

**Consulate General of India  
Frankfurt**

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**Report**

**HEIMTEXTIL 2018**

*International Trade Fair for  
Home and Contract Textiles*

**09 - 12 January 2018**

# Consulate General of India Frankfurt

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## **Heimtextil Fair held in Frankfurt from 9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> January, 2018**

1. "Heimtextil" is the international trade fair for home and contract textiles, which takes place annually at the Frankfurt trade fair grounds. It's a four days event which normally held at the beginning of January every year. "Heimtextil" offers a wide range of home textiles from bath, bed and table textiles to products for windows, floors, walls, sun protection and upholstery. The business community from all over the world visit the fair and engage in serious business talk and seal the deals in fair and frank manner. The main objective of "Heimtextil" are the equipment of objects, the coupon business, sustainably produced home textiles and youth development which completes the wide range of the exhibition.

2. In 2018, 2975 international exhibitors participated in the fair and presented their upcoming textile products and designs across 20 halls at the Frankfurt trade fair ground. Around 70,000 trade visitors from 135 countries attended the trade fair to keep abreast themselves on the latest innovations and trends in the sector.

3. The strong presence of 392 Indian exhibitors including 50 participants sponsored by the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC), 40 participants under the umbrella of the Cotton Textiles Export Promotion Council of India (TEXPROCIL) and 14 participants under the banner of the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH) in the Heimtextil 2018 fair shows their enthusiasm.

4. On the invitation of the Messe Frankfurt authorities, a high level delegation led by Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani, Hon'ble Minister of Textiles visited Frankfurt from 09-10 January 2018 to attend the Heimtextil Fair. On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 she inaugurated the India Pavilion at Heimtextil 2018. She visited several pavilions and interacted with Indian exhibitors.

5. The Consulate General of India, Frankfurt had arranged four B2B meetings of the Hon'ble Minister of Textiles with the representatives of the following prominent business houses on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 which were also attended by the Consul General, DC(Handloom), M/o Textiles, Chairmen of HEPC, TEXPROCIL and EPCH:

- i) Mr. Bertram Roth, FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH;
- ii) Mr. Ralph Hellmann, CEO, Bibella GmbH, Bochholt;
- iii) Mr. Patric Gehlhaus, Category Manager, Home Textiles, Galeria Kaufhof GmbH (Member of the Hudon's Bay Group); and
- iv) Mr. Martin Auerbach, CEO of Heimtex - Association of the German Home Textile Industry

Hon'ble Minister of Textiles had the first B2B meeting with **Mr. Bertram Roth**, Director Overseas Operations & China, FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH, which is the inward

investment agency of FrankfurtRheinMain region. The meeting commenced with the Councils introducing themselves and the scope of their activities in India as well as a brief description on the profiles of their member companies. The meeting continued with an introduction by Mr. Bertram Roth on the activities of FrankfurtRheinMain GmbH in Germany and abroad, including the Agency`s India Liaison Office in Pune which was established in 2007 and the upcoming "FRM meets Pune" event which will be organized by the Liaison Office in Pune in May 2018. Mr. Bertram Roth extended an informal invitation to the Hon'ble Minister to attend the event which would be followed by a formal invitation closer to the date. Mr. Roth further informed the gathering about the large Indian business community in the FRM Region with around 130 Indian companies and the good opportunities for Indian companies in the region's textile sector - particularly for technical textiles in the automotive sector.

While thanking Mr. Roth the Hon'ble Minister expressed interest of the Indian Government in enhancing technical textiles and her hope for infusion of technology from Germany to bridge the technology gap between India and Germany. The Hon'ble Minister encouraged FRM GmbH to carry forward the conversation with the Indian Export Promotion Councils present in the meeting, such as TEXPROCIL, HEPC and EPCH, to enable enhanced cooperation between India and Germany in the textiles sector.

