

# KNITCON 2015

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Organized by  
**Federation of Hosiery  
Manufacturers Association of India**

Title Sponsor:




(L to R) Pradeep Arora, B D Kothari, K B Agarwala, M Choudhury, Sharad Bhatler, Sreemoy Bannerjee

## KNITCON 2015 GETS A GRAND SUCCESS IN ITS FIRST EDITION HELD AT KOLKATA

THE ONE-DAY CONFERENCE AIMED AT SHARING KNOWLEDGE TO THE ENTIRE INNERWEAR TEXTILE AND GARMENT INDUSTRY WITH THE LATEST TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN ALL THE SIGNIFICANT AND ALLIED AREAS LIKE FIBRE AND YARN, KNITTING, PROCESSING AND FINISHING.

BY NABAMITA CHATTERJEE

 The first edition of Knitcon 2015, organised by the Federation of Hosiery Manufacturers Association of India (FOHMA), in association with West Bengal Hosiery Association (WBHA) and Bengal Hosiery Manufacturers Association (BHMA) received great accolades from the textile and garment industry. Around 225 delegates from the textile fraternity all over India registered for the one-day conference held at The Oberoi Grand Hotel, Kolkata on May 9.

The conference was inaugurated by the distinguished members of FOHMA, WBHA and BHMA, which included K B Agarwal, President, FOHMA and Managing Director, Rupa & Co. Limited; B D Kothari, Senior Vice President, WBHA and Director, Kothari Hosiery Factory; Sharad Bhatler, President, BHMA and CEO, Asia Hosiery Mills Private Limited; M Choudhury, Regional Head, Textile Commissioner, Govt. of India; Pradeep Arora, Convenor, Knitcon 2015 and Director, Cotton Casuals (I) Private Limited; and Sreemoy Banerjee, Secretary, FOHMA and Director, Sreepati Hosiery Mills Private Limited.

Sponsored by Voltas Limited, the seminar aimed at understanding the overall advancements in knitting, processing and stitching in the knitwear industry of India, which would help this vertical to scale the growth ladder in the coming future. The seminar revolved around the concept of 'Know-Adapt-Grow'. Knitcon 2015 stressed on four in-depth sessions, which included:

- **Fibre and Yarn**
- **Knitting**
- **Processing (including dyeing and finishing)**
- **Garmenting (including stitching and finishing)**

Agarwal (Rupa & Co.) welcomed the entire textile and hosiery fraternity at the inaugural session and said, "I believe Knitcon 2015 is going to emerge as a great platform for our industry and will open up or maximise potential business opportunity. FOHMA, from the very inception, has been instrumental in supporting the hosiery business on all fronts starting from technology, policy-making, market development, and other inter-related matters. Thus, we are extremely hopeful that through this kind of an initiative we will get good support from the Government of India and the government of West Bengal that will help boost the sector's growth."

Kothari (Kothari Hosiery Factory) added, "As change is inevitable with time in any field, our business is also going through a transition period. Today, we are fortunate to have various industry experts from India taking part in this conference, who will enlighten us with the technological progress in all the related areas of knitting, processing and garmenting."

Bhatter (Asia Hosiery Mills) said, "This industry is currently struggling due to the increasing production cost of the goods. However, today it is a great opportunity for all of us present in the conference to exchange thoughts and share knowledge from industry stalwarts. Kolkata has been a pioneer in the hosiery sector of India for the past 18 years and we should

all take a pledge today that we will strive to achieve a position where our goods will be acclaimed internationally worldwide and while packaging our products, it will be mentioned 'Made in Kolkata'."

The conference saw participation of dignitaries from the Indian government textile bodies. Choudhury (Textile Commissioner, Govt. of India), who was one of the noted speakers at the inaugural session, threw light on the statistical facts and figures of the industry. He stated, "From Gujarat, 25 percent gross manufacturing output is coming followed by 19 percent in Maharashtra, then Tamil Nadu and Haryana. Thus, we are hopeful that the manufacturing facilities can be highly improved from the knowledge sharing that will happen through the in-depth sessions of the seminar." He further said, "According to AC Nielsen, this sector can develop employment opportunity for at least 82,836 in the coming future. Therefore, as all the top-line brands like Rupa, Dollar, Lux Cozi, Amul Macho, and Frontline have emerged from West Bengal, I am highly hopeful that the technological development of the industry will help all these names reach new heights. The Government of India will lend every support to the textile and knitwear industry to grow."

