

Indian Cotton Crop and Trade Issues

With 42 years of experience in the agri business, Shri. Harish Lakhani is the Founder Chairman of DML Group, India and a pioneer in the agri export business in India. He started his career as an agri products broker and with his hard work and entrepreneurial skills, he has taken the DML Group to new heights. Today, the DML Group is a leading cotton and agri products exporter from India and has been awarded the "Premier Trading House".

Under his leadership and guidance, DML Group has achieved many goal and is heading towards a brighter future.

The Indus Valley civilization started cultivating cotton by 2500 BCE. Cotton was mentioned in Hindu hymns in 1500 BCE. Herodotus, an ancient Greek historian, mentions

Indian cotton in the 5th century BCE as wool exceeding in beauty and goodness that of sheep. When Alexander the Great invaded India, his troops started wearing

cotton clothes that were more comfortable than their previous woollen ones. Strabo, another Greek historian, mentioned the vividness of Indian fabrics, and Arrian told of Indian–Arab trade of cotton fabrics in 130 CE.

In the diverse economic and manufacturing activities of India, cotton growing, processing and trading, occupy a predominant position and act as one of the strong competitive base for textile and clothing production. India is one of the largest producers and exporters of cotton and an influencing player in the global cotton economy. It is estimated that more than 60 million people in India have been directly engaged in cotton and cotton-based manufacturing process and it is one of the largest employment sector in rural India. The description of cotton as white gold, has rightfully highlighted its significance in the Indian economy

> since a long time. The dependence of millions of rural workers on cotton and cotton economy, has made this segment the back bone of rural economy, expansion of manufacturing activities and employment. Any adverse developments in the cotton sector will have a serious impact on the livelihood of many and on the overall economy.

> > The primary objective of this article is to highlight two very important issues and problems related to cotton and cotton trade.

Firstly, from the producer's point of view; how to sustain the growth in cotton production which India had achieved over the years. Secondly, since, cotton consumption has been increasing at a faster pace, from an end user perspective; what policies and measures need to be adopted to create a viable and stable mechanism which can augment supply to domestic manufacturing and for exports earnings.



Shri. Harish Lakhani Chairman, DML Group, India

Maximising Cotton Production

The introduction of Bt cotton on commercial scale in year 2002 and various programmes under cotton Technology Mission (TMC) helped in reducing cost and increasing yield in India. A significant amount of cotton was being imported for the spinning industry till 2004-05. But then India became a net exporter in cotton and holds this position now, meeting the domestic requirement. India has occupied the leading slot in world cotton in production, consumption and for exports.

However, the main issue that worries stakeholders in Indian cotton is the stagnation of productivity at an average of 500 kg per hectare for the past few years. It seems that the gains have been stagnant and unaffected by the increase in area of Bt cotton during these times. Since the area under cotton is likely to stagnate around 12 million hectares because of pressure on land availability for alternative or competitive usages, clearly cotton productivity needs to improve considerably. High yield can ensure the remunerative prices for farmers after adjusting ever increasing input costs.

Currently, the world average in cotton yield (around 750 kilos per hectare) is over 50% higher than ours, though the overall trend in average yield gap in world cotton vis-à- vis Indian cotton is coming down. However, with need and ability to adopt requisite inputs, techniques and practices in cotton production at better pace than ever, there are high costs or opportunity foregone, if we remain lagging behind in average yield from world cotton.

Policy Focus for High Yield

The focus needs to be on technology and other factors that could complement the growing of Bt with widened share of existing cotton land in India. The awareness of farmers on how Bt cotton works (in terms of GM technology) is either limited or not getting implemented effectively. The government should pro-actively put into place systems or revamp the existing systems which would assess the situation of Bt cotton vis-a- vis non-Bt cotton in terms of pest and disease incidence, economics of investments and returns, other problems like newer diseases, efficient crop management strategies, etc. It is being reported that the sucking pests found to be very high in Bt cotton vis-a- vis non Bt cotton. Most of the Bt-cotton fields were damaged by sucking pests in recent years. In the rain-fed zones, crops are suffering from leafreddening and wilting problems, which are getting more severe as years go by.

