COTTON ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

Established 1921

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News Relating to Cotton and Textile Sector

Date-14-07-2026

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COTTON ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

(Regd. Office : Cotton Exchange Building, 2nd Floor, Cotton Green (E), Mumbai 400 033)
Tel. No. 022-20830685 / 8657442944-48 Email: cai@caionline.in Website: www.caionline.in

Mumbai, Tuesday 14th July 2026 at 3.00 P.M.

UPCOUNTRY SPOT RATES

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)
Sr. No.	Growth	Grade Standard	Grade	Staple	Micronaire	Gravimetric Trash %	Strength / GPT	2025-26	2025-26	
1	P/H/R	ICS-101	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0 – 7.0	4%	15	14763	52500	(N.C.)
2	GUJ	ICS-102	Fine	22mm	4.0 – 6.0	15%	20	12654	45000	(+500)
3	M/M(P)	ICS-104	Fine	23mm	4.5 - 7.0	4%	22	14904	53000	(N.C.)
4	P / H / R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	4%	26	16759	59600	(+300)
5	M/M(P) /SA/TL/GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.0 – 3.4	4%	25	15185	54000	(N.C.)
6	M/M(P)/SA/TL	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5 – 4.9	3.5%	26	16591	59000	(+500)
7	P/ H/R(U)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5 – 4.9	4%	27	17406	61900	(+300)
8	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	27	18053	64200	(+500)
9	SA/TL/K	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	27	17912	63700	(+500)
10	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	27	17997	64000	(+500)
11	R(L)	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.7 – 4.9	4.0%	27	17153	61000	(+300)
12	R(L)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	28	18137	64500	(+400)
13	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3.5%	28	18419	65500	(+500)
14	SA/TL/K	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	28	18137	64500	(+500)
15	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	28	18278	65000	(+400)
16	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	29	18700	66500	(+500)
17	SA/TL/K/O	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	29	18419	65500	(+600)
18	M/M(P)	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	30	N.A.	N.A.	
19	SA/TL/K/TN/O	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.7 – 4.9	3%	30	N.A.	N.A.	
20	SA/TL/K/TN/O	ICS-106	Fine	32mm	3.5 – 4.9	3%	31	N.A.	N.A.	
21	M/M(P)	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	2.8 - 3.7	4%	33	23199	82500	(N.C.)
22	K/TN	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	2.8 - 3.7	3.5%	34	23621	84000	(N.C.)
23	M/M(P)	ICS-107	Fine	35mm	2.8 - 3.7	4%	35	24043	85500	(N.C.)
24	K/TN	ICS-107	Fine	35mm	2.8 - 3.7	3.5%	35	24324	86500	(N.C.)

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
2	P/H/R(U) ICS-202 (SG) rate is lower by Rs. 1000/ pc than Sr. no. 4
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 32mm consists of – (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. 5 are for 67 Rd
10	For Northern Zone (P/H/R(U)-Sr. Nos. 4 and 7 are for 70 Rd
11	For M/M(P)/SA/TL-Sr Nos. 6, 8, 9, and GUJ-Sr No.10 are for 74 Rd
12	For R(L)-Sr. No. 11 is for 72 Rd and 12 is for 73 Rd
13	For M/M(P) and K/TN-Sr Nos. 21 to 24 are for 70-72 Rd

Secretary

ICE Cotton Futures: 13-07-2026

ICE COTTON CLOSE					13 Jul 2026	
CONTRACT MONTH	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	SETTLE	CHANGE	Op. Int.
Cotton (CT) - Quote: Cents/Pound - Contract Size: 50,000 Pounds.						
Oct-26	79.99	81.08	79.62	79.83	▼0.09	169
Dec-26	81.60	82.96	80.62	81.51	▼0.03	2,03,981
Mar-27	82.94	84.26	81.98	82.93	▲0.02	61,322
May-27	83.64	84.88	82.76	83.74	▲0.10	20,498
Jul-27	83.02	84.11	82.26	83.16	▲0.04	13,132
Oct-27	0.00	79.06	79.06	79.06	▼0.07	5
Dec-27	76.89	77.62	76.82	77.10	▼0.05	20,265

Cotlook Index: 13-07-2026

90.70 (+0.95)

Bharat Tex 2026 opens in New Delhi with 1600 exhibitors

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www.fibre2fashion.com/news)

Insights
Bharat Tex 2026 has opened in New Delhi, bringing together India's textile value chain with over 1,600 exhibitors, 7,000 buyers and participants from 14 countries.
The four-day event features B2B meetings, investment sessions, policy discussions and sourcing opportunities to boost trade, innovation, global partnerships and investment worldwide.

Bharat Tex 2026 opened today at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, bringing together India's entire textile value chain with global buyers, exhibitors, policymakers and investors for four days of sourcing, trade, investment and collaboration. The event will run until July 17.

Organised by the Bharat Tex Trade Federation, a consortium of Textile Export Promotion Councils and industry bodies, with support from the Ministry of Textiles, the third edition features over 1,600 exhibitors, more than 7,000 buyers, around 130,000 trade visitors and over 20,000 products spread across 1.6 million square feet.

Minister of Textiles, Government of India, Giriraj Singh inaugurated the event, joined by Minister of State for Textiles Pabitra Margherita, Textiles Secretary Neelam Shami Rao, senior government officials and industry leaders.

The exhibition covers the complete textile value chain, including fibre, yarn, fabric, apparel and fashion, home textiles, technical textiles and ancillary industries.

International exhibitors from 14 countries including the US, UK, Japan, Portugal, Spain, New Zealand, South Korea, South Africa and Nepal are participating alongside representatives from the United Nations and the European Union, while ministerial and business delegations from countries such as New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Japan, the US, the UK and Bangladesh are attending to strengthen bilateral cooperation, sourcing and trade partnerships.

The event is expected to facilitate over 4,000 B2B meetings, more than 100 business-to-government (B2G) meetings and the signing of 30-plus memoranda of understanding (MoUs) across trade, investment, sustainability, technology and market access.

Dedicated investor-connect sessions will enable Indian states to showcase textile infrastructure, PM MITRA parks and policy incentives.

More than 350 speakers from over 20 countries will participate in over 100 knowledge sessions, including panel discussions, roundtables, masterclasses and state sessions covering trade, sustainability, Industry 5.0, innovation, technical textiles and global sourcing.

The event will also host the CITI Textile Sustainability Awards 2026 and deploy AI-enabled digital platforms for exhibitor discovery, business matchmaking and meeting scheduling, reinforcing Bharat Tex's role as a global platform for India's textile industry.

Fibre2Fashion is exhibiting at Hall 10, Booth 10A-4B.

India promotes textile waste upcycling with Weave the Future 4.0

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www.fibre2fashion.com/news)

> Insights
> India is promoting textile waste upcycling through Weave the Future 4.0, a Ministry of Textiles initiative showcasing circular textile solutions at New Delhi's Dilli Haat.
> The exhibition features 100+ brands, artisans and startups highlighting upcycling, recycling, repair and sustainable design to advance a more circular textile economy.

India is strengthening its push towards a circular textile economy through 'Weave the Future 4.0 – Upcycling Edition,' a Ministry of Textiles initiative showcasing textile waste upcycling, recycling, repair and circular design solutions. The six-day exhibition, being held at Dilli Haat, INA, from July 12-17, brings together over 100 brands, artisans, startups, recyclers and innovators to promote sustainable textile production and responsible resource use.

