



The Southern India Mills' Association

Post Box No. 3783, 41 Race Course, Coimbatore - 641 018

Phone: 0422 4225333 | Fax: 0422 4225366

E-mail: info@simamills.org | Web: www.simamills.org

NEWS CLIPPINGS –12-04-2018

States to step up e-way bill vigilance to clamp down on evasion

Economic Times

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/states-to-step-up-e-way-bill-vigilance-to-clamp-down-on-evasion/articleshow/63702983.cms>

Some states have asked their tax departments to step up vigilance on electronic way bills to clamp down on evasion, according to people with knowledge of the matter, raising the prospect of increased roadside inspections of trucks. The move comes as states such as Maharashtra have seen lower-than-expected generation of e-way bills by transporters, which the authorities fear could be a sign of evasion.

Maharashtra has issued instructions that tax authorities should start taking strict action against those found to be transporting goods without e-way bills. Maharashtra generated 100,938 bills compared with Gujarat's 175,851 on March 3 though it had 2,669 enrolments against Gujarat's 1,980. There is an apprehension that transporters or businesses are not generating e-way bills," said a government official.

An e-way bill is required for movement of goods worth more than Rs 50,000 across state borders. Eway bill trials began on January 16 and the system was formally implemented on April 1. E-way bills for intra-state transport, which involve movement of goods beyond 10 km, will start on April 15 in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh, the government said on Tuesday. Trucks caught without e-way bills can be levied a penalty of up to Rs 10,000 besides which the cargo can be inspected to ascertain tax evasion

A penalty to the tune of 100% of the tax being evaded can be levied along with the tax itself. Both the vehicle and the goods can be impounded as well. The e-way bill mechanism is an integral part of the goods and services tax (GST) regime that's aimed at plugging evasion.

Evasion was one of the reasons cited by the government for the fall in GST revenue in the past few months. GST collections hit a high of Rs 95,132 crore in October before declining to Rs 85,931 crore in December 2017. They have since recovered to Rs 89,264 in February but are still below the peak. Tax experts said businesses need to ensure that they don't slip up on e-way bill generation through error or ignorance of the law. "Businesses may face more scrutiny going forward as clearly there seems to be an apprehension based on the data that many dispatches are being made without generation of e-way bills," said Anita Rastogi, partner, GST and indirect tax, at PwC. "They need to put focus on this area."

**Most businesses struggling with GST,
report sales fall**

Zee Biz

<http://www.zeebiz.com/india/news-most-businesses-struggling-with-gst-report-sales-fall-42382>

The industry seems to be struggling to make profits post GST, with about 26% saying they saw a decline in profits by more than 30%. More than 55% respondents are unsure or believe that GST is not good for their businesses in the long run.

Nine months after the goods and services tax (GST) was launched in the country, most businesses are still struggling to understand the new indirect tax regime, a survey conducted by the online wholesale marketplace Wydr has revealed. According to the survey, 57% of the respondents representing manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers said they are yet to fully understand the working of GST, while nearly 19% (one in five) said they still do not understand GST at all. A total of 130 businesses across India were surveyed on how the GST regime has impacted their business.

“The scale of implementation for the GST is unprecedented anywhere in the world, which naturally leads to some challenges and teething troubles in the first few months. The survey’s results demonstrate that even though significant progress has been made in GST rollout, the administration needs to enhance its focus on educating small and medium business owners across India,” said Devesh Rai, founder and CEO, Wydr. Wydr is a B2B app-based marketplace for retailers and wholesalers to buy directly from distributors and manufacturers.

As per Wydr’s survey, over 53% of the respondents admitted to having experienced a decline in their sales and revenues post the introduction of GST, while only 25% said the impact on sales was positive.

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“Those businesses whose annual sales cross a threshold of Rs 1.5 crore and fall under the GST are liable to remit GST and are eligible to deduct input tax credit. This increases the complexity. Also, firms don’t just need to apply the correct rate, but also have to match invoices of their outputs and inputs in order to be eligible for full input tax credit, which increases compliance costs further. However, the government is working towards minimising the issues. It has not even been a year since the tax system has been implemented and considering the scale of implementation, I think we are much better off,” Rai said.