Crop scientists arguing for the shift towards hybrid cotton and pesticides with novel modes of action, are important in helping cotton productivity. Research and development of seeds, and substantial improvement in irrigation facilities are urgent requirements to increase yield. The possibility of importing seeds and technology from countries which have achieved high yields like Brazil, Israel and China needs to be explored. High density planting is another important area that needs attention.

It is obvious that the low productivity in the Central Zone, because of low yield of Maharashtra, is dragging down the national average yield. Notably, Maharashtra accounts for nearly 36 percent of total cotton area in India. Even though the irrigation source and potential are very much limited in the Central Zone, ideal temperatures and ample sunshine during grand growth and maturity periods and the extended moderately cool, rain free dry weather prevailing during October to February are favourable for obtaining higher yields above 700 kg/hectare.

So pest and disease incidence, economics of investments and returns, other problems like newer diseases, efficient crop management strategies etc. need immediate attention. If the yield in general and in the Central Zone in particular, can reach the world average, India can overtake China as the largest cotton producer in the world.

Over the years, we have succeeded in mitigating the problem of cotton contamination drastically. Now the focus should be the on the need for branding of Indian cottons, with commitment to keep cotton contamination free and also to maintain trash and other quality parameters of cotton in line with international norms.

Global factors and uncertainty in cotton prices and increase in consumption trend mainly driven by India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and some other cotton-based textiles producing countries would support the international cotton prices. In fact, according to International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC), there is increase in cotton consumption by mills globally. Production cost of competing textile fibres, that is man-made fibres or others, for textiles products are also increasing, hence unlikely to pull down cotton prices. But, in the medium term, there are genuine apprehensions in the cotton market and its prices for the international cotton community.

Recent past experiences have played a distortionary role in the cotton economy and these affected the price stability and in turn the textile manufacturers. Fundamentally, a continuous rise in mill consumptions along with less room for speculators can set discernible price trends. Absence of these factors may cause high uncertainty, volatility and unpredictability in cotton prices. If cotton prices decline significantly, trading may incur losses and planting of cotton may be discouraging in many countries. Among significant producers and exporters, US cotton agriculturalists have enough safeguards and capability to mitigate the losses.

But, in many developing countries including India or less developed countries, cotton growers can easily become victims of wild swings in international prices of cotton. Hence, ultimately, the onus falls upon the major cotton producing or consuming (or both) governments to ensure competitive remuneration to farmer, bring stability in prices for consumption as raw materials for cotton value chain industries and support exports. Hence, the Indian cotton community must be safeguarded with developing and leveraging Indian spinning capacities and its operations.

Cotton Consumption and Growth Factors

Growth in cotton can be ensured and sustained through push and pull factors respectively. Reaping the potential yields and maximum production in cotton by improving irrigation infrastructure, innovation in seeds and its application, providing best agricultural practices, technical assistance and other farm supports, etc. can be categorised under push factors. Increased demand of cotton for yarn production or other value-added textiles products and in exports market can be realised under a category of pull factors.

Recent investments through TUFS or otherwise, expansion and modernisation in spinning sector have ensured the higher consumption demand of cotton in India. The opportunity and realisation of supplying maximum cotton yarn for domestic downstream textiles value chain products like fabrics, made-ups and garments and also for the exports market, would augment the consumption demand of cotton further. The Indian textiles industry has been showing positive growth rates in recent years, now textiles industry is showing significant growth rate in each segment of its value chain. It is being expected or projected to achieve double digit growth rate.

Apparel, known for most value addition in the entire textiles chains, is the main drivers of overall textiles production growth rate. Importantly, high surge in cotton yarn manufacturing and cotton yarn exports are also auguring well for cottonbased textiles production growth rate. Domestic demand for cotton is basically driven by spinning mills, of which 90% falls under organised sector in India. Further consumption is bound to increase with more addition in capacity with increase in investments, up-gradation and modernisation of spinning technologies. Growth in cotton yarn production is higher than any other production in textiles value chain. So, it's easy to reap the benefit of higher exports earnings by converting more cotton into yarn and exports of surplus cotton varn.