Union Minister of Textiles Giriraj Singh, who visited the exhibition on Sunday, said rising textile consumption makes it imperative to strengthen circular economy practices, scale responsible production and convert textile waste into valuable resources. He said initiatives such as Weave the Future 4.0 demonstrate how innovation, entrepreneurship and sustainability can create both economic opportunities and environmental benefits while supporting better livelihoods for workers.

Organised by the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms), the exhibition highlights solutions including upcycling, recycling, repair, repurposing and material recovery, while connecting India's traditional craft heritage with modern circular design practices. It also features interactive installations, repair demonstrations, workshops and discussions on sustainable design and conscious consumption.

Development Commissioner (Handlooms) Dr M Beena said the platform has evolved into a national initiative linking artisans, designers, startups, recycling enterprises and students to develop practical and scalable solutions for textile waste management. She noted that growing participation by young entrepreneurs reflects increasing interest in sustainable consumption and resource efficiency.

The exhibition also includes the 'Marammat' workshop, organised in collaboration with Rafooghar, which encourages repair and mending as sustainable alternatives to textile disposal.

The Ministry said Weave the Future aims to strengthen India's leadership in sustainable, craft-led and circular textile development by fostering collaboration across the textile value chain.

Cotton Acreage Declines in Khandesh as Farmers Shift to Maize and Soybean

Tue. 14th July 2026, Jayesh Chouhan (Source: www.smartinfoindia.com)

Cotton Acreage Shrinks in Maharashtra's Khandesh; Farmers Shift Towards Maize and Soybean

Jalgaon/Maharashtra: A significant shift in cropping patterns is being observed in Maharashtra's Khandesh region during this year's Kharif season. While sowing for Kharif crops is nearly 81 percent complete, the area under cotton cultivation is steadily declining. Due to rising cultivation costs, weak market prices, and increasing pest infestations, farmers are now turning towards alternative crops such as maize, soybean, and *arhar* (tur/pigeon pea).

Specifically, the cotton cultivation area in Jalgaon district has decreased by approximately 25,000 hectares compared to the previous season. While cotton was cultivated on about 5.11 lakh hectares in the district during 2024-25, this figure has dropped to around 4.55 lakh hectares this year.

According to Agriculture Department data, cotton acreage has declined in other districts of Khandesh as well. In Dhule district, cotton is being cultivated on approximately 1.75 lakh hectares this year, down from nearly 2 lakh hectares in the previous season. Meanwhile, in Nandurbar district, the cotton area has shrunk to about 85,000 hectares, compared to over 97,000 hectares last year.

Farmers state that while the cost of cotton cultivation keeps rising, market prices are not commensurate with production levels. Escalating costs of labor, fertilizers, seeds, and pesticides have driven up expenses. Additionally, the menace of the pink bollworm and changing weather patterns have further compounded concerns for cotton growers.

A delay in monsoon rains has also compelled many farmers to opt for alternative crops. This shift is reflected in the increased acreage for maize and other Kharif crops; in Jalgaon district alone, the area under maize cultivation has expanded by approximately 10,000 hectares. Agricultural experts believe that, given the current circumstances, the total area under cotton cultivation across the Khandesh region could remain below 8 lakh hectares this year. Farmers are now altering their crop choices by taking into account costs, risks, and market prospects.

State-wise CCI Cotton Sales

Tue. 14th July 2026, Yash Chouhan (Source: www.smartinfoindia.com)

State-wise CCI Cotton Sales Details – 2025-26 Season

The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) Increased its cotton candy prices by upto ₹800 per candy during this week . CCI has sold approximately 81,86,800 cotton bales for the 2025-26 season. Sales are highly concentrated in a few major cotton-producing states, Maharashtra, Telangana and Gujarat emerging as the leading contributors.

STATE	NO. OF BALES	STATE	NO. OF BALES
MAHARASHTRA	27,72,500	RAJASTHAN	3,20,200
TELANGANA	17,71,100	ODISHA	2,66,200
GUJARAT	14,38,700	ANDHRA PRADESH	1,98,600
KARNATAKA	6,53,600	HARYANA	1,69,400
MADHYA PRADESH	5,52,500	PUNJAB	44,000
TOTAL			81,86,800

ICE cotton pauses after strong rally, weather concerns persist

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www.fibre2fashion.com/news)

Insights
ICE cotton futures paused after last week's strong rally, with the December 2026 contract slipping 0.03 cent to 81.51 cents while holding most of its weekly gains.
Hot, dry weather in West Texas and declining US crop ratings supported prices despite bearish USDA WASDE estimates.
Higher crude oil prices and lower ICE certified stocks also underpinned the market.

ICE cotton futures paused yesterday after last week's strong rally. Cotton contracts settled with limited gains to slight losses. The most actively traded contract held on to most of its 442-point gain from the previous week, reflecting continued underlying support for the natural fibre.

The most active December 2026 contract settled at 81.51 cents, down 0.03 cent. Other nearby contracts settled between 9 points lower and 10 points higher.

Trading activity remained subdued, with analysts focusing primarily on hot and dry weather across key US cotton-growing regions, particularly the Southwest and West Texas, where prolonged heat could negatively affect crop development during the critical growing stage.

Market analysts said the ongoing hot and dry conditions in the Southwest Plains, especially West Texas, remain the market's primary bullish factor. West Texas is the largest cotton-producing region in the United States, making its weather especially important for production prospects.

The latest USDA Crop Progress Report showed that 44 per cent of the US cotton crop was rated good-to-excellent, down from 46 per cent the previous week and 54 per cent a year earlier, reflecting continued deterioration in crop conditions.

Trading volume increased to 59,297 contracts from 54,824 contracts in the previous session, while the average daily trading volume last week stood at 55,791 contracts, indicating steady market participation despite limited fresh cotton-specific news.

Traders continued to assess the USDA's July WASDE Report, which projected 2026-27 US cotton production at 13.70 million bales, US ending stocks at 4.10 million bales, and global ending stocks increasing by 300,000 bales. Despite the slightly bearish supply revisions, the market remained focused on weather rather than the report.

The US Dollar Index strengthened slightly, but analysts noted that the move had little impact on cotton prices. However, a stronger dollar generally reduces the competitiveness of US cotton exports in international markets.

CBOT soybean and corn futures closed slightly higher, supported by continued concerns over hot and dry weather across parts of the US Midwest.

Crude oil surged about 9 per cent, reaching its highest close in nearly one month, following renewed military exchanges between the US and Iran, which escalated tensions around the Strait of Hormuz and raised concerns over global energy supplies. Higher crude oil prices supported cotton by increasing polyester production costs, thereby improving cotton's relative price competitiveness against synthetic fibres.

Broader financial markets were mixed, with gold falling 2.6 per cent, silver declining 3.6 per cent, grain markets remaining mostly unchanged, and all three major US equity indices closing lower ahead of key US inflation data and Federal Reserve testimony.

Market participants are now focused on the upcoming US June CPI inflation report and Federal Reserve Chair Kevin Warsh's congressional testimony, both of which could influence interest rate expectations, the US dollar, and overall commodity market sentiment.

ICE certified cotton stocks as of July 10 declined further to 127,127 bales from 158,607 bales previously, reflecting another significant reduction in deliverable supplies.

This morning (Indian Standard Time), ICE cotton for December 2026 traded at 81.76 cents per pound (up 0.25 cent), cash cotton at 75.83 cents (down 0.09 cent), October 2026 at 80.28 cents (up 0.45 cent), March 2027 at 83.16 cents (up 0.22 cent), May 2027 at 83.99 cents (up 0.25 cent), and July 2027 at 83.32 cents (up 0.16 cent). A few contracts remained at their previous closing levels, with no trades recorded so far today.