**Govt to import another 5000 MW from
India**

The Daily star

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/govt-import-another-500mw-india-1561651>

The government is set to import 500 megawatt more electricity on a short- and long-term basis from India to meet the growing demand for power in the country. The proposal to import electricity from two Indian companies for Tk 4.7148 to Tk 6.5474 kW/h has already been approved by the cabinet committee on purchase yesterday.

The short-term would be from June 2018 to December 31, 2019. Bangladesh will purchase 300MW of electricity from NTPC Vidyut Vyapar Nigam (NVVN) for Tk 4.7148 kW/h (\$0.0566) and 200MW from PTC India for Tk 4.8647 kW/h (\$0.0584).

The same companies will also provide power over the long-term: from January 1, 2020 to May 31, 2033.

Indian company NVVN will supply 300MW at a cost of Tk 6.4891 kW/h (\$0.0779) and PTC India Ltd will supply 200MW power at a cost of Tk 6.5474 kW/h (\$0.0786). Bangladesh has been importing 500MW of electricity from the neighbouring country through the inter-connection grid line from 2013. The tenure for the arrangement will end in June.

Another 100MW of electricity is being imported from Tripura from March 2016. mBangladesh has plans to import more power from India, said a power division official. Also at yesterday's meeting, the cabinet committee on purchase approved a proposal to appoint Indian Texmaco Rail and Engineering for constructing dual gauge rail line from Akhaura to Agartala for Bangladesh Railway for Tk 241 crore. The project, the total cost for which would be Tk 478 crore, has been taken up with a view to expanding trade between Bangladesh and India through the railway.

For the implementation of the project, India will give a grant of Tk 420 crore, said an official of the railways ministry.

The cabinet committee on economic affairs held a meeting before the meeting of the purchase committee. The economic affairs committee approved the draft policy for the National API (active pharmaceutical ingredients) and Laboratory Reagents Manufacturing and Exports. The government plans to offer a host of incentives to encourage local manufacturing of raw materials for the pharmaceutical sector in a bid to boost exports and lower the cost for domestic consumers.

Bangladesh largely relies on imports for raw materials in the absence of local API: about 95 percent of the Tk 5,000 crore worth of raw materials needed by the pharmaceutical sector are brought in from abroad. Besides, the raw materials, which are mostly imported from China, South Korea and India, are not always of the requisite quality. As per the proposal, the government will give unconditional tax-holiday to all API and laboratory reagents producers, both local and joint ventures, for five years from fiscal 2016-17 to fiscal 2021-22. The committee also approved the import of liquefied natural gas from Oman on a government-to-government basis. Besides, the Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation under the textiles and jute ministry has proposed to hand over 1.18 acres of land to the directorate of police at the negotiated price.

MCX Cotton futures is trading on positive note since the start of April and jumped almost 2.2% or Rs. 440 per bale on reports of lower acreage, increase in export demand from China and increase in mill consumption. Prices have been supportive as Cotton production for the country revised downwards for the fourth consecutive month by Cotton Association of India (CAI) to 360 lakh bales from 375 lakh bales estimated in December last year. Since the start of the season cotton futures surged more than 11% from Rs. 18,530 per bales to Rs. 20,630 levels. However, cotton futures falls more than 6.2% from its high in January on higher arrivals in the physical market coupled with reports that cotton yarn exports may remained under pressure due to sluggish demand from China. However, in February, cotton futures surged 3.6% on reports that the cotton production in Maharashtra and Telangana may be lower due to pest infestations and exports from the country improved due to weak rupee and good demand from the Asian countries.

Last year, cotton prices were higher during February and March compared to this year on restricted arrivals from the Farmers due to demonetization but this year the arrivals have been good. In the current season 2017-18, the arrivals have been 287 lakh bales, up by 4.5% as on 31st March compared to 275 lakh bales last year. Cotton arrivals in Gujarat recorded highest at 76 lakh bales (Vs 64 lakh bales last year) followed by Maharashtra at 66.75 lakh bales (Vs 74 lakh bales) and Telangana at 46 lakh bales (Vs 43 lakh bales). In North India, cotton arrivals increase to 47.8 lakh bales compared to 43 lakh bales last year.