The second B2B meeting was with **Mr. Ralf Hellmann** who introduced himself as CEO of Dibella GmbH, Bocholt, a renowned business house in textile service industry, such as the hotel and healthcare market, with a special focus on sustainability and organic fair trade. The meeting commenced with the Councils introducing themselves and the scope of their activities in India as well as a brief description on the profiles of their member companies. Mr. Hellmann gave insights of the activities of Dibella GmbH in Germany and abroad, particularly India, including the company's own source track technology "Source Trace" introduced by the company in the first half of the year through which they are trying to connect consumers to the field/farmers in India as well as the company's respect code which allows consumers to see the entire supply chain. Mr. Hellmann further informed about the company's social commitment in India by opening an organic farming training centre with model farm in the Utnoor region. He also raised the point about the challenges the company is facing in India such as fluctuating cotton prices, late announcement of cotton prices and GMO contamination of organic cotton. During the meeting Mr. Hellmann emphasized the company's focus on organic fair trade and in this connection requested for some encouragement by the Indian Government for small-scale farmers who want to move from chemical-based to organic farming. He also mentioned the price disadvantage of India compared to Pakistan of about 20-25% due to duty issues. The Hon'ble Minister in her reply stressed the Government's commitment on fair prices for small-scale companies and suggested Mr. Hellmann to make a report on the aforesaid issues, so that it can be taken up by the Government. The heads of the Export Promotion Councils were also of the view that demand of organic cotton is increasing globally and expressed their interest in technology transfer and cooperation with Dibella GmbH.

The Hon'ble Minister suggested both parties to continue exchanging the ideas, so that the Councils can subsequently make proposals to the Government.

The third B2B meeting commenced with the Councils introducing themselves and the scope of their activities in India as well as gave a brief description on the profiles of their member companies. **Mr. Patric Gehlhaus** introduced him as Category Manager, Galeria Kaufhof, one of the largest retail chains in Germany. He mentioned that the Group's operations in India are growing, especially with the quality and design segment

strengthening. The Group collaborates closely with the big names in the Indian textile industry, viz. Welspun & Sharda for their home linen category of products. He emphasised that the 'seersucker' products manufactured in India, especially, have a cutting competitive edge in comparison to other countries due to the superior quality and innovation that Indian companies implement.

One of the challenges mentioned by Mr. Gehlhaus was the requirement for the evaluation of cotton prices which has an effect on the overall product manufacturing and logistical cost. This additionally impacts the company's trade with India and gives the competitor countries, like Pakistan, an added advantage due to the duty free agreement offered by them with the investor countries.

Hon'ble Minister informed that India is a country with high manufacturing standards with the Textile Councils constantly striving towards betterment of quality as well as encouraging innovation in order to keep pace and excel in the world market. She also apprised Mr. Gehlhaus about the several steps undertaken by the Government of India towards achieving the goal of sustainable development as well as to foster international investment into the country. She recommended that the retail chain work closely with the smaller business houses where efficiency and excellence in quality are given priorities and where innovative technologies can be easily implemented. She suggested that the chain should develop further and maintain a close association and coordination with the Textile Councils in order to be abreast of the latest developments and initiatives launched by the Government of India. She further told that they should keep the Councils informed of the challenges and roadblocks, if any, faced by the company regarding its operations in India.

The last B2B meeting was with **Mr Martin Auerbach**, CEO, Verband der Deutschen Heimtextilien-Industrie e.V.(HEIMTEX) a German Textiles Federation, which is around 150 years old. Mr. Auerbach informed that the Federation has developed in the recent years from being the traditional trade association into an effective and modern service organization for the home textile industry, catering exclusively to the German home textiles industry. While introducing themselves the representatives of Councils gave brief description of field of their activities in India. Mr. Prahladaka, Chairman EPCH pointed out the need of close cooperation between all councils and German Federation to protect the interests of its members, who are in the production home textiles and have distribution networks mainly in the European market.