But the development of more value-added products like made-ups and garments out of cotton is slow paced. These sectors must be strengthened by augmented investments, upgradation and consolidation process. Indian textile and clothing industry have made substantial investment in the entire value chain and an investment of US Dollar 30 billion has been invested in the last 10 years. The industry is planning to invest additional US dollar 20 billion in the next five years to expand capacities and modernise and upgrade the existing capacities. Notably, cotton-based production capacity constitutes nearly 70% of these investments.

Conclusion

If India wants to lead the cotton trade in the world market, then India has to improve its yield of cotton, quality, and work towards ensuring contamination and trash free cotton. Indian cotton farmers must have enough safeguards and capabilities to mitigate the losses and protection against swings in international prices of cotton. The government has to ensure farmers are remunerated competitively, bring stability in prices for consumption as raw materials for cotton value chain industries and support exports.

Courtesy: Cotton India 2018 (Domestic)

(The views expressed in this column are of the author and not that of Cotton Association of India)

Annexure III

Excerpts from India Meteorological Department's Weather Report of 21st June 2018

Forecast for next two week

Weather systems & associated Precipitation during Week 1(21 to 27 June, 2018) and Week 2 (28 June to 04 July, 2018)

The monsoon scenario is very likely to improve from around 24th June with (i) expected movement of active phase of Madden Julian Oscillation (MJO) into west equatorial Indian Ocean & adjoining Arabian Sea during next 2-3 days and (ii) development of cyclonic circulations over eastern India leading to strengthening of easterlies winds over Gangetic plains.

Conditions very likely to become favourable for further advance of Southwest Monsoon over remaining parts of Assam, some more parts of

35	KERALA		ws"	ws	5	ws*	ws"	W	3	FWS	FWS
34	SOUTH INT.KARNATAKA		FWS"	FW	s	FWS"	FWS"	FW	s"	FWS"	FWS
33	NORTH INT.KARNATAKA		FWS*	SCT	r•	SCT	FWS	FW	/S	FWS	FWS
32	COASTAL KARNATAKA		WS"	WS	-	WS" WS"		WS		WS"	WS"
31	TAMILNADU & PUDUCH	IERRY	ISOL ¹⁵	ISOL		ISOL ¹⁵	ISOL	ISC		ISOL	ISOL
30	RAYALASEEMA		ISOL ^{TS}	SCT	-	SCT	SCT	sc	-	SCT	ISOL
29	TELANGANA		SCT ¹⁵	SCT	•rs	SCT	SCT		т	WS"	FWS'
28	COASTAL ANDHRA PR	ADESH	SCT ¹⁵	SCT	• TS	SCT SCT		sc	т	FWS*	FWS
27	CHHATTISGARH		SCT	SC	T	SCT	FWS	FW	s	ws*	ws"
26	VIDARBHA		FWS'	FW	-	FWS	FWS	w		ws	ws"
25	MARATHAWADA		FWS*	FWS	-	FWS	FWS	FW	-	FWS	ws*
24	MADHYA MAHARASHT	RA	FWS"	FWS	s*	FWS	FWS	FW	s	FWS*	ws*
23	KONKAN & GOA		ws.	ws	-	ws*	ws*	w	s*	ws*	ws*
22	SAURASTRA KUTCH & DIU		ISOL	ISO	_	ISOL	ISOL	ISC		SCT'	SCT
21	GUJARAT REGION D.D. & N.H.		ISOL	ISO	L	ISOL	SCT	SC	т	SCT*	SCT'
20	EAST MADHYA PRADESH		ISOL	ISO	L	SCT	SCT	sc	т	FWS	ws*
19	WEST MADHYA PRADESH		ISOL	ISO	L	ISOL	SCT	sc	т	SCT*	ws'
18	EAST RAJASTHAN		DRY	ISO	L	ISOL	ISOL	DR	Y	ISOL	SCT
17	WEST RAJASTHAN		DRY	DR	Y	DRY	DRY	DR	Y	ISOL	ISOL
16	JAMMU & KASHMIR		ISOL	ISO	L	ISOL	ISOL	ISC)L	ISOL	SCT
15	HIMACHAL PRADESH		ISOL	ISO	L	ISOL	ISOL	ISC)L	ISOL	SCT
14	PUNJAB		DRY	DR	Y	DRY	DRY	ISC)L	ISOL	SCT
13	HARYANA CHD. & DEL	н	ISOL	DR	Y	DRY	DRY	ISC)L	ISOL	SCT
12	UTTARAKHAND		ISOL	ISO	L	ISOL	ISOL	ISC)L	SCT*	FWS
11	WEST UTTAR PRADES	н	ISOL ¹⁵	DR	Y	DRY	DRY	ISC)L	SCT	SCT
10	EAST UTTAR PRADES	1	ISOL ^{TS}	ISO	L	ISOL	SCT	sc	т	FWS	FWS
9	BIHAR		ISOL ⁷⁵	ISOL	TS	SCT	FWS*	FW	's'	ws*	ws
8	JHARKHAND		ISOL ¹⁵	SCT		SCT	FWS'	FW	-	ws'	ws'
7	ODISHA		SCT ¹⁵	SCT	_	SCT	FWS	FW	-	ws	ws*
6	GANGETIC WEST BENG		SCT	sc		SCT	FWS*	FW	-	FWS	ws*
5	SUB-HIM.W. BENG. & S		WS ¹⁵	ws'		ws	ws	Ws	- S ⁻	ws*	ws"
4	NAGA.MANI.MIZO.& TR		SCT	SC		FWS	FWS	W	-	WS WS	WS WS
2	ARUNACHAL PRADESI ASSAM & MEGHALAYA	FWS FWS	FWS	-	FWS"	WS' WS	W	-	WS'	WS*	
1	ANDAMAN & NICO.ISL/	FWS	FW	-	FWS	FWS	W		WS	WS	
sr. No	MET.SUB-DIVISION	21 JUN	22 JI		23 JUN	24 JUN			26 JUN	27 JU	