Due to vulnerability of cotton to pink boll worm and spurious cotton seeds sold in the market, traders are expecting a reduction in acreage under cotton by 10-15% in the coming kharif season. Cotton farmers are likely to shifting towards oilseed and pulses in hope of better returns. Last year, Pink Bollworm infestation damage crops in in Maharashtra and Telangana had dent farmer incomes.

Moreover, CAI in its latest press release has raised its estimate for India's export for cotton to 65 lakh tonnes in 2017-18 (Oct-Sep) from 55 lakh tonnes projected in start of the season. Last year, country exported about 58.2 lakh bales of cotton. For CY2017/18 (Oct-Sep) consumption is forecast at 324 lakh bales, up by 5.5% from last year's consumption of 307 lakh bales. Cotton consumption is expected to improve over last year due to various government schemes and incentives to boost garment and apparel exports will renew mill activity.

Outlook: We expect cotton to trade on positive note towards Rs. 21,500 per bale (CMP: 20,620) in next one month on expectation of improved exports demand and reports of reduction in cotton acreage in coming kharif season. However, if India's exports during the recent month surge due trade war between the US and China, cotton acreage may increase, supported by near normal monsoon forecast by private weather forecasting company - Skymet. During current season, China is the fourth largest market for Indian cotton after Bangladesh, Vietnam and Pakistan. However, India is hoping to export three times more cotton ie. About 27-30 lakh bales to China next year as it looks to restock cotton and also going to impose a 25% import tax on US cotton. Moreover, cotton prices may also increase if government declare Minimum Support price (MSP) 1.5 times the cost of cultivation."

In his opening address, the Prime Minister observed the increasing energy demands of the world and the economies' gradual shift to green energy and energy efficiency in accordance with the climate change agenda based on the COP21 agreement. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the 16th edition of International Energy Forum (IEF) Ministerial on Wednesday, which is being hosted by India and co-hosted by China and South Korea.**

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The Prime Minister also observed India's growing energy needs due to the rapid economic growth, "I came across an energy forecast prepared by an agency according to which India will be the key driver of the global energy demands in the next 25 years. India's energy consumption will grow by 4.2 percent a year for the next 25 years."

"Currently India is the fastest growing large economy in the world. All leading agencies are estimating India to grow at 7 to 8 percent in the future," he said, adding, "Our govt is boosting local manufacturing through Make in India and filling of youth in industries such as textile, petrochemical, engineering, etc. This in turn is also increasing out energy needs further." Sharing his views on the hydrocarbon sector, Prime Minister Modi called for moving responsible oil prices that balance the interests of both the consumers and the producers.

He also stressed on moving to transparent market for both oil and gas, with the view to serve the energy needs of humanity in an optimal manner.

The Prime Minister also shed some light on the India's endeavour to achieve energy security.

"People must have universal access to clean, affordable, sustainable and equitable supply of energy," he said, and added, "My vision for India's energy future has four pillars- energy access, energy efficiency, energy sustainability and energy security. Energy in general and hydrocarbons in particular are important parts of my vision for India's future. India needs energy which is accessible and affordable to the poor."

Prime Minister Modi also listed down various ways in which the country is addressing the energy demands of the country, maintaining a balance between the economic growth and the needs of the poor. Our government has encouraged private participation across entire oil and gas value chain. Our government believes in an integrated approach to energy planning and our energy agenda in India is inclusive, market-based and climate-sensitive," he said. The three-day forum with 92 participating countries will discuss the future of global energy.

Delhi HC dismisses Monsanto plea to enforce BT cotton seed patent

Business Today

<https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/delhi-hc-dismisses-monsanto-plea-to-enforce-bt-cotton-seed-patent/story/274608.html>

The Delhi High Court today dismissed US-based agro major Monsanto Technology's plea to enforce the patent for its BT cotton seeds in India.