The first in-depth session of the conference focused on the area of fibre and yarn. The session was moderated by Sanjay Jain, Managing Director, T T Limited, and saw the participation of both Indian and international speakers. The session highlighted the major facts and figures related to the use of cotton, which is around 60-70 percent in India for the textile industry, whereas globally the cotton consumption is hardly 5 percent and also it is becoming costlier with each passing day. The discussions of the session focused at how India needs to look at using other options like viscose, which is gaining immense popularity in the textile manufacturing sector.

Manohar Samuel, President-Marketing and Business Development,



**SANJAY JAIN,**  
VP, FOHMA & MD, TT LIMITED



**MASATOSHI IKEDA,**  
INTERNATIONAL SALES MANAGER,  
MORIMOTO MANUFACTURING COMPANY



**GAYAN RUHUNAGE,**  
PRESIDENT, EXODUS FUTURA KNIT  
PVT. LTD.

**... THE TEXTILE MANUFACTURING SECTOR CAN DEVELOP EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR AT LEAST 82,836 IN THE COMING FUTURE.**

Birla Cellulose, Grasim Industries Limited, gave the first presentation, where he talked about 'Consumer and Value Chain Engagement for Growth'. Samuel focused on various positive aspects of using viscose and how there has been a gradual shift from cotton to these fibres in the world market. He stressed on how Birla Cellulose has evolved as a major market leader in this segment. He said, "We focus on value chain engagement for growth with design, innovation and development having partner forums for brand building. It helps the farmers in selling yarn and fibre, and is also beneficial for the branded retail and wholesale market. Birla Cellulose has recently launched Liva and as a brand we want partners to collaborate for the innerwear industry that will help the market to adapt new ideas and grow."

The next topic of the session, 'Beyond Cotton', was addressed by K Alakan, Head Marketing, Pallavaa Group. Alakan stated, "We consider silk as the queen of fibres and cotton as the king of fibres. As cotton is becoming very expensive, we will have to see how other raw materials may be used for the textile industry. With water also becoming so precious, early entry into the polyester market probably could be beneficial for India just like it has been for the global market. Though, it has been observed that India has failed so far in this attempt. The ratio says cotton consumption is still 58 percent and other constitutes 32 percent. Thus, more conscious fabrication methods should be adopted for hosiery industry as India is a very vulnerable market."

M K Kim, Marketing Manager, Creora, Korea presented the next topic of the session – 'Spandex Yarn – Possibilities & Advantages'. Kim reflected on how Creora manufactures spandex yarn and they are one of the largest producers in the world. He also focused on functional and practical advantages of using polyester as a raw material. Kim said, "We have a huge range starting from Creora Color+, Creora Black, Creora Power Fit, Creora Highclo, Creora Eco-Soft, Creora Steamset+, Creora Soft Fit, Creora Luminous and Creora Comfort. We are already supplying spandex in India from Vietnam. All these variants would be highly suitable for Kolkata hosiery



**AMOS SHEK HIU YEH,**  
SALES MANAGER, FONG'S



**MICHELE ZAMPEIRI,**  
AREA SALES MANAGER, BIANCO



**BHASKAR DUTTA,**  
VP- TEXTILE MACHINERIES GROUP,  
BATLIBOI

**WITH WATER ALSO BECOMING SO PRECIOUS, EARLY ENTRY INTO THE POLYESTER MARKET PROBABLY COULD BE BENEFICIAL FOR INDIA JUST LIKE IT HAS BEEN FOR THE GLOBAL MARKET.**

market. We are hopeful that we will get a good opportunity to work with more Indian brands."

This first in-depth session was concluded by Jain (TT Ltd.), he also moderated the session and spoke on the topic – 'Cotton fibre and yarn'. This presentation focused on the finer nuances of cotton fibre and yarn. Jain stressed on the different types of cotton fibres and their features, which have a direct impact on the quality of the product produced. He said, "The Indian textile industry is worth around US\$ 108 billion, of which 68 percent comes from the domestic market and the remaining 40 percent from export. Both the rates are growing by 12 percent and 15 percent, respectively. India is the second largest yarn producer in the world after China and the largest exporter of cotton yarn (with 24 percent share)." Later in his presentation, he stressed on parameters of evenness in terms of how to determine the price of cotton.