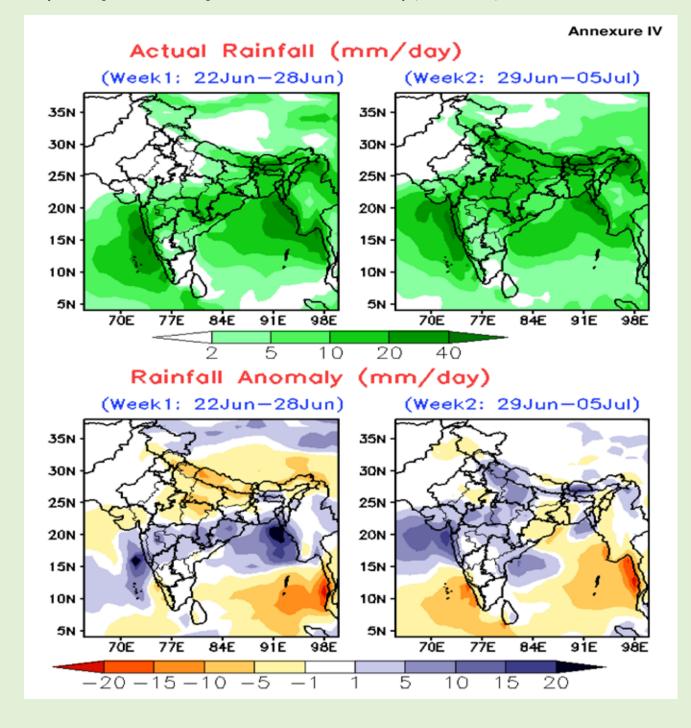
Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal and some parts of Jharkhand, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and some parts of south Gujarat region between 23rd to 25thJune.

Fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely to occur along west coast of India, over Interior Maharashtra & Karnataka, northeastern states and Sub-Himalayan West Bengal & Sikkim during most days of the 1st week;

Rainfall activity is very likely to increase over rest parts of east India & over Chhattisgarh with fairly widespread to widespread rainfall with isolated heavy rainfall over the above regions during second half of the 1st week.

