgraded Agri Welfare Portal. The portal aims to provide farmers across the country with direct, easy access to government schemes, financial assistance and reliable agricultural information on their mobile phones, eliminating procedural hurdles and the role of intermediaries.

Addressing the launch programme, Shri Chouhan said Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's clear vision is to ensure that the government remains accessible to citizens and farmers at all times through their mobile phones. Technology, he said, could fulfil its true purpose only when it reached farms and rural communities and made farmers' lives easier. With the upgraded portal, farmers will no longer need to visit multiple government offices or navigate different websites to obtain information about



schemes or submit applications. The platform will also bring together Farmer Producer Organisations, Primary Agricultural Credit Societies, agricultural scientists, researchers and startups, creating a common digital platform for the wider agricultural ecosystem. Emphasising the importance of reliable information, Shri Chouhan directed officials to ensure that the portal remained accurate and regularly updated. He said outdated or incomplete information could

undermine public trust in the system, making continuous updates essential to its success. He also stressed that the language and processes must be simple enough for small and marginal farmers, including those with limited formal education, to understand and use the platform with ease. To help farmers make effective use of the portal and other digital tools, a special training campaign will be conducted through Krishi Vigyan Kendras across the country.



Shri Chouhan also commended the entire technical team for developing the upgraded portal within the stipulated time. Developed in compliance with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's Digital Brand Identity Manual 3.0 and Guidelines for Indian Government Websites 3.0, the portal is designed to offer a secure, mobile-friendly and accessible digital experience, including for persons with disabilities. The platform will serve as a single-window gateway to major government initiatives, including PM-

KISAN, AgriStack and the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, making it easier for farmers to access relevant services and information through a common interface. Union Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Secretary Shri Atish Chandra, Additional Secretary Pramod Meherda, senior officials from the Digital Agriculture Division and other officials from the Ministry and the National Informatics Centre were present at the launch.

Key Benefits of the Agri Welfare Portal



All services in one place: Information on the Ministry's schemes, subsidies, rules and digital services will be available on a single portal, reducing the time and effort farmers spend navigating multiple platforms.

Greater transparency and fewer intermediaries: Online eligibility checks, direct application facilities and the transfer of financial assistance through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) will make processes more transparent and reduce the role of intermediaries.

Designed for rural connectivity: Built with rural users in mind, the portal is lightweight and user-friendly, enabling smooth operation on basic smartphones and in areas with weak internet connectivity.

Timely and reliable agricultural information: Farmers will be able to access authentic information on weather conditions, scientific farming practices, the availability of seeds and fertilisers, and prevailing market prices for agricultural produce.

Accessible to persons with disabilities: Designed in line with modern government accessibility standards, the portal supports screen readers and simple navigation, enabling visually impaired users and other persons with disabilities to access its services more easily.

SITRA and TTRI Sign MoU to Strengthen Textile Research and Sustainability

Wednesday, 21st Oct 2026, (Source: www.textilevaluechain.in)

India-Taiwan collaboration will focus on advanced fibres, medical textiles, sustainable processing, technical textiles and joint research initiatives.

The South India Textile Research Association (SITRA) and the Taiwan Textile Research Institute (TTRI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to advance research and technical cooperation in textile innovation and technology development. The agreement was signed on October 6, 2026, during the Taipei Innovative Textile Application Show (TITAS) 2026, held in Taiwan from October 6 to 8.

Mr. G. Raj Kumar, Vice Chairman of SITRA, signed the MoU on behalf of the Indian research organisation, while **Mr. Chiu Sheng-fu, Vice President of TTRI**, represented the Taiwanese institute. Industry leaders from the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) attended the signing ceremony.

Focus on Advanced Fibres and Technical Textiles

The partnership will focus on developing man-made fibres for speciality applications, medical textiles and sustainable solutions for textile processing.

SITRA will contribute its expertise in textile research, testing, consultancy, training and industry support. TTRI will bring its capabilities in advanced textile technologies, applied research and innovation.

The agreement aims to strengthen cooperation through capacity building, collaborative research and development, testing, and technology development.

Training, Research and Knowledge Exchange

Planned activities under the MoU include training programmes, expert lectures, workshops, researcher interactions, industrial visits and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

The two organisations will also explore collaboration in several emerging and established areas, including:

Sustainable textile processing and resource-efficient manufacturing

Functional and technical textiles

Advanced fibre development

Textile recycling and circularity

Digitalisation and automation

These areas are intended to support research collaboration and the development of technologies relevant to the textile industry.

Cooperation in Testing and Standards

Testing and standards will form another part of the partnership. Cooperation in this area will cover quality assurance, laboratory practices, method validation, proficiency comparisons and alignment with international requirements.

The initiative aims to support the development of textile products that meet requirements for safety, durability, sustainability and global compliance.

Strengthening India–Taiwan Textile Cooperation

The MoU establishes a framework for closer collaboration between SITRA and TTRI in textile research and technology development. Through joint research initiatives and knowledge exchange, the organisations aim to strengthen technical capabilities and support the development of innovative and sustainable textile technologies for the benefit of both industries.



**COTTON
ASSOCIATION
OF INDIA**

Established 1921

ISO 9001:2015

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Farming, the natural way

The way ahead for Gujarat's natural farming

C Shambu Prasad
PVS Suryakumar

Over two decades, Gujarat's agriculture has grown at around 9 per cent a year, more than double the national average, making the State a leader in groundnut, castor, cumin, fennel and cotton, and in dairy through Amul.

Yet, this rests on increasingly stressed natural resources. Water use exceeds irrigation plan limits by 21 per cent, northern districts face groundwater over-extraction, and about half the State's land is undergoing desertification.

Recognising this, Gujarat adopted an Organic Farming Policy in 2015 and set up India's first organic agriculture university in 2017, since renamed the Gujarat Natural Farming Science University.

Gujarat now pursues Natural Farming (NF) through mass-mobilisation rather than certification alone, backed by a ₹392-crore budget for 2026-27, and policy instruments like Gujarat Prakrutik Krushi Vikas Board (GPKVB) and the Desi Gau Sahay Yojana to promote indigenous cows. Under the National Mission on Natural Farming 1.51 lakh farmers have been enrolled on 61,919 hectares in 1,376 clusters by August 2026.

