

Handloom expo gets under way at Tinsukia

CORRESPONDENT

TINSUKIA, May 7 – A week-long Handloom and Handicraft expo, organised by the District Industries and Commerce Centre (DICC), was inaugurated by Parliamentary Secretary in charge of the Department of Industries and Tinsukia MLA Rajendra Prasad Singh at Boroguri Industrial Estate here on Wednesday. Thirty self-help groups and entrepreneurs from different areas of the district are taking part in the exhibition to sell handicraft and handloom products.

In his inauguration speech, the Parliamentary Secretary stated that the youths must come forward to do business in the production and marketing sectors as there are not sufficient jobs in the government and semi-government sectors to solve the burning

unemployment problem.

Singh claimed that the present State Government under the leadership of Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi has assisted the youths of the State to gain self-employment through various schemes since the last 14 years.

The inaugural function was also addressed by the chairperson of the Zilla Parishad, Meera Singh, Additional Deputy Commissioner Arup Arandhara and the General Manager of the Tinsukia DICC, Kanakeswer Sonowal. The function was attended by a number of dignitaries and entrepreneurs. The expo will conclude on May 13.

Articles distributed: Under the aegis of the Tinsukia District Industries and Commerce Centre (DICC), various articles under the Mukhya Mantrir Karmajyoti Achoni were distributed at a function

held at the Industrial Estate in Tinsukia on Wednesday. Under the scheme, 11 commercial sewing machines, 60 jewellery-making kits, seven water hyacinth yarn-making machines, 13 popcorn machines, five plumber kits, 55 fashion designer kits, 17 grinding machines for both grains and spices and 160 packets of cotton yarn for weavers were distributed among the beneficiaries in the function, which was presided over by the DICC General Manager, Kanakeswer Sonowal.

As the chief guest of the function, Parliamentary Secretary and local MLA Rajendra Prasad Singh appealed to the beneficiaries to work hard. The function was also attended by Meera Singh, chairperson of the Zilla Parishad, Additional Deputy Commissioner Arup Arandhara and other dignitaries.

ARCHITECTURE

A dream designer

The London-based architect Tom Croft isn't the type to shout about anything. But if he was, his client book would be the talk of the town. It's a roll call of top art dealers, highly-regarded collectors and celebrities at the Paul McCartney end of the scale. But Croft is discreet in both his day-to-day dealings and his design, often working in historic buildings and making them fit for modern day-purposes. "It's important to be deferential to the original character of the place," he says.

His most recently completed project is a home in Albany (the fourth he's done here), that unique collection of apartments in a 1770s building that stretches from Piccadilly to Vigo Street, for the art dealer Per Skarstedt. "It's on the top two floors in the original William Chambers-designed mansion," says Croft. "It's a Grade I-listed building, so there are things you can't do. But contemporary art works well in Georgian spaces — they are good at being simple and the windows are big."

Transforming spaces

The apartment was 1970s, filled with stripped pine. "We've taken it back to the 1770s by repainting the rooms in a more historic way, but we've also brought it right up to date by making the bathrooms and the kitchen modern and minimal. The bathrooms are all white marble — actually a Georgian material. The kitchen is a U-shaped chocolate brown boîte by Bulthaup."

He had previously created a gallery space for Skarstedt in Old Bond Street. "He deals primarily in established artists of the late 20th century, so a lot of the work needs a good setting," says Croft. "His aesthetic isn't a white box one. His original New York gallery is in the Upper East Side in an elegant 19th-century Palazzo building. There's almost a domesticity about these spaces."

For David Gill, the specialist in contemporary limited-edition furniture, he installed enormous windows into a corner façade in St James, transforming what had been a particularly unwelcoming and gloomy gallery space into one where people happily walk in off the street.

Croft describes the gallery world as a

"virtuous circle" where work comes as the result of recommendations and homes are inevitably designed with art in mind. One client, with an impressive collection of contemporary work, looked at 50 properties before finding one in the Hyde Park Estate that suited her purposes.

"She wanted scale and big walls," says Croft. "And a ground floor that would be right for hosting big events. People stand on the stairs to give speeches. I've seen Kevin Spacey on those stairs." Croft began by making photorealistic renders of every room and every work of art, to show the client how they would come together.