Hon'ble Minister emphasised the need of proper communication between the Federation and the Indian Textile councils in order to address the skilled labour gap in Germany, without jeopardising the technological and business intelligence. This would enable to expand the manufacturing possibilities of the German member companies and also cater to the Indian market. The Minister also suggested that the relevant Councils on the Indian and German sides hold dialogues to enable enhanced cooperation between India and Germany in the textiles sector.

6. On 9<sup>th</sup> January 2018 an India Evening was organized by the Ministry of Textiles, the Trade Promotion Councils, HEPC, EPCH, Texprocil with the support of the Consulate General of India, Frankfurt. The event commenced with welcome remarks by Mr. V. Kumar, Chairman, HEPC, followed by opening remarks by representatives from EPCH and TEXPROCIL and a short address by Mr Raj Manek, Executive Director and Board Member of Messe Frankfurt Asia Holding Ltd. The event concluded with the keynote address by the Chief Guest, the Hon'ble Minister of Textiles, Smt. Smriti Zubin Irani. The event was

attended by over 120 participants, including officials from Messe Frankfurt, representatives of trade associations and chambers as well as international buyers and Indian exhibitors.

7. On 10<sup>th</sup> January 2018 the Hon'ble Minister of Textiles had a meeting with high ranking officials of Messe Frankfurt. The following officials from Messe Frankfurt attended the meeting.

- i) Mr. Detlef Braun, Member of the Executive Board, Messe Frankfurt;
- ii) Mr. Stephan Kurzawski, Senior Vice President Messe Frankfurt,
- iii) Mr. Olaf Schmidt, Vice President, Textile Fairs, Messe Frankfurt; and
- iv) Ms. Katrin Ordnung, Head of Protocol, Messe Frankfurt

Also present were Consul General, DC(Handloom), M/o Textiles, Chairmen of HEPC, TEXPROCIL and EPCH.

Mr. Detlef Braun, Member of the Executive Board, Messe Frankfurt greeted the Hon'ble Minister of Textiles and accompanying delegation. He introduced Messe Frankfurt team to the Minister and congratulated the textile Councils on bringing large participants from India to the Heimtextil Fair 2018. He highlighted that the Heimtextil is the world leader amongst the textile fairs and that the participation of India in the Fair is regarded as very important by Messe Frankfurt. The Minister was satisfied of the positive sentiment of the growing Indian participation at the Heimtextil and the general satisfaction expressed by the Indian companies on in terms of the business output generated by the Fair. She opened up the discussion by giving opportunity to representatives of the Indian Councils to share their experience with the Messe Frankfurt.

The following suggestions and concerns were raised by the Textile Councils:

The representative from Texprocil was of the view that an information booth nearer to the Indian companies stall be made available by the Messe. A demand for more space in Hall 11 which is premium exhibitor's hall was also raised.

Security concerns have been raised by the participant companies who have experienced thefts in the past. A suggestion was made to install CCTV cameras to avoid or keep a tab on these activities to ensure safety of the exhibitor's belongings and their products.

The representative from HEPC expressed desire of close cooperation between Indian Councils and Messe Frankfurt and also requested for strategic locations for Indian stalls for better brand building of the Indian products and exhibitors at the trade fair. In order to promote SMEs handloom sector the request for special consideration, especially for the exporters from Indian handloom industry to encourage more participation and provide impetus to the Indian SMEs in the handloom sector were flagged.

The representative from EPCH suggested space for 50 more stands to the Indian companies showcasing a new category of products. He further requested for a system of direct invoicing to the participant companies by Messe Frankfurt.

The Council also proposed to Messe Frankfurt to collaborate with the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), which is in the process of constructing a new exhibition facility in India. A business plan is requested from Messe Frankfurt towards this initiative.

A request for providing extra space for Indian indigenous artisans to showcase their unique art was also made to Messe authorities.