Cotton Growers in Punjab Warned as Whitefly Infestation Threatens Crop Health

Mon. 13th July 2026 (Source: www.textilevaluechain.in)

PAU survey detects rising pest levels in cotton fields; farmers advised to intensify monitoring and timely control measures

Punjab Agricultural University (PAU), Ludhiana, has reported the presence of whitefly infestation in some cotton fields following a recent survey across the state's cotton belt. The pest population has been observed nearing the economic threshold level of six whiteflies per leaf.

Experts have cautioned that the prevailing weather conditions could lead to a further rise in infestation levels during the coming week. Farmers have been advised to regularly inspect their fields and begin pest management measures once the infestation reaches the economic threshold level.

For controlling whiteflies, PAU has recommended spraying any one of the prescribed insecticides, including flonicamid, afidopyropen or pyrifluquinazon, in recommended quantities.

Farmers have also been advised to monitor green leafhopper infestation and apply recommended pesticides if 50 per cent of fully developed leaves show yellowing along the edges and downward curling.

For early-sown cotton, PAU has suggested initiating pink bollworm control when 10-20 per cent of plants reach the flower-bud stage, using the recommended insecticides.

To manage white bollworm in desi cotton, the university has recommended spraying one of the prescribed pesticides when about 25 per cent of plants have flowered.

Rising MSP Without Rising Productivity Could Deepen India's Cotton Problem

Sat. 11th July 2026 (Source: www.textilevaluechain.in)

Why a support-price-first approach may weaken domestic cotton demand, complicate textile sourcing, and still leave farmers under stress

India's cotton economy is entering a phase of deep contradiction. On one side, the government continues to raise Minimum Support Prices to protect farmers. On the other, cotton productivity, fibre quality, and cost competitiveness remain weak relative to the needs of India's textile industry and the realities of the global market. The result is a dangerous imbalance: higher price support without enough productivity growth.

Manish P. Daga
Managing Director,
COTTONGURU

The latest CCI data makes the scale of the issue clear. During the 2025–26 season, as on 28 June 2026, total cotton procurement stood at 105 lakh bales. Out of this, 79.34 lakh bales had been sold, including 33.57 lakh bales to mills and 45.77 lakh bales to traders, while 25.66 lakh bales remained unsold. These numbers underline one basic reality: the Indian cotton market is becoming increasingly dependent on large-scale intervention to absorb cotton when open-market demand is not strong enough at MSP-linked price levels.

That should worry the entire cotton value chain.

MSP plays an important role in protecting farmers from distress sales. But when MSP keeps rising while productivity remains low and global lint prices stay broadly stagnant, Indian cotton risks becoming less attractive not only in export markets, but even within India itself. Mills ultimately buy cotton based on price, quality, contamination, yarn realization, and competitiveness. If Indian cotton becomes structurally expensive without a matching improvement in yield and fibre performance, domestic demand starts weakening in relative terms.

That creates complications on both sides.

For the textile industry, costlier domestic cotton reduces procurement flexibility and adds pressure to yarn and fabric margins. Mills become more dependent on policy relief, import windows, or selective buying strategies. Some may shift toward imported cotton for specific qualities. Others may reduce aggressive domestic buying if Indian cotton does not offer the right balance of price and performance. Over time, this can distort the market and weaken confidence in the domestic cotton system.

For farmers, the outcome is even more troubling. A rising MSP may appear supportive, but if the market cannot naturally absorb cotton at those levels, then farmers become more dependent on CCI procurement rather than real competitive demand. That is not a healthy long-term solution. It can keep the crop moving in the short term, but it does not solve the underlying problem of low productivity, high cost per unit of output, weak fibre consistency, and inadequate farm-level resilience. In such a situation, the farmer is protected from immediate collapse, but not empowered toward sustainable profitability.

This is why India's cotton debate must move beyond MSP alone.

The question isn't whether MSP should exist. It should. The real question is whether MSP is being supported by a serious productivity strategy. Without that, the country risks creating a cycle where cotton becomes more expensive to support, more difficult to sell competitively, and more dependent on repeated intervention by CCI season after season.

That is precisely why the newly approved Mission for Cotton Productivity (2026–27 to

2030–31) is so important. With an outlay of ₹5,659.22 crore, the mission recognizes that India's cotton sector is facing serious structural bottlenecks in productivity, quality, and competitiveness. But the challenge is that a lot still needs to be done for the mission to make a real difference on the ground.

The mission cannot remain only a budget announcement or a research-and-extension statement. It must translate into measurable field-level outcomes: higher yields, better seed reliability, lower contamination, stronger agronomy, improved pest and moisture management, more resilient farm practices, and better alignment between what farmers grow and what mills actually need. Productivity must not be treated as a technical side issue. It is now central to farmer welfare, industry competitiveness, and national cotton strategy.

If India succeeds only in raising MSP but fails to raise yield and quality, then it will end up protecting cotton without strengthening cotton.

That would be a costly mistake.

A competitive cotton economy cannot be built only by increasing support prices. It must be built by increasing output per hectare, improving fibre quality, and reducing the gap between domestic cotton economics and global market realities. Otherwise, the country may see more CCI buying, more unsold stocks, more industry discomfort, and continued farmer distress — all at the same time.

India still has the chance to course correct. But that correction must begin with one clear principle: productivity is the real foundation of price strength. Without it, higher MSP may offer temporary relief, but it cannot deliver lasting cotton security, neither for farmers nor the textile industry.

Crystal Crop Protection Launches 6 New Agri Products

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www. money.rediff.com)

Crystal Crop Protection introduces six new products for paddy, soybean, maize, and cotton, targeting weed, disease, pest, and nutrition management.

New Delhi, Jul 14 (PTI) Crystal Crop Protection Ltd on Tuesday said it has launched six new products targeting weed, disease, pest and nutrition management in paddy, soybean, maize and cotton crops.

The company introduced Samorian, a soybean herbicide that uses a patented three-way mode of action against grasses and broadleaf weeds, and Takuro, a combination herbicide for maize that combines rapid systemic action with long-lasting residual control.

In its paddy fungicide range, Crystal launched Xeberia, aimed at fungal and bacterial diseases, and MAXentra, a dual-action fungicide for broad-spectrum disease control, the company said in a statement.

The company also introduced Valtruva, a cotton insecticide that uses "Smart Triple Action Technology" to control sucking pests, building on its existing Proclaim Xtra and Jivora brands.

The sixth product, KGR-T, is an organic nutrition solution developed under Crystal's Green-Ag platform, using what the company calls an Effervescent Tablet Delivery System and Extended Nutrient Release technology to improve nutrient efficiency and crop resilience.

"Indian agriculture is evolving rapidly. Climate uncertainty, changing pest dynamics and rising expectations from every acre demand a new generation of agricultural innovation," said Ankur Aggarwal, chairman and managing director of Crystal Crop Protection.

Sohit Satyawali, the company's chief business officer for brands, said the products were developed after field trials across multiple agro-climatic regions in India.

"These launches strengthen our ability to offer farmers and channel partners a comprehensive portfolio," he said.

Crystal Crop Protection said the launches reflect its focus on integrated pest management and expanding access to new molecules, biologicals and bio-stimulants aimed at improving farm productivity while supporting environmental sustainability.

India''s Textile Exports Thrive with Diversification: Giriraj Singh

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www. money.rediff.com)

Union Minister Giriraj Singh highlights India"s textile sector resilience, fueled by export diversification & FTAs. Bharat Tex 2026 showcases global competitiveness.