Isolated to scattered rainfall activity likely to occur over rest parts of the country outside West Rajasthan, where dry weather likely to occur during first half of the 1st week (Annexure III).

Overall rainfall activity is likely to be normal to above normal over the country except most parts of northwest, central & adjoining East India and Arunachal Pradesh, where it is likely to be below normal during week 1. During week 2, there may be increase in rainfall activity over most parts of the country (Annexure IV).



First Secretary (Agriculture) from Chinese Embassy in India visits CAI

s. Feng Yan, First Secretary in charge of agriculture in the commercial section of the Chinese Embassy in India, made a courtesy visit to CAI on June 22, 2018. She was accompanied by Mr. Ma Guang, the third secretary in charge of tax affairs and enterprises liaison. She was received by Mr. Atul Ganatra, President CAI, along with Mr. Vinay Kotak, Additional Vice President, CAI and Mr. Arun Sekhsaria, Director CAI.







(In Lakh halos)

Cotton Consumption - Cotton Year-wise

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (P)	Lakh bales) 2017-18 (P)
Oct.	16.54	18.13	22.09	17.77	21.84	24.03	24.17	24.70	21.52	22.13
Nov.	16.94	18.47	21.09	18.34	21.09	22.96	25.05	23.35	23.06	23.19
Dec.	17.98	19.49	22.57	20.13	22.63	25.16	25.89	25.49	24.59	25.14
Jan.	16.93	19.54	22.1	20.33	23.3	25.19	25.77	25.26	25.02	25.12
Feb.	16.23	18.81	20.23	20.31	22.24	23.22	24.58	24.64	24.44	24.31
March	17.51	20.01	21.77	20.38	23.61	25.07	26.18	25.61	25.90	24.95
April	17.12	20.53	20.17	20.31	23.22	24.32	25.57	24.95	24.82	24.24
May	17.83	20.93	18.64	21.27	22.85	24.38	25.62	25.38	24.86	
June	18.01	20.71	18.23	21.17	22.51	24.11	25.61	25.38	24.57	
July	18.98	22.11	19	22.14	24.11	24.54	25.56	25.01	24.68	
Aug.	18.59	21.73	18.64	22.08	24.23	24.46	25.86	24.37	23.17	
Sept.	18.29	21.42	21.71	21.46	23.7	25.81	24.58	23.14	22.28	
TOTAL	210.96	241.88	246.23	245.47	275.34	293.24	304.43	297.28	288.91	169.08

Since 1921, we are dedicated to the cause of Indian cotton.

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The Cotton Association of India (CAI) is respected as the chief trade body in the hierarchy of the Indian cotton economy. Since its origin in 1921, CAI's contribution has been unparalleled in the development of cotton across India.

The CAI is setting benchmarks across a wide spectrum of services targeting the entire cotton value chain. These range from research and development at the grass root level to education, providing an arbitration mechanism, maintaining Indian cotton grade standards, issuing Certificates of Origin to collecting and disseminating statistics and information. Moreover, CAI is an autonomous organization portraying professionalism and reliability in cotton testing.

The CAI's network of independent cotton testing & research laboratories are strategically spread across major cotton centres in India and are equipped with:

- State-of-the-art technology & world-class Premier and MAG cotton testing machines
- HVI test mode with trash% tested gravimetrically

LABORATORY LOCATIONS

Current locations : • Maharashtra : Mumbai; Akola; Aurangabad • Gujarat : Rajkot; Mundra; Ahmedabad • Andhra Pradesh : Guntur, Warangal • Madhya Pradesh : Indore • Karnataka : Hubli • Punjab : Bathinda • Telangana: Adilabad