A bench of Justices S Ravindra Bhat and Yogesh Khanna partially allowed the counter-claims of three Indian seed companies that Monsanto does not have a patent for its BT cotton seeds, a genetically modified variant which resists bollworms.

The court also upheld the decision of a single judge on the issue of trait fee payable to Monsanto by the three Indian companies -- Nuziveedu Seeds Ltd, Prabhat Agri Biotech Ltd and Pravardhan Seeds Private Ltd -- under the sub-licence with them.

The single judge had said that the Indian companies would pay trait fees to Monsanto according to government-set rates.

Monsanto wanted to charge a higher rate of trait fee under the sub-licence given to Indian companies to use its seed technology.

Both sides had challenged the single judge's order before the division bench.

Monsanto had challenged the single judge's decision reinstating a sub-licence between it and the three Indian seed companies, which the foreign entity had terminated.

The Indian companies in their appeal had challenged the rejection of their claim by the single judge that the US-based agro major Monsanto was incorrectly granted patent for BT cotton seeds.

After the verdict was pronounced, Monsanto sought that the decision be kept in abeyance for a few weeks so that it can file an appeal in the Supreme Court.

The high court declined to keep the operation of its decision in bench, but granted the US company a certificate of fitness to file an appeal in the apex court.

Over 7 tonnes of spurious hybrid cotton seed seized

The Hindu

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/over-7-tonnes-of-spurious-hybrid-cotton-seed-seized/article23496973.ece>

50 Task Force teams set up last month conducted raids in districts from March 29 to April 9

The Task Force teams comprising officials from the agriculture and police departments and seed certification and development agencies have seized over seven tonnes of spurious and illegal hybrid cotton seed with herbicide tolerant trait worth ₹13.15 crore during the raids conducted in districts from March 29 to April 9.

In all, the 50 Task Force teams set up last month have conducted raids/inspections on 1,860 seed shops besides seed processing plants and godowns.

The reports submitted by the teams were reviewed at a meeting held here on Tuesday by Principal Secretary (Agriculture) C. Parthasarathi and Inspector General of Police Y. Nagi Reddy.

According to officials, the teams have arrested 31 persons for and registered cases under Section 420 of the Indian Penal Code against 6 persons following the detection of spurious seed during the raids. In all, they have seized 4,283 kg of expired herbicide tolerant (HT) cotton seed worth ₹3.32 crore and over 2,842 kg (6,317 packets of 450 grams each) of spurious HT cotton seed worth ₹9.83 crore.

Besides, the Task Force teams have also issued show cause notices to Narmadasagar, Karthiyan Agri-Genetics, Kohinoor Seeds and Vibha Agro-tech seed companies.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr. Nagi Reddy said cases under the provisions of the IPC and Prevention of Dangerous Activities Act would be registered against those indulging in spurious and illegal seed to minimise loss to the farming community.

Commissioner of Agriculture M. Jaganmohan, Director of Telangana State Seed and Organic Certification Authority K. Keshavulu, Director of Horticulture L. Venkatram Reddy and others also participated in the review.

Cotton trading remains moderate on steady physical prices

Daily Times

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/226889/cotton-trading-remains-moderate-on-steady-physical-prices-2/>

Cotton trading remained moderate and buyers made deals on slightly higher price amid firm physical prices.

Forward deals for a month period also changed hands that pushed physical prices in green zone. The Karachi Cotton Association (KCA)'s spot rate stood at Rs 7,500 per maund. Buyers made deals for all grades besides deals for better and second grade of lint for blending purpose remained firm and deals changed hands at around Rs 6,975 per maund to Rs 7,675 per maund during the trading session. Mills consolidated their long positions and made deals for second grade on paying premium price for it.

The shrinking fine lint put general price in firm zone and buyers also made forward deals on slightly higher price at around Rs 7,750 per maund in Sindh and Punjab stations. The private exporters consolidated their long positions through buying from old stocks while market remained in steady tones. The buyers remained selective on grade and consolidated their future positions with fresh fine lots, he added.