New Delhi, Jul 14 (PTI) India is currently exporting textile products from 550 districts, and the government's export diversification strategy has helped the sector remain resilient despite global uncertainty, Union Textiles Minister Giriraj Singh said on Tuesday.

Inaugurating India's largest global textile event, Bharat Tex 2026, the minister said India's strategy to target 40 key nations for export diversification helped its textiles sector register sustained export growth despite global uncertainty.

"Buyers from 130 countries have come. We are in the process of negotiating FTAs with various nations; some are underway while others have been signed. This shows we are ready to compete globally," Singh told reporters on the sidelines of the event.

As many as 130 countries are participating in the third edition of Bharat Tex 2026, including the US, UK, Japan, Russia, South Africa, UAE and Bangladesh, among others.
The wide participation in Bharat Tex 2026 underscores India's growing global presence in the textiles sector amid the government's push for free trade agreements (FTAs), export diversification and ease of doing business reforms, Singh said.

"Led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we have identified 40 nations for export diversification which we are working on; therefore, India's textiles exports did not suffer much despite global uncertainty," he said.

According to Singh, over 90 per cent of the exhibitors at Bharat Tex 2026 are micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), reflecting the sector's broad-based participation.

He said global textile imports are estimated at around USD 900 billion and noted that the Narendra Modi-led government has signed FTAs with major textile-importing nations while negotiations for similar pacts with several other countries are underway.

The minister said the event is drawing investor interest in addition to overseas buyers.

Asked what message he will convey to global textile buyers looking to diversify beyond China, Singh said, "I have a meeting with them. This time not only buyers are coming here but also investors".

The minister highlighted that several textile manufacturing clusters such as Tiruppur, Surat, Ichalkaranji, Panipat and Ludhiana are gaining prominence, aided by improvements in the ease of doing business. He also noted that the government has waived the import duty on cotton till October.

Highlighting the sector's growth ambitions, the minister said India aims to build a USD 350 billion textile market by 2030, comprising USD 100 billion in exports and a USD 250 billion domestic market.

He said the domestic textile market has expanded from USD 138 billion when the present government assumed office to around USD 190 billion currently.

Maharashtra to Set Up International Agri-Market Near Vadhvan

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www. money.rediff.com)

Maharashtra plans a world-class agricultural market near Vadhvan Port to boost farm exports, create 10,000+ jobs, and link farmers globally. Developed by MSAMB.

Mumbai, Jul 14 (PTI) The Maharashtra government will set up an international-standard agricultural market in Palghar district, about 40km from the upcoming Vadhvan port, to strengthen farm exports and link cultivators directly to global markets, Marketing Minister Jaykumar Rawal said on Tuesday.

The proposed market at Dapchari, which will be spread across more than 558.43 hectares, would function as a world-class agricultural trade hub catering to both domestic and export markets and also generate more than 10,000 direct and indirect jobs, he told reporters here.

Rawal said the project, approved by the state cabinet earlier in the day, would be developed by the Maharashtra State Agricultural Marketing Board (MSAMB) on the lines of France's Rungis Market, Royal FloraHolland in the Netherlands and the agricultural logistics ecosystem around the Port of Rotterdam.

The state government plans to develop a three-tier agricultural marketing system at the sprawling site adjoining Mumbai comprising an international market, a market of national importance and Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMCs), informed the minister.

The mega project will focus on export infrastructure, post-harvest value addition, transparent computerised trading and modern marketing facilities, he maintained.
According to Rawal, the hub will provide wholesale trading, import-export facilities, and house cold chain infrastructure, grading and packaging units, multimodal logistics, agritech and exchange centres at one location.

Warehousing, cold storage, ripening chambers, quality testing laboratories, container terminals, railway siding, e-auction facilities and an export facilitation centre are also planned at the site, he said.

He noted that Maharashtra accounts for around 15 per cent of India's agricultural exports and 43 per cent of overseas shipments of fruits. The state is the country's largest producer of grapes, pomegranates, cotton and pulses, and ranks second in fruit and vegetable production.

The project is expected to reduce post-harvest losses by 15-20 per cent and lower transportation and handling costs by a similar margin, Rawal said.

The hub's connectivity to the upcoming Vadhvan Deepwater Port, Navi Mumbai International Airport, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority, Samruddhi Mahamarg, Western Dedicated Freight Corridor and Mumbai-Vadodara Expressway would help cut logistics costs and significantly boost exports of fruits, vegetables, flowers, grains, pulses, spices and processed farm products, he noted.

Rawal said the project would be developed by MSAMB with the support of the state government and would help position Maharashtra as a leading agricultural export hub in the country.

From Lab to Land: Why Are Krishi Vigyan Kendras Falling Short of Their Full Potential?

Sat. 11th July 2026 (Source: www.eng.ruralvoice.in)

India's 731 Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) have significantly improved farm productivity, incomes and technology adoption by bridging the gap between agricultural research and farmers. However, inadequate funding, staff shortages and weak infrastructure limit their potential. The article calls for structural reforms to strengthen KVKs as integrated centres for knowledge, technology and rural entrepreneurship.

India is a leading agricultural producer globally, ranking first in the production of milk, pulses, jute and second in rice, wheat, sugarcane, groundnuts, cotton, fruits, and vegetables in the world. Between 1947 and 2020, India's food grain production increased six fold, horticulture ten fold, milk nine fold, and fish production thirteen fold.

However, despite possessing soil, climate, and abundant vegetative resources suitable for agriculture, agricultural productivity and farmers' income from farming remain lower compared to other nations. The small size of landholdings is often cited as one of the primary reasons for this low productivity. Yet, productivity does not inherently depend on the size of the landholding; rather, it relies on technological and capital investment in agriculture. Any unit area that receives higher inputs of technology and capital will consequently exhibit higher productivity. Countries such as China, Japan, and South Korea demonstrate higher productivity than India, even though the average size of their landholdings is roughly equivalent to or even smaller than that of India. Therefore, to enhance agricultural productivity and boost farmers' income, it is imperative to increase capital and technological investment in the agricultural sector.

The government is promoting capital investment in agriculture through schemes such as the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi and Kisan Credit Card. However, another significant reason for low agricultural productivity is the limited adoption of advanced technologies in farming. The majority of farmers continue to rely on traditional and outdated techniques. The limited use of advanced technologies by farmers does not imply that such technologies are not being developed within the country.

More than 100 research institutes dedicated to agriculture and allied sectors operate across the country under the aegis of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). Every year, these institutes develop hundreds of improved crop varieties endowed with diverse traits as well as various other technologies; however, due to a disorganized agricultural extension system, only a limited number of these innovations are successfully transfer from lab to land.

Numerous experiments were conducted to transfer agricultural technologies from the lab to the land; however, the establishment of the first Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) at Puducherry in 1974 marked a revolutionary beginning in the field of agricultural extension. Witnessing the success of these KVKs, on August 15, 2005, the former Prime Minister, the late Dr. Manmohan Singh, announced from the Red Fort the establishment of one KVK in every rural district of the country by 2007. In accordance with the announcement, one KVK also known as a Farm Science Centre was established in every rural district of the country and two in certain large districts.

Currently, 731 KVKs are working across the country as multi-disciplinary institutions to transfer technology from lab to the land. They facilitate the assessment and demonstration of technologies, provide training to farmers including women farmers and agricultural extension personnel, foster rural entrepreneurship and supply quality seeds, planting materials and agricultural advisories. Through national initiatives such as natural and organic farming, the formation of Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs), the use of agricultural drones, promotion of pulses and oilseeds production, crop residue management and climate-resilient agriculture, they are actively enhancing agricultural productivity and farmers' income. During the 'Viksit Krishi Sankalp Abhiyan' held from May 29 to June 12, 2025, KVKs played a pivotal role in facilitating scientific dialogues with approximately 13.5 million farmers across 728 districts. While ATMA (Agricultural Technology Management Agency) and state governments also engage in agricultural extension activities, they, too, depend on the KVKs.