COTTON ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

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				UPC	OUNTRY	SPOT R	RATES				(R	Rs./Qtl)	
	Standard Descriptions with Basic Grade & Staple in Millimetres based on Upper Half Mean Length [By law 66 (A) (a) (4)]						Spot Rate (Upcountry) 2017-18 Crop JUNE 2018						
Sr. No.	Growth	Grade Standard	Grade	Staple	Micronaire	Strength /GPT	18th	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	
1	P/H/R	ICS-101	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0-7.0	15	12598 (44800)	12598 (44800)	12879 (45800)	12598 (44800)	12598 (44800)	12598 (44800)	
2	P/H/R	ICS-201	Fine	Below 22mm	5.0-7.0	15	12738 (45300)	12738 (45300)	13020 (46300)	12738 (45300)	12738 (45300)	12738 (45300)	
3	GUJ	ICS-102	Fine	22mm	4.0-6.0	20	8464 (30100)	8464 (30100)	8464 (30100)	8548 (30400)	8548 (30400)	8577 (30500)	
4	KAR	ICS-103	Fine	23mm	4.0-5.5	21	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	9926 (35300)	
5	M/M	ICS-104	Fine	24mm	4.0-5.0	23	10826 (38500)	10826 (38500)	10826 (38500)	10826 (38500)	10826 (38500)	10826 (38500)	
6	P/H/R	ICS-202	Fine	26mm	3.5-4.9	26	12795 (45500)	12654 (45000)	12654 (45000)	12710 (45200)	12710 (45200)	12766 (45400)	
7	M/M/A	ICS-105	Fine	26mm	3.0-3.4	25	10011 (35600)	9842 (35000)	9842 (35000)	9786 (34800)	9786 (34800)	9842 (35000)	
8	M/M/A	ICS-105	Fine	26mm	3.5-4.9	25	10826 (38500)	10657 (37900)	10657 (37900)	10601 (37700)	10601 (37700)	10629 (37800)	
9	P/H/R	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5.4.9	26	12907 (45900)	12766 (45400)	12766 (45400)	12823 (45600)	12823 (45600)	12879 (45800)	
10	M/M/A	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.0-3.4	26	10489 (37300)	10404 (37000)	10404 (37000)	10348 (36800)	10348 (36800)	10404 (37000)	
11	M/M/A	ICS-105	Fine	27mm	3.5-4.9	26	11304 (40200)	11164 (39700)	11164 (39700)	11107 (39500)	11107 (39500)	11107 (39500)	
12	P/H/R	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5-4.9	27	12991 (46200)	12823 (45600)	12823 (45600)	12879 (45800)	12879 (45800)	12935 (46000)	
13	M/M/A	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5-4.9	27	11951 (42500)	12092 (43000)	12092 (43000)	12035 (42800)	12035 (42800)	12092 (43000)	
14	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	28mm	3.5-4.9	27	12682 (45100)	12682 (45100)	12682 (45100)	12541 (44600)	12541 (44600)	12598 (44800)	
15	M/M/A/K	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.5-4.9	28	12710 (45200)	12710 (45200)	12654 (45000)	12654 (45000)	12710 (45200)	12710 (45200)	
16	GUJ	ICS-105	Fine	29mm	3.5-4.9	28	13160 (46800)	13160 (46800)	13104 (46600)	13076 (46500)	13076 (46500)	13132 (46700)	
17	M/M/A/K	ICS-105	Fine	30mm	3.5-4.9	29	13104 (46600)	13104 (46600)	13104 (46600)	13048 (46400)	13048 (46400)	13076 (46500)	
18	M/M/A/K/T/O	ICS-105	Fine	31mm	3.5-4.9	30	13385 (47600)	13385 (47600)	13385 (47600)	13329 (47400)	13244 (47100)	13357 (47500)	
19	A/K/T/O	ICS-106	Fine	32mm	3.5-4.9	31	13666 (48600)	13666 (48600)	13666 (48600)	13610 (48400)	13526 (48100)	13582 (48300)	
20	M(P)/K/T	ICS-107	Fine	34mm	3.0-3.8	33	16788 (59700)	16788 (59700)	16788 (59700)	16788 (59700)	16788 (59700)	16788 (59700)	

(Note: Figures in bracket indicate prices in Rs./Candy)