The spread of NF is estimated at 5.64 lakh farmers across 2 lakh hectares. But the count measure reach, not outcomes. There is no working definition of a 'natural farming farmer' and to measure the depth of practice. There are a few independent assessments on NF adoption, but small and dated: a 2022 survey of 288 farmers in 102 villages found 47 per cent buy bio-fertilizers and 29 per cent are still using chemical pesticides, but most of them are counted as adopters. Have all farmers completely transitioned and how inclusive is the transition? Tenants, who cultivate close to half the State's cultivated area, remain outside most schemes, as do landless livestock keepers. The Desi Gau Sahay Yojana, which depends on cow ownership and a land record, leaves them out.

In Dang, India's first declared chemical-free district, the all-women Dang Adiwasi Khedut Producer Company now has over 2,000 shareholders across 130 villages.

SOME SUGGESTIONS

The question is how Gujarat can build on this pioneering legacy. Drawing from insights from a recent policy brief by the National



TWEAKING. Gujarat's natural farming policy VIJAY SONEJI

Coalition for Natural Farming, we suggest the following.

First, treat the transition as a five-to-eight-year journey. It cannot rest on one scheme; it needs sustained government financial commitment and season-long, repeated handholding rather than one-off training.

Second, institutionalise women's extension cadres (Krishi Sakhis and women master farmers), by giving them defined roles within ATMA.

Third, consider positioning Bio-Input Resource Centres and FPOs as frontline extension hubs.

Fourth, adopt SHG-backed models to include tenant farmers.

Fifth, connect fields to market by channelling NF produce into anganwadis and mid-day meals.

Sixth, institutionalise paired-plot trials on farmers' fields to track soil carbon, water use and income and also incentivise farmers with carbon credits and extra income.

Seventh, treat enrolment as an input and five seasons of sustained practice as the outcome. Training numbers matter less than maturity of practice.

Eighth, while going wide, Gujarat must go deep. It could build a few reference landscapes, small enough to manage and large enough to show a whole system working. These would let government perfect the administrative mechanisms for transition and serve as lighthouses where farmers can see, feel and believe, and learn NF.

Finally, finance has a role in the transition. These landscapes require the usual agriculture credit for individual farmers and also patient capital for the transition namely: extension, community institutions, aggregation, market systems and data. With GIFT City in its midst, the State must scout for green capital which would enable this transition.

Prasad is Professor at IRMA-TSU, Anand; Suryakumar is former Deputy Managing Director, Nabard

Rupee, and the price of dodging a century

Improving ease of doing business and speedy decision-making by the govt will help the rupee find its right level

NS Vageesh

The Indian rupee, currently trading at 94.81 to the dollar, was Asia's worst-performing currency till a week ago, declining 7 per cent over the past nine months (following a 5 per cent decline over calendar 2025), before a spate of RBI measures helped the currency recover a bit. In May this year, the rupee had touched 96.71 to the dollar, flirting dangerously close to the psychological 100 to a dollar mark.

JUST ANOTHER NUMBER?

The sceptical reader would be right to wonder: what is the worst that would have happened if the currency had crossed 100? Nothing terrible, really. 101 or 103 is just another number. But it would have been a bit embarrassing for a country claiming to be the fastest-growing large economy and wanting to flex muscles in the global arena. A currency number that's substantially market determined has the uncomfortable ring of final diagnosis of an economy's performance and its relative standing vis-a-vis other peer economies.

THE SACROSANCT 100

Fearing a breach of that sacred level, an uneasy government got the RBI to invite more dollars to India through the FCNR(B) deposits scheme in June this year and defray the currency depreciation risks faced by banks. The RBI duly mopped up \$133 billion, and that temporarily stemmed the decline of the rupee.

The pressure on the rupee has come from a variety of factors, including global uncertainty, crude oil price hikes and fast-exiting foreign institutional investors (FIIs). In the 10 months of the calendar year so far, net FII outflows have been at \$32.8 billion. In 2025, net FII outflows were at \$16 billion.

The RBI has certainly tried all usual measures to defend the rupee. It sold plenty of dollars in the market over the past two years. Net dollars sold (sales of dollars less purchases of dollars) in the spot market was \$53 billion last fiscal (FY26) after net sales of \$35 billion in FY25.

In the first two months of this fiscal, the RBI sold \$15 billion. Last week, the RBI raised interest rates (repo rates) by 0.25 percentage points to 5.50 per cent after nearly two years. They have tightened controls on importers'



PRESSURE. Comes from a variety of factors for the currency

payments and forex derivative contracts, and opened a special window for oil-importing companies, which create the bulk of demand for dollars on a daily basis, given that India imports 90 per cent of its fuel requirements. Last week, RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra also suggested that the rupee was undervalued.

The list of measures, while necessary, are insufficient and palliative at best. The real issues that need to be addressed are attracting FII inflows again and

retaining them. FII money is exiting India as capital gets reallocated to newer sectors (AI/semiconductors/data centres), as well as due to higher interest rates in the US. Some are leaving after encashing handsome gains.

STABLE CURRENCY

A more stable currency in the immediate future is, however, contingent on sorting out some issues. Most critical would be taxation of FIIs. They pay both capital gains tax and securities transaction tax in India, which eat into their gains when compared to investments in other peer economies where the rates are zero.

In addition, FIIs also have to factor an average annual decline of 4 per cent in the Indian currency value over the long term, which makes us relatively uncompetitive. The Finance Minister has hinted at a possible re-look at the rates for long-term capital gains for FIIs and that would be a welcome move.

Improving ease of doing business, along with speedy decision-making by the government in tandem with an attractive tax regime, will help the rupee find the right level when the sentiment turns positive once again.