According to a study conducted by NITI Aayog in 2018, approximately 40 percent of farmers immediately adopt the techniques recommended by KVK experts, while about 25 percent implement them the following year. The adoption of techniques recommended by KVKs has resulted in an increase of approximately 42 percent in productivity and 33 percent in income, alongside a 20 percent reduction in hard labour. Approximately 25 percent of the youth who receive training from KVKs go on to start their own self-employment ventures. As a result of interventions by KVKs, about 80 percent of farmers have modified their farming patterns; these changes include crop diversification, seed sowing practices, the use of fertilizers and pesticides, changes in machinery and the efficient utilization of water. In another impact study conducted by the International Food Policy Research Institute in 2019, the benefit-cost ratio for investments in KVKs is approximately 12. This implies that an investment of one rupee in a KVK yields a return of 12 rupees, thereby underscoring the favourable economic returns generated by the activities of these centres.

Despite these remarkable achievements, KVKs are plagued by multifaceted structural challenges. Inadequate budgeting - constituting less than one percent of the agricultural budget and limited staffing (only 16 employees), wherein 30 percent of the positions remain vacant according to the parliamentary committee report-2025, coupled with delays in fund allocation and uncertainties regarding experts' salaries, promotions, and pensions, are adversely affecting morale. Despite being 100 percent funded by the ICAR, administrative control exercised by diverse host institutions such as ICAR institutes, agricultural universities, NGOs, and state governments gives rise to financial and administrative complexities. Furthermore, a dearth of infrastructure - including testing laboratories, training halls and farmers' hostels is weakening the Lab to Land linkage, thereby hindering the timely transfer of technology.

Therefore, KVKs can play a crucial role in nourishing growing population and ensuring income security for the farmers amidst a deepening climate crisis, shrinking arable land and water resources. To achieve this, it is imperative to transition KVKs from 'Plan' to 'Non-Plan' budgetary heads bringing them under an integrated umbrella as well as to fill vacant positions, ensure timely disbursement of salaries, promotions, and pensions to employees, adequate budgetary allocations, digital infrastructure and merge ATMA with KVKs, to develop them on the line of district hospitals as a ‘Krishi Vigyan Evam Gramin Udyamita Kendras’, thereby enabling farmers to access knowledge, technology, training, inputs, and advisory services all under a single roof.

(The writer is an Agriculture Scientist, associated with Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Siddharthnagar, U.P. Views expressed here are his personal)

USDA raises global cotton output forecast, consumption higher in July

Tue. 14th July 2026 (Source: www.fibre2fashion.com/news)

Insights
The USDA's July WASDE raised its 2026–27 global cotton production forecast to 117.26 million bales, with higher output in Brazil, the US and Türkiye lifting ending stocks slightly despite stronger consumption.
US cotton production was also revised higher to 13.70 million bales, increasing projected ending stocks, while the 2025–26 farm price was lowered to 62.5 cents per pound.

The global cotton outlook for the 2026–27 season improved slightly in the USDA's latest World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates (WASDE) report of July 2026. Higher production in major producing countries more than offset lower beginning stocks, leading to a modest increase in global ending stocks despite stronger consumption. The revised outlook marks a shift from the tighter supply-demand balance projected in the June report.

According to the July 2026 WASDE, global cotton production is forecast at 117.26 million bales (480 pounds or 220 kg each), up from 116.04 million bales projected in June. Global consumption has also been revised up slightly to 121.95 million bales, compared with 121.76 million bales last month.

World cotton trade remains virtually unchanged at 43.34 million bales, while total global supply is estimated at 192.98 million bales, up from 192.67 million bales in the previous outlook. Ending stocks for 2026–27 is now projected at 71.22 million bales, marginally higher than 71.13 million bales forecast in June.

The USDA attributed the production increase to larger crops expected in Brazil, the United States, Türkiye, and Central Asia. Consumption was revised slightly higher due to increased mill use in Vietnam, partly offset by a small reduction in Azerbaijan. As production growth outpaced the increase in consumption, global ending stocks rose marginally, resulting in a stocks-to-use ratio of 58.4 per cent.

For 2025–26, global cotton production was lowered by 750,000 bales, mainly due to a smaller crop in Brazil. World consumption was trimmed modestly to 119.95 million bales, as lower demand in Pakistan more than offset higher consumption in Vietnam. Global exports were raised by around 1 per cent, primarily on stronger shipments from Brazil, while ending stocks were reduced by about 900,000 bales, lowering the global stocks-to-use ratio to 63.1 per cent.

The US cotton balance sheet for 2026–27 shows higher production following an upward revision in planted area based on the June Acreage Report. US cotton production is now projected at 13.70 million bales, up from 13.30 million bales in June. Beginning stocks remain unchanged at 4.20 million bales, while exports are maintained at 12.30 million bales and domestic mill use at 1.60 million bales. Higher production is expected to lift ending stocks to 4.10 million bales, compared with 3.70 million bales in the previous forecast, resulting in an ending stocks-to-use ratio of 29.5 per cent. The projected season-average farm price remains unchanged at 73 cents per pound.

For 2025–26, there were no changes to the US cotton supply and demand balance sheet. However, the season-average farm price was lowered by 0.5 cent to 62.5 cents per pound.

businessline – 14.07.2026

US must control Hormuz and get paid for it: Trump

TRANSIT THREAT. We'll become the guardian of the Strait, says US President

Reuters
Washington

President Donald Trump said on Monday that the US would probably take over the Strait of Hormuz and should be reimbursed for controlling the vital waterway.

"We're going to keep the Strait, and we'll probably run it. We'll become the guardian of the Strait. Maybe we'll call it the guardian angel of the Strait. And we should be reimbursed for that," he said in a phone interview on *Fox News*' 'Fox & Friends' programme.

Control of the Strait of Hormuz, a vital route for global oil supplies, has become one of the main battlegrounds of the conflict. Iran's effective blockade of the strait has pushed up energy prices and increased concerns about inflation globally

. "We're going to guard it. We're going to get paid for guarding it — a lot of money," Trump said. "We're going to be reimbursed, because the other nations are very wealthy. They're on our side, and we can't be expected to do that for nothing," he said.

"We're going to get paid for guarding it... going to be reimbursed, because the other nations are very wealthy

DONALD TRUMP
US President

After announcing the waterway's closure on Saturday following what it described as an unauthorised transit, Tehran said on Sunday that passage remained suspended and that permits would be issued once "stability and calm" were restored. "We had a deal. It was a done deal, and then they broke it. They always break it. We've had 10 deals with these people, and so we're just going to hit them very hard," Trump said.

Iran's Revolutionary Guards said in a statement on Monday that the only way to restore regular shipping traffic through the strait was to end US military interventions in the waterway, and warned that "continued interference could lead to greater incidents in the global oil and gas sector."

DRONE ATTACKS

US and Iranian forces exchanged heavy missile and drone attacks over the weekend and into Monday, with Tehran saying it had struck US military facilities across the Gulf and kept the Strait of Hormuz closed, driving oil prices higher.

Explosions were heard on Monday in the Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas on the Strait of Hormuz and on nearby Qeshm Island, the semi-official Mehr news agency reported, citing local residents.