That special touch

"Some clients are good at imagining spaces, but for a complicated project they need more help," he says. But his favourite part of the house is the 30-metre long corridor he reinstated in the basement. "The ceiling is Barisol, a material usually used for swimming pool ceilings. It comes in gigantic lengths and has an otherworldly shininess," says Croft. "Shiny ceilings are my tip for 2015."

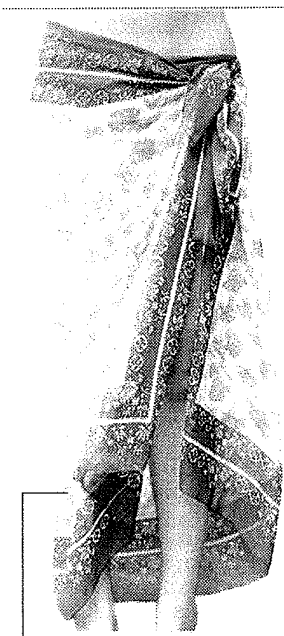
Deference, however, isn't always the order of the day. One house, completed 10 years ago in Notting Hill, still has its 1846 exterior — "It's a glorious house in a kind of Greco-Roman version of Georgian, a style that didn't catch on," says Croft — but has a completely new interior and the addition of an impressive 11-bay steel colonnade that incorporates a new dining room, library and drawing room. The colonnade doesn't just create more space, but is a significant architectural move to unite the rather asymmetric existing parts of the house.

Success can be measured in many ways, but when it comes to clients, a following commission is probably the surest sign, and Croft has just completed a new-build house in Scotland for the same people. "It's an abstracted version of Scottish vernacular, with slate roofs and white rendered walls," says Croft. Sadly we can't show any images here, but suffice to say, it's a little bit more palatial than your average crofters cottage.

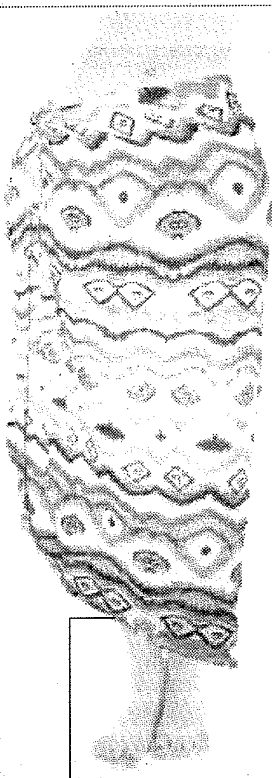
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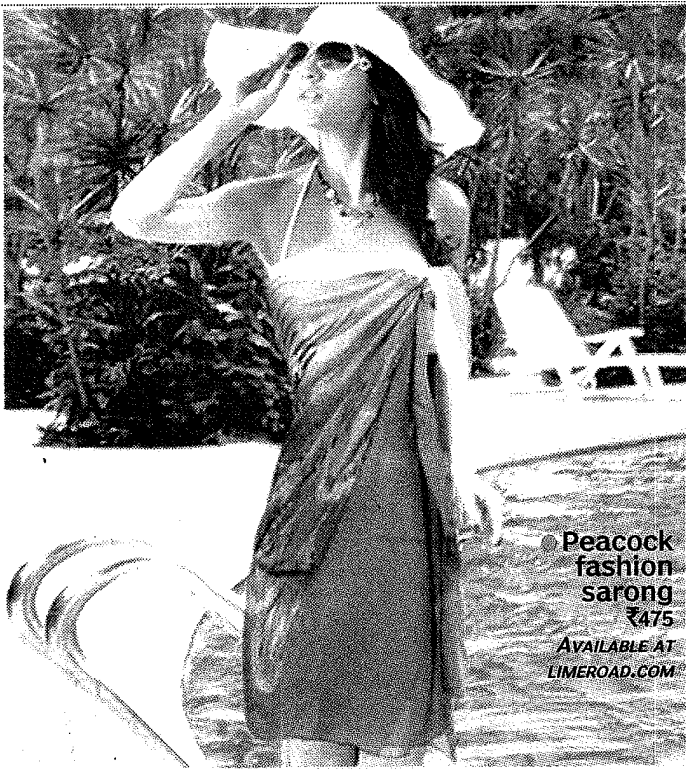
IN HIS SPACE Architect Tom Croft is the most sought after designer.