He further said, "It is difficult to predict or forecast the price because there are innumerable practical factors that affect the price of cotton. For instance, the demand supply ratio domestically and globally will have a direct impact on the cotton price." He concluded with the message, "Do not forecast prices; live in the present and focus on the quality of cotton which India can produce."

The second session of the conference dealt with knitting. It was moderated by Satyam Agarwal, Director, Sat Text Agencies Private Limited. Knitting technologies being one of the ultimate key factors contributing to the growth of this industry, this session had speakers coming from various machineries and technology background.

The first presentation was given by Franz Hudi, Area Sales Manager, Terrot, Germany. He spoke on the topic – 'Development in Circular Knitting'.

## knits

Hudi shared, "With a rich experience of 150 years, Terrot has been a leading manufacturer of knitting machineries since 1850. During 1995-96, electronic machines replaced Jacquard machines. We have a great range of models like Double Jersey, Ultra Fine Jersey, etc. Our 13 P154 for Rib and Interlock could be very much helpful for the Indian market."

Sanjay Chawla, Sales Director, Groz Beckert threw light through his presentation – 'Saddle Up for Higher Productivity in Knitting M/C'. Chawla informed, "For the proper functioning of the production centre, some general conditions must be always be taken care of. Raw material, maintenance (clean and clear surrounding), optimum needle management, proper servicing of machine and lubrication are required for higher productivity. Thus, the essential parameters for higher productivity have to be checked and partnering successfully with the knitting industry will help to adapt and grow this sector."

'Setting Up a Modern Knitting Unit' was the topic of discussion for Nizar Ali, DGM, Voltas Limited, Coimbatore. He pointed out, "For setting up a unit, the most important factors which are to be kept in mind include – the correct area of space, layout of the building, quality installation, humidification (as we are predominantly cotton manufacturing country), quality control and monitoring, minimised wastage, manpower and training."

Bhaskar Dutta, VP- Textile Machineries Group, Batliboi gave the concluding presentation of this session on 'Quality – A Journey from Yarn to Finished Fabric'. He started off with a saying, "Quality is a journey and not a destination." For successful product manufacturing, the Indian textile and garment industry needs to address areas in which we are not competitive enough. For instance, 'power' is a major factor which eats up a lot of cost. The key components in knitting are – raw material, machine, product, and process parameters. As 'finishing' is all about this trade, right fabrication engineering and fabric inspection are also an essential part of this journey." On a concluding note, he stated, "We can only control what we can measure."

The third in-depth session of the conference focused on processing



**PRADEEP ARORA,**  
CONVENOR, KNITCON & DIRECTOR,  
COTTON CASUALS (I) PVT. LTD.



**FRANZ HUDI,**  
AREA SALES MANAGER, TERROT

(including dyeing and finishing). This session was moderated by Vikram Mehta, Technical Consultant, Knitcon.

Jochen Stillger, Sales Director, Thies, Germany presented the first topic of this segment, which was 'Go Green with Thies'. Founded in 1892, Thies has been a popular name in the manufacturing of yarn and fabric dyeing machines, bleaching and drying plants for more than 100 years. Stillger said, "Through our machineries we are trying to the master the resources intelligently and it has given spectacular results with ultra-low dye liquor levels. The iMaster H20 is one of the new ultra-low liquor ratio hydraulic dyeing machines for all weight fabrics. In India, it was first successfully installed at Kothari Processors, based in Sankrail, a short distance from Kolkata (West Bengal). Many popular brands in the Indian hosiery industry are using our

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machineries. Master Intensive Section, CCR System, and Master Injector for Dry Salt are some of the excellent properties of our technology."

Amos Shek Hiu Yeh, Sales Manager, Fong's addressed the second topic of this segment. He threw light on the 'Recent Trends in Dyeing Technology' through his presentation. Yeh said, "It is a 50-year-old company and perhaps we have one of the largest manufacturing facilities with 700,000 sq. mt. space. We have a 100 percent dry manufacturing facility and for eco-friendly dyeing series in the market, we offer various models providing different capacity to satisfy the needs in production."

