



Technical Textiles Mission - A Reality

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India takes Leadership:

After a few years in discussion and making, government of India on January 20th Jan 2011 officially launched Technological Mission on Technical Textiles (TMTT) in an event jointly organized by the Ministry of Textiles and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) in New Delhi. This national program puts India on a pedestal as to my understanding; no other country has created such a nationally significant mission to boost the growth of value-added textiles. This national project is mission oriented and is aimed at imparting practical knowledge in specialty textiles and provides marketing support for entrepreneurs.

Technical Textiles in India:

In India, technical textiles sector is estimated to grow at a rate of 10-11%, whereas, globally, the growth is estimated at 3-4%. The growth in India has happened predominantly due to the efforts of the government of India for the past five years. I was privileged to be part of the early efforts and awareness programs conducted by the Ministry of Textiles, India in the year 2005. Ever since, the government has supported a number of awareness programs and workshops throughout India. Many national and international trade bodies and institutes such as the USA based Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry popularly as INDA, Brussels based European Disposables and Nonwovens Industry Association (EDANA) and FICCI. Along these lines, Lubbock, USA based Texas tech University has been playing an important role in creating greater awareness and developing international linkages to boost the growth of nonwovens and specialty fabrics industry. Texas Tech University began its effort in India in the year 2004 with this author taking efforts to create an international conference to create more knowledge in technical textiles. The conference HPTEx-2004 was developed as a collaborative endeavor between Texas Tech University, USA and the Coimbatore based Kumaraguru College of Technology. This conference attracted many international and national experts in the field of advanced textiles and paved the way for awareness programs in technical textiles in South India. This conference has grown in stature now and is a recognized event in the field of specialty textiles and is known as "Advances in Textiles, Machinery, Nonwovens & Technical textiles," commonly referred to as ATNT. This conference played the pivotal role in bringing the USA based INDA to India for the first time in 2006. In fact, in 2006, I had the distinct privilege of inviting Mr. Ian Butler of the Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry to India. Ian is responsible for the industry statistics at INDA. When he made the presentation at the international conference hosted by Texas Tech University in Coimbatore, his estimate on Indias nonwoven roll good production was about 30,000 to 40,000 metric tons. India's roll good nonwoven production now stands over 100,000 metric tons. India has tripled its production in 3 years. Mr. Butler of INDA witnessed firsthand India's eagerness to get into a new sector within the textiles industry.

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