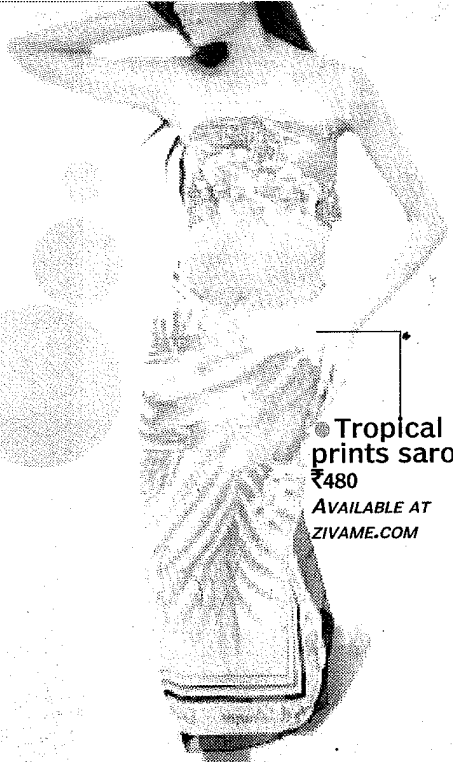
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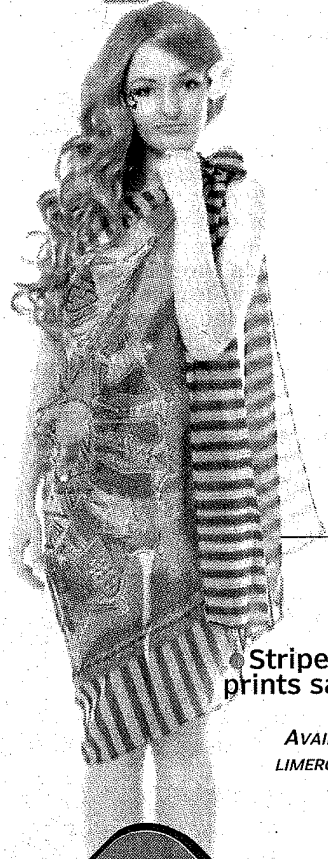
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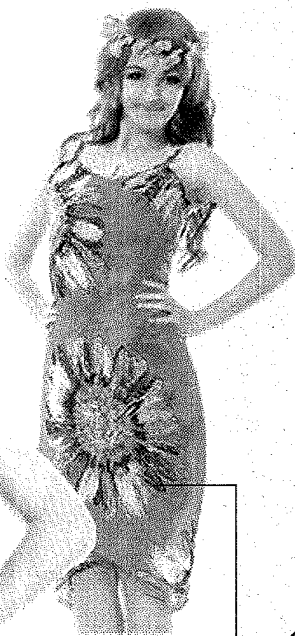
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GALaxy

SHE IS ADEPT AT DESIGNING AND EVEN MORE AT FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE. HEMA KAUL NOW WOWS THE WORLD WITH HER FASHION SENSIBILITY

The 'Kaul' of COUTURE

● NAYARE ALI

Dubai-based fashion designer Hema Kaul's debut at the London Fashion Week in 2014 was the culmination of a childhood dream. At an age when little girls toyed around with fashion accessories for fun, Hema had found her calling. She was mesmerised by the colours, cuts and the feel of fabrics — a passion that only deepened with time. So why did she specifically choose LFW?

"London is a great platform to make your presence felt especially as far as the international media is concerned. But having said that, it was not at all easy. I had to go through the application, presentations interviews like anyone else," she says without stating the obvious that she had emerged with flying colours.

As a Dubai resident, Hema has been an active participant of Fashion Forward Dubai, which she describes as a definitive fashion platform for the Middle East. "This is a fashion movement that highlights strengths, inspires and nurtures industry growth and its wealth of talent, with the ultimate goal of driving forward the entire fashion industry in the region," she adds.