Silvano Rizzo, Sales Manager, Corino was the other speaker of this session, who presented the topic 'Squeezer' to the gathering. He mentioned, "India and Kolkata both are important markets for us. Corino was established in the year 1983, and since then it has been a popular name in the textile machine manufacturing industry. Over 2,000 Corino machines work across the world and we export in 70 countries. Our exclusive range of Aquaflo machines gives highly satisfactory production at considerable costs, which will be highly beneficial for a country like India."

The topic 'Developments in Finishing' was presented by Michele Zampeiri,



**PETRUZIO LEOPOLDO,**  
SALES MANAGER - SOUTH EAST ASIA,  
FERRARO



**VENKATESH BABU,**  
SENIOR SALES MANAGER,  
BRUCKNER



**NIZAR ALI,**  
DIRECTOR GENERAL MANAGER,  
VOLTAS LIMITED

**... IT IS THE ULTIMATE TIME TO UNLEASH THE TRUE POWER OF PRINTING, WHICH WILL HELP IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS VERTICAL IN THE COMING FUTURE. AUTOMATION IN PRINTING IS EMERGING IN KOLKATA. FOR THE GROWTH OF THIS INDUSTRY, IT IS A MUST TO HAVE AN IN-HOUSE SET-UP AND IT IS HIGHLY BENEFICIAL TO INVEST IN AUTOMATED PRINTING."**

Area Sales Manager, Bianco. Zampeiri shared, "Various machineries that we manufacture can expedite the processing of garment. Starting from Rope Opener to Slitting Lines for Wet Fabrics, Washing Tank, Twister for Spirality Control may be very much suitable for the Indian textile industry." Petruzio Leopoldo, Sales Manager, South East Asia, Ferraro through his talks presented the topic 'Impact of Compactor on Knitted Fabrics'. Leopoldo shared, "We started our journey way back in 1952. We have a range of Open Width Compacting Machines, Tubular Compacting Machines and Accessories Machines. Some of the impacting factors are – Tensionless (free fabric pass fabric width synchronisation), Moisture (steam or water, their advantages, improves compaction, hand-feel and colour effect, disadvantage – elongation (when the fabric is wet, it gets elongated easily), Compaction (felt or rubber quality, economy, performance, and compression capability setting area [diametre of heated cylinder]) and Cooling (stability of the fabric and softness)."

'High Performance and Energy Efficiency in Finishing' was one of the most important topics of this session,

which was presented by Venkatesh Babu, Senior Sales Manager, Bruckner. Bruckner is a prominent name in the textile finishing machinery products. Babu shared, "We have our complete product range, which includes every type of machine for dry-finishing. We lay special emphasis on the drying and heat-setting of knitted fabrics. Factors like heat setting process, coating, drying, vaporisation and evaporation all constitute the perfect finishing in textile industry."

The last speaker of this session was Arindam Choudhuri, Technical Sales Manager, Britacel Silicones. He spoke about 'New Developments in Auxiliaries and Finishing Applications'. Choudhuri opined, "Founded in 1988, Britacel today holds 30 percent share of the finishing industry. We go for exclusive silicone application for the finishing of the textiles. We have global partnerships in terms of technology and services for Britacel Silicones. We cater to varieties of knits and our product range ensures excellent feel, softness, hydrophilicity, enhancement of shape recovery, and improved sewability on the knit. We are coming up with various innovative ideas like insect-repellent fabric, stain-release

finish, Vitamin E and Aloe Vera finish for medical purposes. The organisation is constantly looking for creating sustainable finishes."

The concluding session of the conference was on garmenting and printing (including stitching and finishing), which was moderated by Uday Kumar Agarwal, Managing Director, Anaadih Vincom Private Limited.

Vinod Kumar, Sales Manager, Reggiani, Italy dealt with the first topic 'Digital Printing'. An established name in the textile digital printing, Reggiani has multiple customisations available for the client. We have a great machine technology with robust built."

For instance, the main advantage of their Rotary Printing Machine is that it has individual screen-drives, and Reggiani is a huge name in this area.