The writer is a former journalist

IMD forecasts isolated very heavy rain in Tamil Nadu, Puducherry for two more days

Vinson Kurian

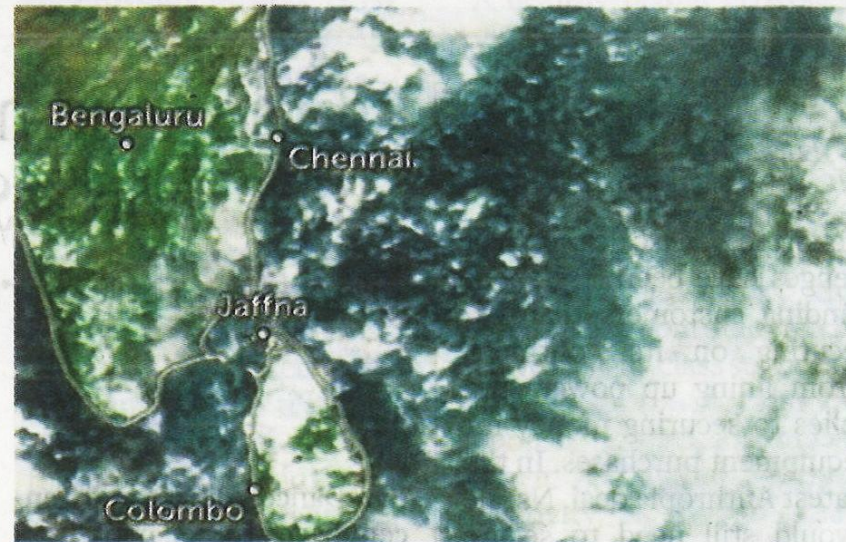
Thiruvananthapuram

Isolated very heavy rainfall is forecast over Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal on Wednesday and Thursday, as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) watches the possible formation of two low-pressure areas at opposite ends of the Bay of Bengal, one of which could likely intensify into a tropical cyclone.

The first 'low' is expected to form over the south-west Bay and the adjoining Tamil Nadu coast on Wednesday, as a cyclonic circulation descends to the lower atmospheric levels.

ANDAMAN SEA SYSTEM

The European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF) earlier suggested that the system could instead form over the



RAIN ALERT. Heavy cloud banks developed off the south Andhra Pradesh coast, south-east Tamil Nadu and southern parts of the Bay of Bengal

south-east Arabian Sea. The second system is expected to emerge from an incoming circulation over the Gulf of Thailand and adjoining parts of Thailand and Myanmar.

Moving into the north Andaman Sea by Wednesday, it is forecast to travel west-north-west and form a 'low' over the south-east and ad-

joining east-central Bay by Friday. It could then turn north-westwards towards the Andhra Pradesh coast and intensify further.

The IMD's numerical projections indicate the possibility of its rapid intensification over the warm waters into a tropical cyclone, although it is yet to take an of-

ficial call. Global model forecasts, including those of the ECMWF, broadly support this scenario against the backdrop of an active North-East monsoon, a passing helpful Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) wave over the Indian Ocean and a developing positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) phase.

The IMD expects heavy rain to persist across much of the southern peninsula over the coming days. Kerala and Mahe are likely to receive isolated heavy rainfall for six days, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Karaikal for four days from Friday, and south interior Karnataka for four days from Wednesday. Lakshadweep is likely to see heavy rain for five days from Thursday, and coastal Karnataka on Saturday. Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Yanam and Rayalaseema are also forecast to receive heavy rain on Wednesday.

ZF expects India sourcing to grow 10-15% annually

DEEPAK PATEL

New Delhi, 19 October

ZF Friedrichshafen AG (ZF Group) expects its sourcing from India to grow by 10-15 per cent annually over the next three to four years, as Indian suppliers offer lower costs without compromising on quality, Andreas Moser, a member of the board of management at the German automotive components and industrial technology maker, told *Business Standard*.

ZF's sourcing from India has grown by around 20 per cent over the past three years. Moser said buying materials and components from Indian suppliers offers a cost advantage of around 20 per cent, even after accounting for shipping expenses. The company sources everything from steel and metal castings to fully machined components and complete units for its overseas operations.

"Year by year, we will have a growth rate of 10-15 per cent when it comes to sourcing," Moser said, responding to a question about the outlook for sourcing from India over the next three to four years.

Moser put ZF's current annual sourcing from India at around €600 million for its commercial vehicle business, €500-600 million for its passenger vehicle business, and €150 million for industrial technology. These figures represent the annual value of materials and components sourced from India for ZF's overseas businesses.

ZF wants India to play a larger role in its global operations rather than remain primarily a source of relatively inexpensive materials, manufacturing, and engineering services. Moser said the company's Indian teams should increasingly

determine the technologies and products needed by local customers, with the global organisation supporting their development.

"For the time being, our business in India is on a ZF level; it's around €1.2 billion, we have 20,000 people here,

we have 17 production locations here, and we have thousands of engineers," he said.

The company is also developing products specifically for Indian customers instead of simply adapting existing European products. Moser said products designed for European markets can be too expensive for Indian buyers, making it necessary to develop alternatives tailored to local requirements.

He cited the example of a transfer case, a component used in certain four-wheel-drive vehicles. A product developed to meet European requirements costs around €3,000, while the acceptable price point in India is

roughly €1,500.

"You can't manage to bring the cost of an existing product down. You have to develop a new product based on the technical requirements of the local market, develop it here, and source it here," he said.

ZF is working on products, including transmissions for agricultural machinery and axles and transmissions for construction equipment. Its industrial technology business in India generates €300-400 million in annual revenue, excluding wind power, and is expected to grow by 5-10 per cent annually over the next few years, Moser said.

India also plays a major

role in ZF's global wind power business, which generates around €1 billion in annual revenue. Moser said the company's Coimbatore plant accounts for around 60 per cent of its global production of wind turbine transmissions, which transfer power from a turbine's rotor to its generator.

The plant had a production capacity of 12 gigawatt (Gw), with a further investment planned to raise it to 14 Gw, he said. Around 75 per cent of its output is supplied to international markets.

ZF expects its global wind power business to grow by 6-7 per cent annually in revenue terms. Moser said the industry could not sustain the annual growth rates of 10-20 per cent once anticipated, as developing and commissioning new wind farms takes time.

Alongside its growth plans, ZF is facing rising costs and shortages of electronic components. Moser said growing demand from artificial intelligence (AI) data centres, which house computers used to de-

velop and run AI systems, was intensifying competition for electronics. "The printed circuit boards (PCBs), for example, the prices go up from today to tomorrow by 30 per cent. And this is caused by the data AI centres, which are sourcing and paying every price for electronics, for PCBs," he said.