Coming from a prominent business family in Dubai, Hema was blessed to have found their unflinching support. "My family is very encouraging of my career as they always wanted me to pursue my fashion dream. I used to take interest and be on the lookout for upcoming trends, travelling the world to attend various fashion shows and purchasing materials that I tinkered with," she confesses like a true blue fashionista.

Having been exposed to the finest haute couture names in the world, Hema unabashedly admires

Alexander McQueen and Coco Chanel. But having closely followed the Indian fashion industry, she admits to being inspired by Sabyasachi Mukherji.

"He incorporates antique textiles and cultural traditions of his home town, Kolkata. This has been a lifelong inspiration for a designer who believes that 'clothes should just be an extension of one's intellect,'" points out Hema. Ask her if she plans to participate in any of the Indian fashion weeks and she adds that "India is on the cards very soon."

Hema's journey to the London Fashion Week was gradual. Prior to that her couture pieces had been sold privately and she was also involved in her family business of producing perfumes. But Hema straddles the worlds of fragrance and design with relative ease. She shares her tips. "Time management is something I work on, and since both are creative fields, it works well for me. Also I won't deny while creativity is important, but one should also have the skill to sell the product and become an overall success, I have been involved in the family business for over 14 years and have aspired for my brand to be presented on a larger platform."

She may not have showcased her collection in the country yet, but has not stopped her from styling some of our popular Bollywood stars like Kajol, Alia Bhatt, Bipasha Basu, Ileana D'Cruz, Malaika Arora Khan and others.

Ask her to name a favourite and she picks Karisma Kapoor. "She is beautiful and has an innate sense of style and it shows each time she makes an appearance," While Hema personal style has been described as chic, classic and elegant, she is open to experimentation and likes to "dress women who have the personality to stand out in a crowd."

Hema may travel the world in search of the perfect fabric and a unique design inspiration but when in Dubai, she makes sure to be home before her kids go to sleep. "I like to reflect on the day that has been. I am thankful for all my blessings especially my family. I destress with hot yoga or in the company of good friends. And I always go to sleep with a smile on my face." And while she sleeps, the dreams of making Hema Kaul a global brand continues. More power to the lady!

Hema Kaul

Sari, it's pricey

A bunch of e-retailers has not just revived the market for handlooms but catapulted it to luxury status. Be it khadi or Kota, Andhra weave or Ajrakh, traditional is now tony

Malini.Nair@timesgroup.com

Vijayakashmi Nachiar has been coaxing her weavers at Pollachi, a pretty town south of Coimbatore, to craft swatches of superfine muslin. It is a forgotten art that needs painstaking effort today and a whole day at the loom coughs up barely a few inches of muslin.

By October, Nachiar and her husband, Mani Chinnaswamy, hope to fashion enough muslin stoles to display at the sustainability-centric Textile Exchange in Mumbai. Muslin once draped the ordinary man walking on the street in those 19th century woodcut prints. But in a modern lifestyle store, the nearly extinct textile deserves to be now priced, says Nachiar, as much as say, Mongolian fine cashmere.

"India is absolutely ready for world-class handloom products," says Chinnaswamy who, along with Nachiar, runs Ethicus, a line of organic cotton merchandise. "We talk so easily now about Louis Vuitton or Rolls Royce. We should be will-

ing to put a high value on our own heritage. And remember, we have the youngest market in the world."

The story of muslin could be applied to many other textile traditions across India. From Andhra khadi to Ajrakh, Gadwal to Bomkai, Indian handloom is enjoying a huge revival, but as a luxury product. A lot of it is spurred by e-commerce sites dedicated to handloom that is being reinterpreted for a non-traditional, younger clientele.

The recent furore over the talks to rework sections of the Handloom (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 is a sure sign of the growing urban, young market for handlooms. That it pushed the government to clarify its intentions to protect the weaver is also a sign of his invigorated support base.