Narendra Dadia, CMD, M&R Dhaval Colour Chem Private Limited, also focused on the area of printing. He said, "Kolkata being an emerging market in this category, it is the ultimate time to unleash the true power of printing, which will help in the development of this vertical in the coming future. We have our production facility at Tirupur and Mumbai. With time, automation

in printing has opened up and we can manufacture over 2,000+ garments per hour. For the growth of this industry, it is a must to have an in-house set-up and it is highly beneficial to invest in automated printing.”

The next topic ‘Stitching Machines’ was initially presented by Masatoshi Ikeda, International Sales Manager, Morimoto Manufacturing Company, Japan (Kansai) and elaborately it was dealt by Megha Anand, Director- Sales, Hari Chand Anand & Company, who are the Indian partners of Morimoto Manufacturing Company. They produce high-quality industrial sewing machines, which are constantly evolving with their R&D department. Anand threw light on different types of machines, which have high speed, are easy to maintain and have labour saving equipment. Elastic Cutting Machine (for elastic joining and cutting), Productivity Enhancement Machine, and Automatic Placket Setting Machine are highly suitable for the perfect stitching and finishing of the textile and hosiery products.

The concluding topic of this last session was ‘Garment Factory Setup – New Developments’. This was presented by Gayan Ruhunage, President, Exodus Futura Knit Private Limited. Ruhunage discussed about the challenges in setting up a garment factory in West Bengal and how his company overcame those hurdles. He said, “Today, we have 900 machines covering an area of 7 acres. Our main fundamental behind this project is m3 = man, machine, method. We have 800 in-house trained employees and within the next two years, we are looking at absorbing 1000 more. The major challenges which are to be addressed while setting up a factory are – training the employees to work in unity, team building to bring out efficiency (if 1:1 ratio is achieved, it is equal to success), and a strong HR team. We have a strong team of women workers, who are very sincere and meticulous.” On a concluding note he said, “Attitude makes difference



**JOCHEN STILLGER,**  
SALES DIRECTOR, THIES

with a clear mind-set.”

Jain (TT Ltd.) gave the vote of thanks and the concluding remarks at the conference. He ended with a positive note saying, “I hope this conference today has enlightened the entire textile and hosiery fraternity. It is a great sign that today, not only the industry stalwarts are present but the younger generation on whom the future responsibility is also coming to run this industry has taken time out to share their knowledge and learn about the various aspects of the Indian textile and garment industry. I am hopeful that we will get good support from the government authorities related to textile and garment industry to take this vertical a step ahead in the coming future.”

Arora (Cotton Casuals (I) Pvt. Ltd.), while sharing his view on the entire success of the conference said, “We have received great response from all the delegates and participants. They have also mentioned that no one could say that we were doing it for the first time because the entire conference was highly organised; it started on time and each and every aspect of the industry (fibre and yarn, knitting, processing and garmenting, and printing) got completed within time. We are ecstatic to have received great support from the Indian companies as well as international speakers, who came from as far as Germany, Italy, South Korea and Japan. The chief aim of this conference was to bring industry experts from all areas

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of textile and garment under one roof and share their knowledge amongst us. Secondly, in the recent past as the technology has advanced so rapidly, the association wanted to clearly give out this message that if we do not keep pace with it, then this static mode will never change. Thus, we kept our theme Know-Adapt-Grow, so you first try to know and understand about the technology of the new products and then try to adapt it according to your situation before you try to apply it and grow your respective company. It is an optimistic contour that the present generation as well as the future leaders of this industry participated in this conference. East as a region is growing much faster in terms of hosiery as a category than the rest of India. Thus, we wanted to have this session here in Kolkata, which has been a pioneer in this segment. We got a good number of participation from all the popular innerwear brands, which are headquartered here in Kolkata, and everyone came with a mind frame to learn something new. We have further plans to replicate this even more professionally from the next year. We have been approached by a team of delegates, who came from Ludhiana, and they want to replicate this model of Knitcon 2015. We might help them in organising the same. Through Knitcon 2015, FOHMA, WBHA and BHA jointly gave a platform to the textile and hosiery industry to learn about the rapid technological advancement which is taking place and how India may be benefitted from it.” 