PCBs connect electronic components inside devices, including systems used to control modern vehicles. ZF is also facing shortages of semiconductor chips.

Passing on higher costs to customers is difficult because some contracts were negotiated three to five years ago. Moser said the company was looking for alternative suppliers and materials while negotiating price increases with customers.

Longer shipping times are another constraint. ZF therefore continues to source from multiple countries rather than depend entirely on one market, even as it increases purchases from India.



“YOU CAN’T MANAGE TO BRING THE COST OF AN EXISTING PRODUCT DOWN. YOU HAVE TO DEVELOP A NEW PRODUCT BASED ON THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS OF THE LOCAL MARKET, DEVELOP IT HERE, AND SOURCE IT HERE”

Andreas Moser, Member of the board of management, ZF Friedrichshafen AG

US to give farmers \$8 billion in aid to offset diesel costs

BLOOMBERG

20 October

The Trump administration announced \$8 billion in aid for farmers to help offset rising fuel costs, a major burden for growers during the harvest.

The move is the administration's latest attempt to ease financial burdens on growers — traditionally a strong Republican voting base — ahead of midterm elections. The White House earlier this month also eased limits restricting the use of a tax-exempt variety of diesel.

The Harvest Fuel Relief program will “provide relief during temporary market disruptions

and increased input costs,” the United States (US) Department of Agriculture said in a statement late Monday. The one-time payments will cover a portion of modelled losses for farmers during the 2026 crop year, according to the agency.

US HAD EARLIER EASED LIMITS RESTRICTING THE USE OF A TAX EXEMPT VARIETY OF DIESEL

Diesel prices have surged globally as the US-Iran conflict constrains fuel exports through the Hormuz Strait. Retail prices in the US hit a record at \$6.50 a gallon in September, creating headaches for the president ahead of elections. The upheaval is further delaying a recovery for farmers already struggling with massive global crop inventories and limited demand growth.

Marco Rubio calls India a 'refining superpower'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai/New Delhi, 20 October

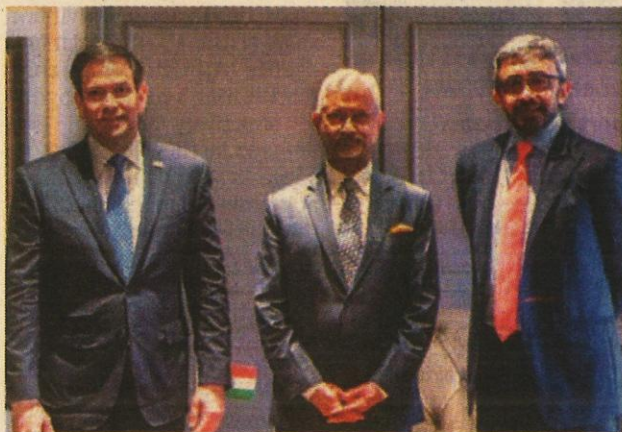
India and the United States (US) on Tuesday looked at expanding energy and defence cooperation amid continuing friction in their ties, with Secretary of State Marco Rubio emphasising that deeper energy trade can play a transformative role in diversifying New Delhi's supply chains.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar hosted Secretary Rubio for wide-ranging talks shortly after the top US diplomat landed in Mumbai on his second trip to the country in five months.

Rubio described India as a refining superpower, adding that the US delegation will discuss with Reliance about producing oil in Venezuela.

Asked what role India can play in meeting the world's energy demand, Rubio, who arrived in Mumbai this afternoon on a three-day India visit, said, "India is a refining superpower. They have the capability to refine heavy crude. They've done so in the past, and I think as more and more Venezuelan oil comes online, it's something they can do." "They also, by the way, have pre-existing oil concessions in Venezuela that can produce more themselves," Rubio told reporters in Mumbai. He said all these are positive things.

"I'm not claiming to you that Venezuela alone can fill the hole that could be caused by some of the things that are happening around the world, but I think over time, it most certainly can, and in the short term, it can certainly help. So, that's one of the things we'll talk about. With India, we've talked about it in the past, and



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar with US Secretary of State Marco Rubio (left) and United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan during a trilateral meeting in Mumbai

PHOTO: @USAMBININDIA/X VIA PTI

they sound ready. They're willing to do it. There might be a few impediments that stand in the way in terms of sanctions and so forth that we'll have to work through," he said. Rubio said the US delegation "will discuss with Reliance about producing oil in Venezuela", claiming that "India made 'substantial progress' in diversifying oil purchases", which is a "smart thing to do".

Jaishankar said on social media that he and Rubio "shared views on further advancement of our ties, focusing on trade, energy, technology, defence, and people-to-people ties".

The US State Department said the secretary and the external affairs minister discussed regional and global issues, including developments in West Asia.

"The secretary reiterated that increased energy trade with the United States can play a transformative role in diversifying India's supply chains while meeting its sizable consumer demand," it

said. "He also commended recent progress in bilateral defence and civil nuclear cooperation, and advocated for the increased purchase of US technologies and systems, which can enhance the security and prosperity of both our countries," the State Department added.

Before his talks with Jaishankar, Rubio visited the Taj memorial and laid a wreath in honour of the victims of the horrific 26/11 Mumbai terror attacks that included six American citizens.

"In Mumbai, Indian External Affairs Minister @DrSJai-shankar and I discussed energy security and defense cooperation while reaffirming the importance of advancing the U.S.-India strategic partnership," Rubio said on X.

The top diplomat also answered questions from the media on the India-US energy ties as well as his trip to Reliance Industries Ltd's refinery in Jamnagar on Wednesday. "In order for energy to become usable, you have to refine it. You have a company

with a massive amount of refining capability. I think I should go talk to them, especially when it involves nation-states," he said.

"We're going to go see a company that has a tremendous amount of refining capability. It makes all the sense in the world to talk to them about it. It's very difficult to understand something or see what the possibilities are if you're not going to speak to them," he noted.