"There was a time when the biggest market for that exclusive ikat or tussar was the West. Today, entrepreneurs are turning homeward for buyers. All that is lacking now is a focused government handloom policy," says textile scholar Promil Pande.

It was the effort of Dastkar, Crafts Council, Dill Haat, weavers' cooperatives and a clutch of dedicated retail outlets that kept the handloom story alive till recently. Today it has moved online as well as to premium design lines like Raw Mango and Vriksha. Take a random run through sites like Parisera, Jaypore or Tadpole. There are no generic stacks here of assorted Naryanpets or Pochampallis or Chanderi, but curated designer handlooms — for a stiff price.

"My motto is 'Jai Saree' and I would love the idea of the workday sari but the lowest range you are looking at is around Rs 5,000," says designer Himanshu Verma, whose

LUXE LOOM: An organic cotton sari by Ethicus. Discerning buyers are willing to pay more for curated handlooms



yearly Saree Festival has entered its second year in Delhi. But he concedes that Indian handlooms have a better chance of surviving in the luxury sector.

Jaypore started two years ago with the idea of selling handcrafted Indian designs to the West using an iPad app. But realization dawned pretty quickly that an India-focused strategy could be successful. Today, about 50% of its market lies in India, and the company is pushing its story of revival textiles —

himroo from Maharashtra, mushroo from Gujarat and Andhra's teliya roomal, traditions that nearly fell of India's crafts map but now have huge following among handloom lovers, old and young.

"Our typical customer is an affluent 35 plus woman who has turned away from contemporary mall-wear and

wants to wear designed, stylish handloom," says Manika Dham, chief storyteller at Jaypore.

The new handloom evangelist is also pushing for something that is different, going beyond the typical stripes, checks, temple borders, paisleys, annapakshi birds and mango motifs. The crumpled, colour-bleed look is simply not cutting it

There was a time when the biggest market for that exclusive ikat or tussar was the West. Today, entrepreneurs are looking homeward for buyers

anymore and even if it is traditional, it has to be re-imagined. For instance, Tadpole showcases Mangalgiris made by design studio Love for the Loom but the predictable lines of zari have been replaced with plain, bright colour blocks. "Handloom saris that sell the most have either functional or aesthetic improvements made to them which set them apart from the usual," says Bhavna Bahri, co-founder, Tadpole.

Perhaps the priciest collection today is with Parisera, a site for "handcrafted luxury". The most understated designer khadi sari in its collection is likely to cost upwards of Rs 5,000. The kanjeevarams,

of course, are another story altogether. Creative head S Ahalya, says the prices are justified by the effort involved. "A weaver attains high levels of skill after a lifetime of work. Why should he not be paid the money that a surgeon or artist is?" she asks.

The designer-entrepreneur says she has a problem with the whole noble idea of the weaver who has to keep his skills alive, ensure its continuity, and at the same time, be happy with small money. "The premium buyer is quite willing to pay well. When we started out we were surprised at how little resistance there was to high pricing," she says.

Not everyone is happy with this new niche market for handlooms. Jaya Jaitly, who is one of the country's pioneering craft revivalists, has a problem with what she calls the "elitifying" of handloom. "How many rich clients for handloom will you get? Instead if you ensured the presence of handloom in our everyday lives you give weavers a better chance — in the jhaadan, the gamchha, the everyday sari, the bed linen in trains, uniforms," says Jaitly.

Actually, affordability, weavers' rights and elegance needn't necessarily be at odds. Dastkar Andhra, for instance, works with medium skilled weaver and offers lower price bands for distinctly designed textiles. "We do not see luxury price sector as the only market place for handlooms as this would mean work only for those with high skills and limited sales. Handloom has to be a way of life for it to survive," says Lata Tummuru of Dastkar Andhra.

Handicrafts haat on the web

Crafts lovers don't have to wait for that annual karigar expo to pick up authentic artefacts. They are now available online, curated from across the country

Mithila.Phadke@timesgroup.com

It takes a while to make a dhaan murti. The bamboo must be sliced thin, soaked in turmeric water, and then laid out to dry. Vats of rice grains need to be looped tight around the sticks with colourful cotton thread, after which the whole spiky mass is coaxed and twisted into its final shape — usually that of Ganesh or goddess Laxmi. The dhaan murti or 'grain idol' is a symbol of prosperity for the Munda tribal community, native to the Chhotanagpur Plateau region, stretching across Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal.