According to KCA, 200 bales of Multan changed hands at Rs 7,150 per maund, 200 bales of Sanghar at Rs 7,450 per maund, 200 bales of upper Sindh at Rs 6,925 per maund and 200 bales of southern Punjab at Rs 7,200 per maund. In domestic market buyers remained eager for quality lint on the back of growing demand of end products. The ginners of Punjab offered cotton of all grades to the buyers around Rs 5,975 per maund to Rs 7,775 per maund while ginners of Sindh offered low-grade of lint to the buyers around Rs 5,975 per maund.

New York Cotton May Futures 2018 contract closed at 84.18 cents per pound, July Futures 2018 contract at 84.36 cents per pound and Cotlook A Index was hovering at 90 cents per pound. The US currency edged higher in value versus rupee in interbank and open market, treasurers said. The greenback remained firm at Rs 115.40 for buying and closed at Rs 115.60 for selling in interbank. It gained 20 paisas. It was traded at a day high of Rs 115.41 and a low of Rs 115.59. A treasurer at a local bank said the oil payments remained the major factor for rupee's dull trend. The euro remained firm to close at Rs 142.66 for buying and Rs 142.86 for selling with a gain of 80 paisas. The pound sterling stood firm to close at Rs 163.62 and Rs 163.82 for buying and selling respectively. It gained 84 paisas.

Kerb Market: The dollar remained firm in value owing to improved demand by umrah going pilgrims. The dollar closed at Rs 116.60 for buying and Rs 116.80 for selling. It gained 15 paisas. It was trading a day low at 116.59 in the open market. The demand of dollar in the open currency market from the corporate and private sector buyers has

now become firm, thus putting some pressure on rupee.

The pound sterling closed at Rs 164 for buying and Rs 164.20 for selling, it gained 50 paise versus rupee. The euro closed at Rs 142.25 for buying and Rs 142.45 for selling. It gained 50 paise in the open market. The gold price in global and domestic market withered any possible descending phase on improved Gold Future speculations on general prices however less volume were traded. Meanwhile business activity remained Gold Future speculative on basis of gold manipulation by leading traders and output outlook during the trading session.

The gold price would be remained under leading hands in half of 2018. Gold closed at \$1,350 an ounce with \$12 upward variation in value as compared to previous trading session and domestic bullion price witnessed same trend. Gold in tola term up by Rs 520 a tola to close at Rs 58,483 per tola while in grammage value, gold remained firm by Rs 446 per ten grams to Rs 50,193 per ten grams. The manipulators in India, Pakistan and other major gold buying countries remained in driving seat for controlling Gold Futures. They remained busy influencing current prices and Futures on speculations. The potential buyers in India and Pakistan remained busy in hedging. The gold hedgers made some cautious deals. The general buyers remained on sidelines anticipating easing in price in coming days on dollar-rupee parity. Buyers made deals according to their immediate needs. Local trading in gold remained dull on back of insignificant buying and less liquidity in the market.

More than 900 exhibitors gather at HCMC textile and garment expo	Nhan Dhan http://en.nhandan.org.vn/business/item/6028802
Participating businesses introduce the event's visitors to advanced technologies, the latest machinery, high-end equipment, and materials in the garment and textile industry. They are scheduled to join experts for a discussion on new trends in the world garment and textile industry, and to analyse the opportunities and challenges facing the industry in Vietnam in the context of the integration process and an era of rapid technological progress. The four-day event will also feature fashion collections by designers from the Vietnam Fashion Design Institute (FADIN). The annual event, jointly organised by the Vietnam National Textile-Garment Group (VINATEX), the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Hong Kong-based CP Exhibition Ltd., is the only textile and garment expo approved by UFI - the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry. It aims to provide a platform for Vietnamese garment and textile businesses to advertise their products, share experiences with foreign colleagues, and seek new trade deals.	

Cotton Mission 2025 Meant To Achieve 20m Bales Production In Punjab	Urdu Point https://www.urdupoint.com/en/agriculture/cotton-mission-2025-meant-to-achieve-20m-bale-312018.html
Punjab secretary agriculture Muhammad Mahmud said on Wednesday that preparations were afoot in line with Cotton Mission 2025 to achieve the milestone of 20 million bales production of cotton in Punjab by 2025 "Cotton Mission is a road map to take cotton to its due status in Punjab," Mahmud said in a statement issued by media liaison unit of Punjab agriculture department. A marathon process of consultations with all the stakeholders would be initiated to get their opinions and suggestions for development of cotton. Mahmud said that scientists have been assigned the task to conduct research on high yielding seed technology and other aspects to	

revive cotton's higher productivity.