The US Secretary of State also responded to a query on India's procurement of Russian crude oil.

"India has expressed repeatedly its desire to diversify its energy portfolio, which is a smart thing to do. It's not easy to do that from one day to the next," he said.

"I think they've made some substantial progress in that regard, and we're happy to see that. But in the end, it's not just about Russian oil; it's about India's desire to diversify, and we think we can be a source of some of its energy inputs. We have discussed Venezuela and other countries, and I think it's in our interest to have strong allies with diverse energy portfolios," he noted.

It is not immediately known whether the proposed trade deal between India and the US figured in the Rubio-Jaishankar talks. There is an "extraordinary alignment" between India and the US on the core issues that matter even though there can be disagreements on some others, Rubio said. Rubio cited the need to have a "free and open" Indo-Pacific where no nation can claim dominance or ownership on international shipping as among the core issues of alignment.

A DAY BEFORE TWO-DAY INDIA VISIT

Trade Deal 'Very Close' to Finalisation: Rubio

May meet Adani, Tata Sons' Chandrasekaran; talks with Jaishankar, Fadnavis on agenda

Dipanjn Roy Chaudhury

New Delhi: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio will have a brief meeting with Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday before his bilateral meeting with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday.

On Monday Rubio said that the India-US trade deal is close to being finalised. "We're trying to finalise a trade deal with India right now. We're very close to doing that," he said in Samarkand ahead of his India visit.

He also said that the US considers global energy needs before imposing sanctions linked to Russian oil exports. "We've had to waive sanctions over the past few months because of the impact on global supplies

and prices... We have to manage all of these things," he said.

"We're trying to finalise a trade deal with India right now. We're very close to doing that. That's one of the things we take into consideration when the President makes a decision about na-

tional security waivers and things of that nature. Every country has a complex set of factors that it has to take into account. Geography is real. For some countries, it's very difficult to acquire energy from alternative sources. That's not an excuse, but all of that has to be balanced when making foreign policy," Rubio said.

During his stay in Mumbai on Tuesday-Wednesday Rubio is also expected to meet Chairman of the Adani Group Gautam Adani and Tata Sons' chief N Chandrasekaran.

The Tata Group has a major presence in the United States, operating across IT services, automotive, hospitality, chemicals, and consumer goods in over 20 states of the USA.

On Tuesday Jaishankar will join Rubio as the guest of honour at the Freedom 250 reception celebrating the United States' 250th anniversary at the Jio Convention Centre.

On October 21, Rubio will head to Jamnagar for his meeting with Ambani. He may also tour the Vantara.

His visit to Jamnagar includes a visit to Reliance Industries' oil refining complex which is the world's biggest refinery and is among the most advanced ones.

The Tuesday's meeting with Rubio will be his second bilateral meeting with Jaishankar in India this year, following a visit in May, with another meeting scheduled next month on the margins of the G20 foreign ministers' meeting in Atlanta. They also met on the sidelines of UNGA and earlier on the sidelines of India-ASEAN meet.

'WEIGH ALL FACTORS'

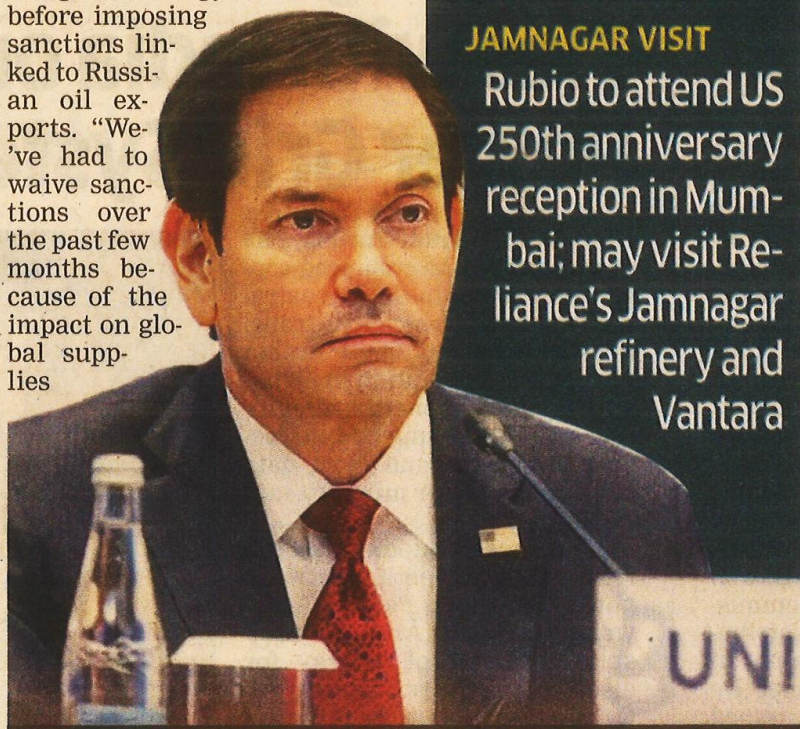


US weighs global

energy supplies and prices while taking decisions on sanctions linked to Russian oil exports

JAMNAGAR VISIT

Rubio to attend US 250th anniversary reception in Mumbai; may visit Reliance's Jamnagar refinery and Vantara



UNITED STATES

India-NZ FTA Comes Into Effect Today

Pact offers Indian exporters duty-free access to New Zealand, bilateral trade likely to double by 2030

Our Bureau

New Delhi: The free trade agreement (FTA) between India and New Zealand will come into effect October 20, with the two sides setting a target of doubling bilateral trade in goods and services to NZ\$7 billion (approximately ₹35,000 crore) by 2030, requiring a compounded annual growth rate (CAGR) of around 18%.

The FTA will provide Indian exporters with 100% duty-free access to the New Zealand market, opening opportunities for MSMEs, women entrepreneurs, farmers and artisans. This is expected to facilitate \$20 billion in investments into India in 15 years that would create opportunities across manufacturing, infrastructure, agriculture, and innovation.