A few clicks, and the dhaan murti reaches a suburban Mumbai home, is given as a housewarming present to a Bangalore family, or adorns the mantelpiece at a Milan apartment. There are also Kashmiri purses with aari work, clocks embellished with Kutchi block-print fabric, and Channapatna toys from the eponymous village in Karnataka — all of which are sold through the Gaatha initiative's online store, set up in late 2013. It joins a

growing pool of e-commerce websites dedicated to the sale of traditional handicrafts. Earlier restricted to an annual karigar exhibition or occasional expo, handicrafts are now increasingly being bought through online marketplaces like Gaatha, iTokri, Go Coop, and Craftsvilla.

The last just secured Rs 110 crore in funding from venture investor Sequoia Capital. CEO and co-founder Manoj Gupta says it'll help the company expand to markets outside of India. "India has probably the largest legacy of handicrafts in the world. The industry is worth about Rs 7 to 10 billion," he says. "And it's going to be even bigger in the next few years."

Craftsvilla features over 2 million products, sourced from more than 12,000 artisans and designers across India. Go Coop has over 1,000 cooperatives onboard. Even the Gwalior-based iTokri, set up by a husband-wife duo, has made the leap from about ten brands in 2011 to over a hundred. It fields an equal number of requests for its curios and jewellery every day.

Online marketplaces present a welcome alternative for buyers who don't need to wait around for the next exhibition to come to town, or make

the trek to local handicraft stores, says iTokri's co-founder Nitin Pamnani. Sales executive Purvi Shah gets to purchase a bandhini jewellery-box or a Channapatna toy truck for her nephew without once leaving her Prabhadevi home. "You get to own a piece of art for much less. And they make for nice gifts," says Shah.

E-commerce also bridges the yawning gap between artisans and buyers, eliminating the middlemen and commission agents. "Though the industry is worth billions, artisans are paid barely minimum wages," says Siva Devireddy, founder of Go Coop.

The visibility for the crafts is also much higher on the internet. "Machine-made goods are distributed to



THE PRICE IS RIGHT: E-commerce also bridges the gap between artisans and buyers, eliminating middlemen

hundreds of stores, but artisans are not empowered enough to be able to do that," says Pamnani, whose website features products by NGOs and crafts organizations like Dastkar, as well as independent designers working with artisans.

Word-of-mouth publicity is what keeps the online marketplaces going. The number of international buyers has risen to nearly 40% of total sales for some sites. But as more players get into online retail for handicrafts, Varnam's founder Karthik Vaidyanathan stresses the need for quality control. For every website featuring a carefully vetted collection, there are those that sell dubious-looking products alongside toiletries and gadgets.

As the handicraft industry changes, artists are wising up too. Somaiya Kala Vidyalaya, an institute of education for artisans in Kutch, has started a one-year business and management course. It offers insights into how businesses are run, how handicrafts are marketed, and production management. "We must understand business too," says artisan and faculty member Laxmiben Puvar. "Why should we work and let others collect all the revenue?"

IT TAKES TWO TO TANGO

The textile sector is making successful strides and the government is seeking assistance of India's industrialists in ensuring its progress, writes Dominick Rodrigues

The Indian government is looking at involving both the textile and tourism sectors in joint progressive development as the Indian textiles and related products industry is witnessing lots of good opportunities today. The Government is also looking at creating milestones through proper awareness in this regard. Union Minister of State for Textiles Santosh Kumar Gangwar said while noting that the government has identified some of its sectors that required to be improved in its path to development. The minister recently spoke at Technotex 2015 which launched the 1-TUFS programme and CEOs Forum besides the Child, Baby and Maternity Expo in Mumbai.

"The government is carefully studying the needs and progress of this sector both within India and globally and finance hopefully should not be a problem in the coming years", he said while highlighting plans to set up 20 textile parks in the country.