The Punjab secretary agriculture said that the on-going seed sowing campaign that began on April 1 would be completed by May 31 at all cost. He said that the provincial government was working with those engaged with the whole supply chain of cotton under long and mid-term planning. He disclosed that a cotton council was being formed that would comprise representatives from government, farmers, APTMA, PCGA and other representatives from private sector. He said that PB-Ropes had proved beneficial for farmers last season in tackling pink bollworm and asked the federal plant protection department to allow private sector import PB-Ropes. He said that field formations of agriculture department have been instructed to launch a two-week long campaign against pink bollworm immediately pleading that an effective control on the initial stage would benefit farmers not only this season but also the next cotton season.

SaigonTex 2018 introduces modern textile-garment machinery

Vietnam Plus

<https://en.vietnamplus.vn/saigontex-2018-introduces-modern-textilegarment-machinery/129405.vnp>

The Vietnam Textile and Garment Industry Expo – SaigonTex 2018, the biggest and most influential event of the textile and garment industry of Vietnam, opened in Ho Chi Minh City on April 11. The event is organised by the Vietnam National Garment and Textile Group (Vinatex), the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Hongkong-based CP Exhibition company. It is Vietnam’s sole textile and garment industry expo meeting UFI standard of the Global Association of the Exhibitor Industry. This year, SaigonTex attracts the participation of more than 900 firms from 27 countries and territories across the world, including Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong (China), India and Indonesia. Many leading experts are expected to attend the event to suggest measures to address the sector’s challenges. Many advanced textile equipment machinery and spare parts as well as new materials are introduced at the event. It also offers opportunities for domestic and international firms to meet and promote their brands, as well as seek new customers and expand markets. Numerous fashion collections of famous Vietnamese designers are also on display.

President of the Vietnam Textile and Apparel Association Vu Duc Giang said SaigonTex 2018 is hoped to not only enable participants to explore new garment-textile equipment, but also bolster investment in the field. The event runs until April 14 at the Saigon Exhibition and Convention Centre.-VNA

Monsanto loses indian legal battle over GM Cotton patents

Euro News

<http://www.euronews.com/2018/04/11/monsanto-loses-indian-legal-battle-over-gm-cotton-patents>

A court ruled on Wednesday that Monsanto <MON.N> cannot claim patents on its genetically modified (GM) cotton seeds in India, the Indian company that brought the case said. Citing an Indian law that excludes seeds from being patented, Nuziveedu Seeds Ltd (NSL) argued that the U.S. seeds company was not eligible to claim patents and charge royalties from Indian seed companies. On Wednesday, the Delhi High Court agreed with NSL, ruling that India’s Patent Act does not allow Monsanto any patent cover for its GM cotton seeds, said Narne Murali Krishna, a company secretary for NSL. A Monsanto India spokesman said the company was “very disappointed” with the court

order. "Today's order will have wide-ranging, negative implications for biotech-based innovation across many sectors within India, and is inconsistent with other international markets where agricultural innovation has flourished," the spokesman said in a statement. Monsanto's "false claim has got exposed today," Kalyan Goswami, director general of the National Seed Association of India, said in a statement. Late last year, NSL said it would not settle a long-standing intellectual property dispute with Monsanto over genetically modified cotton, despite some other Indian companies doing so. Monsanto has been involved in a long-running battle in India over royalties paid by local seed companies for its GM cotton. In 2016, the Indian farm ministry cut Monsanto's royalties by more than 70 percent, triggering a long-running feud that drew in the Indian and U.S. governments. In March, India cut the royalties paid to Monsanto for its GM cotton for the second time in two years, potentially fuelling another row with the U.S. company that threatened to leave India in 2016. More than 90 percent of India's cotton crop is genetically modified.