The latest exchanges mark a sharp escalation in both the pace and geographic reach of attacks over the past week, casting doubt on an interim US-Iranian agreement signed last month to reopen the strait and halt hostilities while the sides pursued a further 60 days of negotiations.

businessline – 14.07.2026

India keenly watching West Asia situation as tension spirals

Amiti Sen
New Delhi

India is assessing the evolving situation in West Asia as tensions escalate to evaluate the potential impact on trade, shipping routes, energy supplies and overall economic interests, with officials closely monitoring developments before deciding on future action, sources said.

"West Asia has seen its share of ups and downs, but this round of escalation looks far more serious. We are watching the situation closely, and if it continues, we will decide on the policy interventions required," an official said.

FRAGILE CEASEFIRE

The latest flare-up comes after a fragile ceasefire between the US and Iran, announced only weeks ago following months of regional unrest, collapsed this month. Washington carried out fresh strikes on Iranian military infrastructure, saying the action followed attacks on commercial shipping and threats to regional security. Tehran retaliated with missile and drone strikes on locations linked to US interests in the Gulf, including facilities in Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and Oman, deepening fears of a wider conflict.

Adding to the uncertainty, US President Donald Trump said on Monday that the US would position itself as the 'guardian' of the Strait of Hormuz and reinstate a blockade on Iranian vessels, while demanding a 20 per cent reimbursement on the value of all other cargo transiting the waterway to cover security costs. The proposal, posted on Truth Social, has raised fresh questions over shipping costs and trade flows through one of the world's busiest energy corridors.

Indian exporters are worried about the development, fearing it could further delay a return to normalcy

Officials noted that Indian refiners have so far managed supply through a diversified import basket, with Russian crude anchoring a significant share of purchases, supplemented by barrels from Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other sources. However, LNG and LPG shipments are seen as more vulnerable given fewer short-term substitution options.

Indian exporters are worried about the development, fearing it could further delay a return to normalcy.

"If ships are not allowed through the Strait of Hormuz, freight rates will go up and lead times will increase. Both exports and imports will be impacted. Buyers will also prefer sourcing from countries with shorter lead times and lower freight costs," said Sanjay Jain, a leading textiles exporter.

Rupee closes at a 4-week low of 95.62 per dollar

Our Bureau
Mumbai

The rupee closed 29 paise weaker on Monday at a four-week low, weighed down by rising crude oil prices and FPI-related dollar outflows amid escalation in the West Asia war. The rupee closed at 95.62 per US dollar against the previous close of 95.33. Intra-day, it tested a high/low of 95.58/95.86 per USD, per CCIL data.

Brent crude oil price rose to $79 per barrel level from previous week's $76 level even as the US and Iran attacked each others strategic assets in the West Asia war.

Foreign portfolio investors pressed on the sell button in the Indian equity markets. They net sold equities to the tune of $331 million, per NSDL data.

Kunal Sodhani, Head of Treasury, Shinhan Bank India, observed that the rupee is currently being influenced by a combination of global and domestic factors – elevated crude oil prices continue to increase India's import bill and demand for US dollar, while a resilient dollar, supported by expectations around Federal Reserve policy and higher Treasury yields, has kept emerging market currencies under pressure.

"Geopolitical tensions have further dampened global risk sentiment, resulting in cautious foreign portfolio flows. On the domestic front, the RBI remains focused on containing excessive volatility through calibrated intervention, while the gradual reduction in its forward short book has enhanced its flexibility to manage the currency," he said.

businessline – 14.07.2026

Crude oil up over 2% as fresh strikes threaten Hormuz shipments

Reuters

Crude oil prices surged more than 2 per cent on Monday after renewed military strikes between the US and Iran reignited concerns over energy shipments through the Strait of Hormuz.

Brent crude futures were up $1.67, or 2.2 per cent, to $77.68 at 0955 GMT, while US West Texas Intermediate crude was up $1.59, or 2.23 per cent, to $73.00 a barrel.

"The focus will remain on the number of inbound tankers as a lower number could impact production, so currently we see a risk premium but as well a disruption risk supporting prices," said UBS analyst Giovanni Staunovo.

TENSE WATERS. Iran said the strait will be closed "until further notice," though Western navies insist that it remained open REUTERS

Fresh US and Iranian strikes over the weekend fuelled fears of a renewed escalation. Tehran targeted US facilities across the Gulf on Sunday and said it had again closed the Strait of Hormuz. Iran's Revolutionary Guards said on Monday they had attacked US military bases in Kuwait and Bahrain.

Before the conflict began in late February, the Strait of Hormuz handled about one-fifth of global daily oil and liquefied natural gas supplies.

VESSEL TRAFFIC

"Shipping operators are adopting a cautious approach and inbound movements have slowed under heightening security concerns," ANZ analysts said.

Vessel traffic through the strait fell to a five-week low on Sunday, ship-tracking data showed. Six vessels transited the strait on Sunday, according to Kpler.

Goldman Sachs estimated that expanding pipeline capacity in the West Asia could shield more than 60 per cent of pre-war Gulf oil exports from any future Hormuz disruptions by end-2028.

The bank's base-case forecast assumes pipeline capacity bypassing Hormuz will rise by 3.8 million bpd by end-2027 and 7.3 million bpd cumulatively by end-2028, taking total effective bypass capacity to more than 14 million bpd by end-2028.

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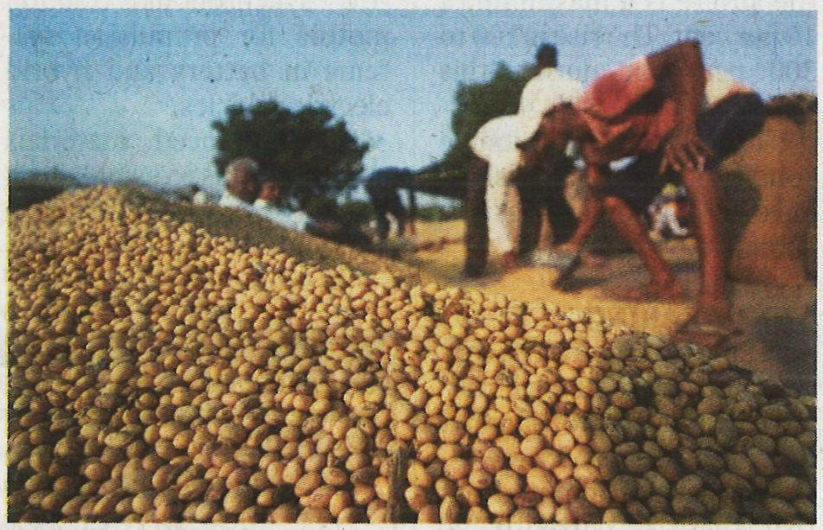
Soybean imports up at 7.77 lakh tonnes till June-end, estimates trade body SOPA

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

Soybean imports in the current oil year 2025-26, ending September, touched 7.77 lakh tonnes as of the end of June, up manifold against 2,000 tonnes the previous season due to a shortfall in domestic supplies. The trade body, Soybean Processors Association of India (SOPA), expects exports of soybean meal to slow down to 10 lakh tonnes against 20.23 lakh tonnes last season due to higher domestic prices.



OUTLOOK. SOPA estimates the import of soybean during the 2025-26 oil year (October-September) at 9 lakh tonnes

As per the latest supply and demand data released by the Soybean Processors Association of India, about 77.5 lakh tonnes of the production of 110.26 lakh tonnes have arrived in the market so far, lower than 89 lakh tonnes a year ago.