"The textile sector is one such sector that was making successful strides and the government was seeking assistance of India's industrialists in ensuring their progress", he added while describing the textiles sector as an ever-growing one. "We are foreseeing shortage of agricultural land and have to plan futuristically in the use of existing such lands," he said while noting that the 11th Plan and 12th Plan had brought out some schemes – for the benefit of the technical textiles sector – in which the textile policy focused ahead on the next 10 to 15 years.

Gangwar noted that the central government was working on removing all hurdles for the Indian textile industry and related sectors while also making continuous efforts for its development and also helping out the farming community including cotton farmers to prevent suicides. FICCI Chairman Shishir Jaipuria said that this event would be a catalyst for exhilarating growth in the sector. Most developed countries are focusing on textiles and India is focusing on FDI within the country with the "Make in India" giving the desired impetus for this effort. This Expo was held to sensitise both industry and government about the number of initiatives taken that had led to this sector's growth and FICCI's initiatives too had generated interest among entrepreneurs – thus leading to 20 per cent growth in this industry while growing to \$18 billion. However, Pramod Khosla, CMD, Khosla Profil Pvt Ltd said, "the technical textiles sector needed government support and a technical textiles policy with a clear strategy to boost the industry further, besides also a clear clarification defining HSN code to ensure that technical textiles got benefits it deserved".

Mohan Kavrie, MD,

Supreme Group, expressed hope that the event would be a game-changer in improving entrepreneurs participation to grow industry numbers. Sanjay Kumar Panda, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles, GOI, said that for Indian technical textiles to remain competitive, technology was needed to produce goods with quality alongside providing enormous opportunity for growth.

"Our ministry has taken new initiatives including a new scheme providing Rs 423 crores. Agrotech technology is reducing moisture loss for farmers

products industry is growing at a rapid pace in India and globally and the Child, Baby and Maternity Expo India (CBMEI) aims to fuel the growing awareness of baby and child care while promoting a trade platform for the participating exhibitors in the related Expos," said Yogesh Mudras, Acting Managing Director, UMB India which organised the third edition of the Expo in Mumbai recently.

Pointing out that the rise in income levels and awareness had led to increasing demand for baby products in India, he said the growing access to key Indian



crops and is suitable for drought-prone areas", he said. Gokula Indira, Tamil Nadu Minister for Handloom and Textiles said, "there is a need for a policy comprising committee of government and others for development and upgradation of this technology while producing opportunities to weavers. The Tamil Nadu government has provided Rs 260 crore for housing the weavers, besides 1.7 crore families being given 'free' sarees and dhootis alongside children given free school uniforms", she said while inviting private investors to invest in Tamil Nadu. Meanwhile, the "Child, Baby and Maternity" products sector grabbed the limelight at the Expo with related issues being highlighted by the industry. "Driven by demand, the child, baby and maternity prod-

ucts here – though it's up to the retailers to make them affordable in even rural areas of India – like citronella (mosquito repellent) on stickers, feeding bottles, foot-wear,

cots etc.", Mudras said. He also noted that rural areas too are becoming aware about foreign products, while many multinationals including one from Italy is manufacturing here and exporting products. While Chinese companies are joining in "Make in India" by bringing their technology here for manufacture, Chinese consumers themselves are also demanding the same standards for products as maintained abroad," he added. Michael Duck, Executive Vice President, UBM Asia Ltd., too emphasised on the importance of the Indian market by pointing out that of UBM's 230 exhibi-

demand for such products and the China Expo itself is 20 times bigger than the one in India. We have manufacturers and retailers here to create awareness, though this event generates money also for the related hospitality and other sectors besides us", he added. The three-day event – the only one of its kind in India – showcased global suppliers and manufacturers of child, baby and maternity products and services under one roof, including world-renowned brands like J L Morrison, Mother Care, TOONZ Retail, Chicco, Lovi, Combi, Smitten Baby and Small Wonder besides participation from

brain development etc. Technical textiles – known as the "sunshine sector" in India – are functional fabrics that have application across various industries including automobiles, civil engineering and construction, agriculture, healthcare, industrial safety, personal protection etc. Based on usage, there are 12 technical textile segments; Agrotech, meditech, Buildtech, Mobiltex, Clothtech, Oekotex, Geotech, Packtech, Homotech, Protech, Indutech and Sportech. Despite achieving high growth rate, the per capita consumption of technical textiles in India is 1.7 kgs in comparison to 10-12 kgs in developed countries. Globally, technical textile contributes to about 27 per cent to textile industry and while in some western countries its share is even 50 per cent, it is a meager 11 per cent in India.