Mr. Olaf Schmidt, Vice President, Textile Fairs, Messe Frankfurt, thanked the Councils for their recommendations and the Indian participation and mentioned that in addition to the German clientele benefiting from the Heimtextil Fair, the international customers from all over the world also look forward to the participation from the Indian exporters given the high quality and creativity of the India-made product range. He mentioned that the Messe is committed to manage their space effectively and with the construction of a new facility within the Fair premises could ensure more space inviting more participation. He mentioned that through dialogue with the Indian Councils, mutually beneficial cross-marketing solutions could be arrived at. With regards to the security, Mr. Stephan Kursawski, Senior Vice President Messe Frankfurt, mentioned that it is a matter of strict German privacy laws and costs involved that the Messe is not able to provide for CCTV camera installations in the trade Fair premises.

Hon'ble Minister objected to this concern emphasising that in order to provide a satisfactory participation, safety concerns of the exhibitors should be taken into cognizance. Failure to do so may result in hampering of the image of the Messe amongst Indian exhibitors which could affect the overall PR and brand of the trade fair. Additionally, Minister also stressed that more advertising and publicity should be undertaken by Messe Frankfurt towards attracting more participation, especially from the traditional Indian textile companies with capacity for capital investment but lacking the international exposure. She also suggested that Messe Frankfurt share their best practices from the Heimtextil in terms of cross advertising, cross branding, etc. which could further be implemented during the organisation of trade fairs by Messe Frankfurt in India.

**Conclusion:**

8. The Ministerial level presence in Heimtextil Fair-2018 was after a gap of 4 years. The last visit of Minister of Textiles to Frankfurt was in 2014. Germany sees India as an important trade partner and foresee it economic superpower in near future. The invitation to the Hon'ble Minister of Textiles to attend the Heimtextil Fair-2018 and to invite India to be partner country for Ambiente Fair-2019, which is mother of all fairs, is the testament of importance the German fair organizers attaches to India. India is the only second Asian country after Japan to be given the honour of the partner country.

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**Facts & Figures**

**Total Number of Exhibitors: 2975 from 64 countries** (2017: 2949 exhibitors from 67 countries)

**Number of Indian Exhibitors: 392** (2017: 387)

**Number of German Exhibitors: 301** (2017: 312)

**Participation Statistics**

| Heimtextil                      | 2018       | 2017       | 2016       | 2015       | 2014       | 2013       |
|---------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Total no. Of Exhibitors         | 2975       | 2949       | 2771       | 2645       | 2714       | 2591       |
| No. Of German Exhibitors        | 301        | 312        | 305        | 308        | 315        | 319        |
| Participating Countries         | 64         | 67         | 67         | 64         | 62         | 64         |
| <b>No. Of Indian Exhibitors</b> | <b>392</b> | <b>387</b> | <b>363</b> | <b>382</b> | <b>367</b> | <b>372</b> |
| China + Hong Kong               | 544+18     | 533+17     | 532+20     | 513+28     | 514+17     | 474+16     |
| Indonesia                       | 2          | 3          | 3          | 2          | 2          | 5          |
| Taiwan                          | 56         | 51         | 52         | 46         | 51         | 47         |
| South Korea                     | 20         | 23         | 18         | 21         | 22         | 30         |
| Vietnam                         | 6          | 7          | 9          | 5          | 7          | 7          |
| Singapore                       | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 2          | 3          |
| Thailand                        | 2          | 3          | 2          | 2          | 4          | 2          |
| Japan                           | 16         | 18         | 19         | 25         | 16         | 18         |
| Pakistan                        | 212        | 218        | 211        | 218        | 226        | 214        |
| Bangladesh                      | 19         | 23         | 21         | 21         | 21         | 29         |
| Malaysia                        | 1          | 1          | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0          |
| Turkey                          | 257        | 243        | 204        | 151        | 163        | 175        |
| UK                              | 87         | 80         | 85         | 86         | 76         | 75         |
| USA                             | 35         | 46         | 48         | 39         | 47         | 40         |
| Italy                           | 183        | 174        | 151        | 117        | 123        | 109        |

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