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PRESS RELEASE

Indian textile, apparel industry now part of global supply chain: Jairam

Gurgaon, Jan 23 – With a wide variety of fabrics and technically-skilled manpower, Indian textile and apparel industry has now become a part of the global supply chain, minister of state for commerce Jairam Ramesh said today.

“Our fabrics and workers are going to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and other countries. A lot of investment in Bangladesh is from India,” he said after meeting top exporters at 42nd India International Garment Fair (IIGF).

“Though Bangladesh has overtaken India in apparel exports, the country has definitely become a part of the global supply chain.”

Mr Ramesh said Indian exporters should not remain focused on traditional markets like the United States and Europe, but rather explore new markets like Japan and non-traditional products like those made from organic cotton which command premium in international market.

“We should quickly respond to new trends to beat competition from Vietnam, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.” The minister was talking to reporters at the fourth and final day of 42nd IIGF after visiting the exhibition hall, fashion streets and theme-based display areas.

More than 300 leading apparel manufacturers and exporters laid out a spectacular collection for autumn and winter seasons of 2009-10 at the event showcasing fine garments for men, women and children.

Mr Ramesh said the textile sector, which provides one-third of industrial employment in India, deserves a special economic package. “I don’t see any reason why the real estate sector should get two stimulus packages and the apparel industry has not got one.”

The minister said that the Planning Commission has called a meeting of garment exporters on February 5 to consider measures for stimulating exports.

Meanwhile, the IIGF concluded today with over 460 overseas buyers and 380 buying agents checking a vast collection of garments, fabrics and fashion accessories manufactured by some of India's premier fashion and export houses.

Adding to the glitz were fashion streets, theme-based fair displays and avant-garde ramp shows. The event was jointly organised by International Garment Fair Association, Apparel Export Promotion Council, Garment Exporters Association, the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India, Apparel Exporters and Manufacturers Association and Apparel and Handloom Exporters Association.

IGFA convenor Lalit Thukral said he did not expect such a heavy turnout in recessionary period. “There were many first-time visitors. A lot of boutique buyers also came this time.”

With exhibition area of over 16,150 square meters, the show had designer and private labels, bridal wear, cocktail and evening dresses, blazers, cardigans, cashmere products, jacket, pullover, sweater, sweat shirt, children's wear, denim wear, infants' wear, knit wear, ladies wear, men's wear, shirts, shorts, silk garments, skirts, suits, T-shirts, trousers, body suit, brassiere, brief, home wear, men's underwear, nightwear and pajamas, outerwear, swimwear, body wear, skiwear and track suits.

India is the sixth largest exporter of readymade garments in the world. Apparel worth 9.7 billion dollars was exported from the country in 2007-08.