Along with initiatives taken by the government, this sector in India is expected to experience growth alongside industrial sectors like automotive, infrastructure etc; increasing per capita income; adaptability and acceptance of products; various governments FDI initiatives and scope of introduction of regulatory norms. The Ministry of Textiles and Government of India has taken various steps for improving skill set availability, raw materials and technology development through various schemes including: Technology Mission on Technical Textiles (TMTT) and Technology Upgradation Funds Scheme (TUFS). According to INDIA, Fredonia Group, IFAI, JEC, the global technical textiles market size was estimated at \$281 billion in 2014. Globally, technical textiles sector has witnessed growth surpassing the conventional textile sector. As per IFAI estimates, the global technical textile consumption in 2010 was 23 million MT, and the vibrant Asian technical textile market recorded CAGR of 4.4 per cent in size between 2005 and 2010, while America and Europe compared at only three per cent in the same period. India is expected to be one of the leading global players in the technical textile domain in the coming years.

India and Russia are the other important markets for technical textiles where consumption is increasing at a fast pace. In India, the technical textile sector is one of the fastest-growing segments of the Indian economy and has registered CAGR of 11 per cent during the 11th Five Year Plan and, as per 12th Five Year Plan estimates by the sub-group on technical textiles, its market size is expected to grow at a CAGR of 20 per cent to reach Rs 1,58,540 crore by 2016-2017 from Rs 75,925 crore in 2012-2013. To facilitate higher integration of technology into manufacturing processes and end-products, the Indian government has allowed upto 100 per cent FDI under automatic route for the technical textiles segment. Leading global manufacturers of technical textiles products will thus be able to set up manufacturing units in India, either alone or through partnerships with Indian industries. Central and state government efforts including holding international roadshow seem to have borne fruit as international companies come to India include; Ahlstrom, Johnson & Johnson, Du Pont, Proctor & Gamble, among others. India is also one of the places with cheapest labour in this industry whose many segments require much manual labour in form of stitching and weaving.

In India, the technical textile sector is one of the fastest-growing segments and has registered CAGR of 11 per cent during the 11th Five Year Plan and as per 12th Five Year Plan estimates by the sub-group on technical textiles, its market size is expected to grow at a CAGR of 20 per cent



tions organised in Asia, 23 of them were in India itself. "With a population of 1.3 billion in India, you can do the math by the number of babies born annually in India and multiply the amount of rupees spent on them which will come to a huge amount running in millions and this market keeps on growing.

Plus, Indian families are looking for safer, more hygienic, non-carcinogenic products for their babies, and the products here at the exhibitions are safe for use", he said, adding, "Baby foods too are likely to become an interesting area of awareness in future such events." Duck said, "UBM is holding such shows in all countries including those with changing economies. "There is a huge

countries like China, Hong Kong. Companies which showcased their products on day one of the event were House of Napius, Omved, Mothercare, Artsana and Lovi, Gerson & Gerson for Apparels, Babuline Pharma, Tuffstone (LOVI), Small Brown Box for Toys, House of Napius for Maternity Wear, Moms & Me, Indian Octopus, Rao Group, Omved, Mothercare, Toyvilla, Repellers and New Natraj Industries for Baby Products. While last year's edition witnessed 75 exhibitors, 100 global and Indian brands and over 4,000 visitors, Mudras said this year's 3rd edition of CBME had drawn over 80 exhibitors and 150 brands in an unrivalled business opportunity to Indian and global manufacturers and providers of child, baby and maternity products and services, providing access to thousands of retailers, wholesalers, distributors, investor, importers, franchise market and educational institutions covering an entire spectrum from baby food to organic clothing, toys, furniture and stationery for infants and children, latest technology for infant safety and

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