Labour-intensive sectors such as textiles, apparel, leather and footwear are expected to benefit from the elimination of tariffs of up to 10%. Engineering goods, pharmaceuticals, machinery, chemicals and agricultural products are also expected to gain improved market access. The FTA agreement provides calibrated market access for New Zealand's apples, kiwifruit and Manuka honey through tariff-rate quotas, minimum import prices and other safeguards to protect domestic farmers. It also includes agricultural cooperation initiatives focused on improving productivity, technology adoption and supply chains for apples, kiwifruit and honey.

"A successful free trade agreement must be balanced, reciprocal, and mutually beneficial for both the partners. We will start tomorrow on the auspicious occasion of Dussehra, and I think it augurs very well for the future for very ambitious plans that have been drawn up by both sides," said commerce and industry minister Piyush Goyal Monday at the ceremony marking the entry into force of the India-New Zealand FTA, terming the pact a "very important milestone" in the journey of the India-New Zealand partnership.

PACT SHEET

FY26 goods export, import each around

\$500 mn

India has offered tariff concessions on 70.03% of its tariff lines, covering 95% of current bilateral trade value



5,000

Temporary Employment Entry visas every yr for Indian pros

1,000 WORKING HOLIDAY VISAS EVERY YR

30% NZ tariff lines in wool, wood, sheep meat to get immediate duty-free access,

Quotas for 0.06% of NZ tariff lines of honey, apples, kiwifruit, albumins including milk albumin

DUTY-FREE IMPORT OF MALT EXTRACTS, CERTAIN ELECTRICAL & MECHANICAL MACHINERY AMONG 35.6% TARIFF LINES FROM 3-10 YRS

"I do believe there's a lot of strength in this potential relationship between New Zealand and India that is being unlocked today, starting tomorrow," he said. India has excluded dairy products, onions, sugar, chickpeas, peas, corn, almonds and various fats and oils, gems and jewellery, aluminium, copper, arms and ammunition.

As part of the agreement, India and New Zealand will launch an agriculture productivity cooperation

New Zealand Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay said the agreement would create opportunities for exporters across key sectors. "Once fully implemented, 95% of New Zealand's current exports to India will benefit from tariff elimination or substantial tariff reductions, creating new opportunities across many of our key export sectors," he said.

Young Indians traveling to New Zealand for education will now be granted a guaranteed work visa, allowing them to undergo training and work in the country for a specified period. Indian farmers will gain wider market access for fruits, vegetables, spices & other agricultural produce, alongside cooperation to improve productivity, support higher incomes & strengthen livelihoods, Goyal said.

The pact provides for customs clearance within 48 hours for cargo and 24 hours for express and perishable consignments. Digital certification and self-certification of rules of origin for eligible status holders are intended to reduce procedural delays and compliance costs.

Certain products from New Zealand lines are subject to tariff reductions, covering products such as honey, apples, kiwifruit, albumins including milk albumin, wine, pharmaceuticals, polymers and aluminium. "These ties are not only about market access and having more exports to each other," said commerce secretary Rajesh Agrawal, adding that the focus is on building a strong and lasting economic partnership.

As part of the agreement, India and New Zealand will launch an agriculture productivity partnership. The initiative will use New Zealand's expertise in precision agriculture and related technologies to improve India's agricultural ecosystem across several areas. Agrawal said that 60-70% of New Zealand's trade is concentrated in the Asia-Pacific region, where several major economies have stronger trade ties with the country than India.

Tariff Quota Notified for NZ Fruits, Honey

New Delhi: India will allow 35,000 tonnes of imported apples from New Zealand at a concessional duty of 25% in 2027 under the free trade agreement (FTA), compared with the prevailing import duty of 50%, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said Monday.

Kiwifruit imports will qualify for zero customs duty under the tariff rate quota (TRQ), subject to a minimum CIF value of \$1.80 per kg while 40 tonnes of New Zealand-certified Manuka honey under the quota have been permitted for 2026. The annual limit will increase to 200 tonnes from 2027.

"A TRQ authorisation shall be valid only for the quota year in which it is issued, and imports against it shall be permitted only within the quota window. Any unutilised quantity shall lapse on expiry of the authorisation," the DGFT said in a public notice, adding that these provisions will take effect on October 20, 2026.

For apples, there will be no quota in the first year. The annual import window will run from April 1 to August 31. At present, India has a 50% import duty on apples. For kiwifruit, there will be no quota in the first year. The quota will start at 8,000 tonnes in the second year and rise to 9,750 tonnes in the third, 11,500 tonnes in the fourth and 13,250 tonnes in the fifth. As per the notice, the TRQ for albumins, a category of protein products, will be 200 tonnes in the first year, 1,500 tonnes in the second, 2,000 tonnes in the third and 2,500 tonnes in the fourth. — **Our Bureau**

કાપડમાર્કેટમાં તહેવારોની તેજીનો કરંટ : દૈનિક ૩૭૫થી ૩૮૦ ટ્રક માલ રવાના

**ખરીદી નીકળતાં કામકાજમાં
૨૫ ટકાનો વધારો થયો**

અમારા પ્રતિનિધિ તરફથી સુરત, તા. ૨૦ ઓક્ટોબર લાંબા સમય બાદ સુરતના કાપડમાર્કેટમાં તેજીનો કરંટ અનુભવાયો છે. રક્ષાબંધનથી તહેવારોની ખરીદી નીકળતી હોય છે. પરંતુ બહારગામના વેપારીઓ ગાયબ થયા હોવાનું અનુભવાયું હતું. સમગ્ર વર્ષ ધીમા પગલે ચાલેલા કાપડમાર્કેટમાં નવરાત્રીથી તેજીનો માહોલ અનુભવવાનો શરૂ થયો છે. એકંદરે ૨૫ ટકા કામકાજમાં સુધારો થતાં સુરતથી દૈનિક ૩૭૫ થી ૩૮૦ ટ્રક માલસામાન બહારગામ જવા લાગ્યો છે.