Soymeal production during October-June of the current oil year was lower at 64.31 lakh tonnes (68.65 lakh tonnes). Exports of soymeal were 9.02 lakh tonnes (15.6 lakh tonnes a year ago), while domestic consumption for food was 6.7 lakh tonnes (6.15 lakh tonnes). Consumption by the feed segment was higher at 48 lakh tonnes (47 lakh tonnes). Meal stocks at the end of June were 1.27 lakh tonnes.

IMPORTS TO TOP 9 LT

SOPA estimates imports of soybean during the 2025-26 oil year (October-September) at 9 lakh tonnes.

Exports of soybean meal for oil year 2025-26 projected lower at 10 lakh tonnes on higher prices

The export of soybean meal for the oil year 2025-26 is projected at 10 lakh tonnes (20.23 lakh tonnes), and the domestic offtake by the food segment is expected to be 9 lakh tonnes (8 lakh tonnes), and the feed sector at 63 lakh tonnes (62 lakh tonnes). "We have revised the soybean meal exports downward to 10 lakh tonnes from 11 lakh tonnes earlier and also increased the domestic consumption of soybean meal in food and feed to 9 lakh tonnes and 63 lakh tonnes, respectively, from the earlier 8 lakh and 62 lakh tonnes," said DN Pathak, Executive Director, SOPA, in a statement.

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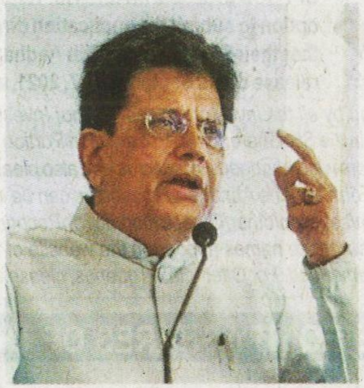
India, US fully engaged in balanced trade deal: Goyal

Amiti Sen
New Delhi

Negotiating teams from India and the US are fully engaged in achieving the objective of reaching a balanced and commercially meaningful bilateral trade agreement, said Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. "I had fantastic meetings with US Trade Representative Jamieson Greer when he visited Delhi in June," the Minister posted on social media platform 'X', underlining that things were moving smoothly while dismissing some reports suggesting otherwise.

The Minister said both sides remained committed to an agreement that is balanced, commercially meaningful and delivers tangible benefits for businesses, farmers, workers and consumers in both countries. "Our teams remain fully engaged in achieving this objective," he said.

> Both sides are committed to a deal that is commercially meaningful, delivers tangible benefits for businesses
>
> **PIYUSH GOYAL**
> Commerce Minister



ADVANTAGE INDIA

Reinforcing the Minister's view, Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal said that the framework deal was ready, and it would be signed at the right time once the preferential market issue, giving India a comparative advantage over competitors, was structured.

"The framework deal is ready. Whenever it is the right time, it will be signed. My Minister has also said in public very clearly we are ready to sign, we are just waiting... because deals are about comparative advantage. If you do a deal, you get preferential market access in India. India gets preferential market access in there, isn't it? That is also an essential part of any trade deal..," Agrawal told reporters on Monday.

He added that it was something that was getting structured.

"Whenever it is ready, things will be signed. But we are on the same page, our understanding is same... and we are progressing well. We don't see any dissension, we don't see any challenge around it," said Agrawal.

India and the US had announced a framework deal in early February, under which tariffs on Indian exports would fall from 50 per cent to 18 per cent. But before it could be signed, the US Supreme Court ruled that the IEEPA did not empower the President to impose reciprocal and penal tariffs, forcing Washington to fall back on Section 122 duties (a uniform 10 per cent on all countries) set to lapse on July 24.

FORCED LABOUR

Since then, the USTR has pursued Section 301 investigations into forced labour and excess capacity across dozens of economies, including India, potentially pushing duties on Indian goods well above the negotiated 18 per cent.

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AJAY SRIVASTAVA
SHANTWNA DIXIT

Food safety rules, or weapons of trade?

CULINARY MATTERS. India must ensure food exports conform to global safety norms, while tightening rules for food imports


BLOOMBERG

The fruits, vegetables, spices and grains we eat often contain very small amounts of pesticides and insecticides used by farmers for crop protection, as well as preservatives and additives added during processing. Food-safety regulations set safe limits for these substances in food product to protect consumers.

Some countries impose excessively strict standards or residue limits. Such measures often do little to improve public health but make it harder for foreign products to enter their markets. As a result, food safety rules have increasingly become trade barriers.

India therefore faces a double challenge. It must strengthen its own food-safety system so that food sold at home and exported abroad meets high standards. It must also ensure that foreign food-safety rules are not used as disguised barriers to its exports. India is falling short on both fronts: its exports face repeated rejections overseas, while imported food often receives far less scrutiny at home.

Recently, Japan suspended imports of India's Alphonso and Kesar mangoes after identifying deficiencies in fumigation and pest-control procedures at approved facilities.

EXPORT REJECTIONS

The European Union, the UK and several other developed markets have repeatedly rejected consignments of Indian spices, sesame seeds, rice products, seafood, fruits, vegetables and herbal products. The reasons include excessive pesticide residues, the fumigant ethylene oxide in spices and food additives, aflatoxin contamination in grains and nuts, veterinary drug residues in seafood, and heavy metals in certain products.

The scale of these setbacks is substantial. Over the past two years, the EU alone issued 365 food safety alerts involving Indian products. These incidents expose weaknesses in India's food-safety ecosystem, from farm-level traceability and pesticide management to laboratory capacity and regulatory enforcement.

While Indian exports face intensive scrutiny abroad, imported food often enters India with comparatively little inspection. This is striking because developed-country agriculture generally uses far more pesticides than India. The EU has nearly 600 registered pesticides, compared with 372 in India. In 2023, EU farmers used about 300,000 tonnes of pesticides, while India used only around 40,000 tonnes. Pesticide use per hectare in the EU stands at 2.67 kg — more than 11 times India's 0.24 kg. (FAO data)

European farmers are also permitted to use many more pesticides on several crops. For example, the EU allows 256 pesticides for apple cultivation, while India permits only 54. The US is also among the world's largest pesticide users. Yet imported European apples, California almonds and dates from West Asia rarely undergo the intensive residue testing or border inspections that Indian exports routinely face overseas. This highlights the weakness of India's own testing, surveillance and enforcement systems.

Food safety standards are indispensable for consumer safety. Yet many economies increasingly use these to control imports — the EU being a prime example.

For example, when a pesticide loses approval for domestic use, the EU frequently reduces the import residue limit to a default level of 0.01 parts per million (ppm). Critics argue that this default is often adopted without a fresh scientific risk assessment and therefore operates more as a trade barrier than a food safety threshold. The consequence is that exporters must comply with requirements that are often much stricter than internationally recognised benchmarks.

The controversy surrounding the fungicide tricyclazole illustrates this concern. In 2022, the European Food Safety Authority concluded that the residue limit for tricyclazole in rice could safely be increased from 0.01 ppm to 0.09 ppm based on scientific evidence. Nevertheless, the European Parliament rejected that recommendation and retained the stricter 0.01 ppm limit, making exports more difficult for rice-producing countries, including India.

> **While the EU-India FTA pledges enhanced cooperation on food-safety regulations, the EU has concurrently** proposed eliminating import tolerances for all pesticides not approved within Europe.

During discussions at the WTO, the EU acknowledged that it could not establish an Maximum Residue Level (MRL) through a conventional risk assessment and instead applied the default 0.01 ppm limit using a hazard-based approach.