સુરતના હોલસેલ

કાપડમાર્કેટમાં રક્ષાબંધનથી શરૂ થતી તેજી છેક દિવાળી બાદ લગ્નસરા સુધી એકધારી ચાલતી હોય છે. પરંતુ છેલ્લા બે વર્ષથી આ તેજીને બ્રેક લાગી છે. આ વખતે પણ નવરાત્રી વખતે બજારમાં ખરીદીનો કરંટ અનુભવાયો છે. રક્ષાબંધન, વ્રત તહેવારો, જન્માષ્ટમી, ગણેશોત્સવમાં જે ખરીદીની ભીડ જામવી જોઈએ તે જામી નથી. એમાં વળી આ વર્ષે ચોમાસું નિરાશાજનક રહ્યું હોવાથી કાપડમાર્કેટના વેપારીઓમાં નિરાશા વ્યાપી હતી. જોકે ગત સપ્તાહથી બહારગામના વેપારીઓની નોંધપાત્ર ખરીદી શરૂ થતાં વેપારીઓના ચહેરા પર રોનક છવાઈ છે. કાપડના વેપારી રંગનાથ શારદા કહે છે કે, આ વર્ષે સમગ્ર વર્ષ કામકાજ પાંખા



રહ્યા છે. એમાં વળી ચોમાસું નબળું રહ્યું તો ક્યાં પૂર અને અતિ વરસાદની સમસ્યાએ કામકાજને અસર પહોંચાડી છે. હજુ પણ દક્ષિણમાં ચોમાસું જામ્યું હોવાથી દક્ષિણની ખરીદી સામાન્ય છે. પરંતુ ઉત્તર ભારતથી સારી એવી ખરીદી નીકળતાં વેપારીઓના

ચહેરા પર હાસ્ય આવ્યું છે. અમને લાગે છે આ તેજી લગ્નસરા સુધી જળવાઈ રહેશે. બજારમાં તેજીનો કરંટ છે. બહારગામની ઇન્કવાયરી પણ સારી એવી વધી છે. પાસલોની સંખ્યા વધી છે.

સુરત ટેક્સટાઈલ ગુડ્સ એન્ડ ટ્રાન્સપોર્ટેશન એસોસિએશનના

પ્રમુખ યુવરાજ દેસલે કહે છે કે, રક્ષાબંધન બાદથી પાસલોની સંખ્યા ધીમે-ધીમે વધી છે. અત્યારે દૈનિક ૩૭૫થી ૩૮૦ ટ્રકોનું બુર્કીંગ થઈ રહ્યું છે. વરસાદન અને બીજા કોઈ કારણોસર માલને નુકશાન ન થાય તે માટે વેપારીઓને અમે તેઓના માલનો વીમો લેવાની અપીલ કરીએ છીએ. હમણાં જ આ મામલે કાપડના વેપારીઓ સાથે બેઠક યોજી વીમો લેવાની અપીલ કરી હતી.

તેમણે ઉમેર્યું હતું કે, આગામી દિવસોમાં લગ્નસરા સુધી ટ્રકોમાં પાસલોનું બુર્કીંગ જળવાયેલું રહેશે તેવી આશા છે. આ વર્ષે પૂર અને ભારે વરસાદને કારણે પાછલા બે-ત્રણ મહિના કામકાજ થોડું અટવાયું હતું પરંતુ હવે સ્થિતિ થાળે પડી છે.

સુરતના કાપડ ઉદ્યોગનું ટેક્સ્ટાઇલથી એડવાન્સ કમ્પોઝિટ્સ તરફ પ્રયાણ

સુરતના કાપડ ઉદ્યોગકારો ક્ષમતા અને
સાહસિકતાના જોરે કમ્પોઝિટ્સ ક્ષેત્રે
વૈશ્વિક સ્તરે મોટું સ્થાન બનાવી શકે

અમારા પ્રતિનિધિ તરફથી

સુરત તા. ૨૦ ઓક્ટોબર

સુરતના કાપડ ઉદ્યોગકારો પરંપરાગત કાપડ ઉત્પાદનની સાથે હવે ઉચ્ચ મૂલ્યવર્ધિત એડવાન્સ કમ્પોઝિટ્સ ક્ષેત્રમાં પણ આગળ વધી શકે છે. એરોસ્પેસ, સંરક્ષણ, ઓટોમોબાઇલ અને માળખાકીય સુવિધાઓ જેવા ક્ષેત્રોમાં કમ્પોઝિટ્સની વધતી માગને ધ્યાનમાં રાખીને સુરતના યુવા ઉદ્યોગકારોને આગળ વધવાની તક છે તેમ દક્ષિણ ગુજરાત ચેમ્બર પ્રમુખ અશોક જીરાવાલાએ ટાંક્યું હતું. દક્ષિણ ગુજરાત ચેમ્બર અને અમદાવાદ ટેક્સટાઇલ ઇન્ડસ્ટ્રીઝ રિસર્ચ

એસોસિયેશનના સંયુક્ત ઉપક્રમે સરસાણા ખાતે ટ્રાન્સફોર્મ યોર ટેક્સટાઇલ બિઝનેસ ઇન્ટુ હાઇ-વેલ્યુ એડવાન્સ કમ્પોઝિટ્સ વિષય પર આયોજિત પરિસંવાદમાં જીરાવાલાએ જણાવ્યું હતું કે સુરત દેશ અને દુનિયામાં કાપડ ઉત્પાદનનું મોટું કેન્દ્ર છે. હવે વૈવિધ્યીકરણ અને ઉચ્ચ મૂલ્યવર્ધન તરફ આગળ વધવાનો સમય છે.

સુરતના કાપડ ઉદ્યોગકારો પોતાની ઉત્પાદન ક્ષમતા અને સાહસિકતાના જોરે કમ્પોઝિટ્સ ક્ષેત્રે વૈશ્વિક સ્તરે મોટું સ્થાન બનાવી શકે છે. યુવાઓએ અટીરાના ટેકનિકલ જ્ઞાન અને સંશોધનનો લાભ લેવો જોઈએ.