FTA CONUNDRUMS

The issue has become particularly important as India and the EU prepare to implement their free trade agreement. While the agreement pledges enhanced cooperation on food-safety regulations, the EU has concurrently proposed eliminating import tolerances for all pesticides not approved within Europe.

This would automatically trigger the application of a default MRL of 0.01 ppm for those pesticides — a practice that stands in direct conflict with international Codex standards, which mandate adequate scientific justification before any modifications to MRL limits can be made. If such policies continue, market access for many Indian agricultural products would become increasingly difficult.

India, therefore, needs a strategy that is both defensive and offensive. The priority is to build a world-class domestic food-safety system. A national farm-to-port traceability framework should be developed for export-oriented agricultural products.

India needs many more internationally accredited laboratories near major production and export hubs, routine monitoring of pesticide residues and contaminants throughout the supply chain, and stronger guidance for farmers on pesticide use and Pre-Harvest Intervals. The enforcement capabilities of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India, customs authorities and plant and animal quarantine agencies must also be significantly strengthened.

The second priority is regulatory reciprocity. India should inspect imported food as rigorously as it inspects its own exports abroad. Imported consignments should undergo risk-based sampling and laboratory testing, particularly for products with a history of food safety concerns. Shipments that fail to meet Indian standards should be rejected, just as Indian exports are rejected overseas.

China provides a useful model — between 2013 and 2019, it rejected an average of 740 European Union food consignments annually for failing food-safety standards. China demonstrated that a major trading nation can strictly enforce food-safety standards on imports while maintaining robust international trade. India should adopt a similarly science-based import inspection regime to protect consumers, strengthen regulatory credibility and create a level playing field for Indian farmers and exporters.

Finally, India must become far more proactive in defending its export interests. A dedicated monitoring and response unit should track regulatory changes in major export markets, provide early warnings to exporters and help them comply with evolving standards.

At the same time, India should vigorously challenge food-safety measures that lack scientific justification through bilateral consultations, free trade agreement mechanisms and the WTO Committees.

Srivastava is the founder, GTRI; Dixit is with Centre for Environment and Agriculture

businessline – 14.07.2026

RAJASTHAN

Kharif sowing in state lags target due to erratic rainfall

ANIL SHARMA
Jaipur, 13 July

Kharif or monsoon crop sowing in Rajasthan has been sluggish this year due to erratic rains. It is likely to pick up once it starts to rain, said an agriculture department official.

"Over half of the state's kharif crops depend on monsoon rainfall. Sowing usually begins with pre-monsoon showers, but this year it was weak. The monsoon arrived in the state around July 2. There was decent rainfall for a week, but a dry spell over the last few days has put the sown crops at risk. If it does not rain soon, farmers may have to resort to resowing," the official said.

According to data from Rajasthan's Agriculture Department as of July 9, sowing has been completed in 61 per cent of the target area for coarse cereals, 58 per cent for pulses, 60 per cent for oilseeds, and 56 per cent for other crops.

Agricultural experts estimate that sowing coverage in the state is currently 20-25 per cent lower than last year.

"Farmers like me are holding off on further sowing, waiting for the rainfalls. Consequently, the Kharif sowing season could be delayed," said Gyarsi Lal, a farmer from Shivdaspura village near Jaipur.

Regarding major crops, 61 per cent of the pearl millet (bajra) target has been achieved, with sowing completed in 2.46 million hectares against a target of 4.05 million hectares. Among coarse cereals, sowing has reached 51 per cent for sorghum (*jowar*) and 69 per cent for maize. In pulses, moong has seen 60 per cent coverage (1.59 million hectares sown against a target of 2.65 million hectares).

In other pulses, 44 per cent sowing has been done for moth bean and 44 per cent for urad. Groundnut sowing is in the best position among all kharif crops. Among oilseed crops, groundnut sowing has reached 919,000 hectares against a target of 1.15 million hectares (80 per cent completion). Soybean sowing stands at 674,000 hectares against a target of 1.1 million hectares (61 per cent completion). Cotton sowing has reached 72 per cent completion.

The state is one of the largest producers of guar, with over 70 per cent of the country's total production.

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Kharif sowing picks up pace but trails 2025 level

Widening gap

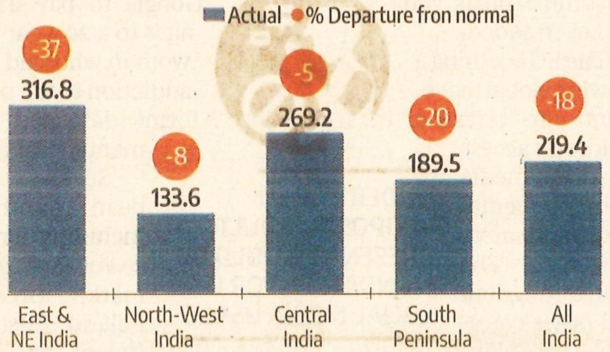
Kharif sowing (in million hectares)

Crops	Normal area	2025*	2026*	Y-o-Y change %
Paddy	41.2	12.55	11.46	-8.7
Pulses	12.96	7.38	5.66	-23.3
Coarse cereals	18.26	12.73	9.86	-22.5
Oilseeds	20	14.91	11.78	-21.0
Cotton	12.55	9.39	7.95	-15.3
Total	110.44	63.26	53.12	-16.0

* Data as on July 10. Normal area is the average area covered during the whole season in last five years
Note: Total might not match as it is only of broad crop categories
Source: Ministry of Agriculture

Rain check

Monsoon so far (in millimeters)



Data is from June 1 to July 10, 2026
Note: Decimals have been rounded off
Source: IMD

SANJEEB MUKHERJEE
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Sowing of kharif crops picked up during the week ended July 10, narrowing the year-on-year gap in acreage to 16 per cent from nearly 21 per cent a week earlier as the southwest monsoon gathered pace.

However, the shortfall remains significant enough to raise concerns over its impact on the final kharif harvest. The concern is heightened as the rains have paused after a vigorous spell and, according to the latest forecast released on Monday from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the southwest monsoon is unlikely to gather much pace over the next six to seven days.

"Subdued rainfall activity is likely over the plains of northwest India and over west-central and south Peninsular India during the next six to seven days," the IMD said in a forecast issued on Monday.

Sowing data showed acreage under all major kharif crops — pulses, coarse cereals, oilseeds, cotton and paddy — remained below last year's level as of July 10, though the gap narrowed considerably from July 5.

The area under paddy, the main kharif foodgrain, was around 9 per cent lower than a year ago as of July 10. This should help ensure a healthy paddy harvest, but the bigger concern remains pulses and oilseeds.

ACCORDING TO IMD'S LATEST FORECAST, THE SOUTHWEST MONSOON IS UNLIKELY TO GATHER MUCH PACE OVER THE NEXT SIX TO SEVEN DAYS

Area under pulses was 23.3 per cent lower than a year ago, while coarse cereals lagged by 22.5 per cent. Oilseeds acreage stood at 11.78 million hectares, down 21 per cent year-on-year, while cotton acreage was 15.3 per cent lower than in the corresponding period last year.

Meanwhile, water levels in all 166 reservoirs monitored by the government improved during the week ended July 9 as the southwest monsoon continued to bring rain to parts of western and southern India.

Water levels in the 53 reservoirs across western India were 48 per cent above the 10-year average. Overall, storage across the 166 reservoirs remained below last year's level but above the 10-year average. Reservoir storage rose to 32.38 per cent of live capacity at full reservoir level as of July 9 from 26 per cent a week earlier.