ચેમ્બરના ઉપપ્રમુખ રવિ રાજ દેસાઈએ જણાવ્યું હતું કે બદલાતા વૈશ્વિક પ્રવાહો વચ્ચે ઉચ્ચ મૂલ્યવર્ધન અનિવાર્ય બન્યું છે. ટેકનિકલ ટેક્સટાઇલ અને એન્જિનિયરિંગ ક્ષેત્ર સાથે જોડાયેલા કમ્પોઝિટ્સ ઉદ્યોગમાં નવી તકો રહેલી છે. અટીરાના કમ્પોઝિટ્સ કેન્દ્રના

નિષ્ણાતોએ ત્રણ સત્રોમાં માર્ગદર્શન આપ્યું હતું. ડો. અંકુશ શર્માએ કમ્પોઝિટ્સના પ્રકારો, ઉત્પાદન પ્રક્રિયા અને વિવિધ ક્ષેત્રોમાં તેના ઉપયોગની માહિતી આપી હતી. ડો. કામેશ્વર રાવે વૈશ્વિક અને સ્થાનિક બજારમાં સૂક્ષ્મ, લઘુ અને મધ્યમ ઉદ્યોગો માટે રહેલી તકો સમજાવી હતી. જ્યારે ડો. ભૂષણ ચૌધરીએ કમ્પોઝિટ્સ ઉત્પાદન એકમ સ્થાપવા માટે જરૂરી મૂડીરોકાણ, ઉત્પાદન ક્ષમતા અને રોકાણ પર વળતર અંગે માહિતી રજૂ કરી હતી. નિષ્ણાંતોએ ટાંક્યું હતું કે, ટેક્સટાઇલ ઉદ્યોગકારો માટે ટેકનોલોજીથી લઈને બજારમાં ઉપયોગ સુધીની અનેક તકો રહેલી છે. ખાસ કરીને નાના અને મધ્યમ ઉદ્યોગો પણ આ ક્ષેત્રમાં પ્રવેશી શકે છે. ટેકનિકલ સત્રો બાદ યોજાયેલા પ્રશ્નોત્તરીમાં ઉદ્યોગકારોએ ઉત્પાદનના પડકારો, કાચા માલની ઉપલબ્ધતા અને બજાર વ્યવસ્થા અંગે નિષ્ણાતો સાથે ચર્ચા કરી હતી.

ગરમીના પ્રકોપથી ઉત્તર ગુજરાતમાં કપાસના પાક પર ખતરો

જમીનમાં ભેજ સૂકાવા લાગતાં કપાસમાં રોગચાળાનો ભય

અમારા પ્રતિનિધિ તરફથી અમદાવાદ, તા. ૨૦ ઓક્ટોબર ઉત્તર ગુજરાતમાં ગંભીર વીજ કટોકટી સાથે તાપમાનનો પારો આકરા ઉનાળાની જેમ ૩૬ ડિગ્રીને પાર થઈ જતા ખેતીનું આરોગ્ય કથળવા માંડ્યું છે. રાજ્યમાં અપૂરતા વરસાદની વચ્ચે બપોરના હીટવેવની સ્થિતિને કારણે ઉત્તર ગુજરાતમાં ૧,૭૦,૦૦૦ હેક્ટર પાકને ગંભીર અસર થઈ રહી છે. જો ગરમી પ્રકોપ યથાવત રહેશે તો પાક ઉત્પાદનને ફટકાની દહેશત રોગચાળાનો ભય સેવાઈ રહ્યો છે.

સ્થાનિક કૃષિ કચેરી તેમજ ખેડૂતો પાસેથી પ્રાપ્ત વિગતો અનુસાર ગરમી વધતાં જમીનમાંથી એકાએક ભેજ સૂકાવવા લાગતાં કપાસમાં સૂકારાના રોગચાળાનું પ્રમાણ રોકેટ ગતિએ વધ્યું છે. જે ના કારણે કપાસના પાક ઉત્પાદનમાં ૨૦થી ૩૫ ટકાનો ઘટાડો થવાની દહેશત છે. સરકાર રાજ્યમાં કપાસના ઘટતા વાવેતરથી ચિંતિત છે ત્યાં હવે કુદરતી પ્રતિકુળ વાતાવરણે ખેડૂતોને પરોશાન કરી મૂક્યા છે.

જિલ્લા વાર કપાસના વાવેતરની સ્થિતિ જોતા જણાય છે કે સાબરકાંઠામાં ૫૪,૧૦૦, અરવલ્લીમાં ૧૯,૦૦૦, બનાસકાંઠામાં ૧૮.૭૦૦, વાવથરાદમાં ૩,૭૦૦, પાટણમાં ૪૧,૧૦૦ અને મહેસાણામાં ૩૪,૧૦૦ હેક્ટરમાં કપાસનું વાવેતર કરવામાં આવ્યું છે.

ચાલુ વર્ષે સી.સી.આઈ. દ્વારા કપાસ ખરીદવાનો ધમધમાટ શરૂ થયો છે. બજારમાં કપાસનો પાક ઠલવાતાં ખેડૂતોને પ્રારંભિક મણ દીઠ રૂપિયા ૨૦૦૦થી વધુનો ભાવ મળ્યો છે પરંતુ હવે સ્થિતિ એ છે કે છેલ્લા એક સપ્તાહમાં

તાપમાનનો પારા ૨થી ૪ ડિગ્રી ઉચ્ચતામાં ઉનાળો શરૂ થયો હોય તેવી આકરી ગરમી આસો મહિનામાં અનુભવાઈ રહી છે.

દિવસ અને રાત્રિના તાપમાનમાં ૧૦થી ૧૨ ડિગ્રીના તફાવતથી મિશ્રજલુ દેખાઈ રહી છે. પ્રજાના આરોગ્યની સાથે હવે ખેતીનું આરોગ્ય જોખમાઈ રહ્યું છે.

ઉંચા તાપમાનના કારણે કપાસના પાક ઉત્પાદનને ગંભીર

ફટકો પડી શકે છે અને કેટલાક વિસ્તારોમાં તેની અસર જોવા મળી રહી છે.

ઉત્તર ગુજરાતમાં વાવેતર પ્રમાણે કપાસના પાક ઉત્પાદનમાં લાખો ગાંસડીનો અંદાજ મુકવામાં આવ્યો છે. પરંતુ આ તમામ ગણિતા ખોટા પડવાની સાથે અનેક જીનીંગ મીલોને પણ ઓછા પાક ઉત્પાદનથી કઠીનાઈનો સામનો કરવો પડે તેવી દહેશત સેવાઈ રહી છે.