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NEWS CLIPPINGS –14-02-2019

Textiles ministry aims to achieve multiple targets: Secy

SME Times

<http://www.smetimes.in/smetimes/news/top-stories/2019/Feb/13/textile-secretary43141.html>

The Ministry of Textiles, in close collaboration with state Governments and district administration, strove to achieve the targets in respect of various deliverables, said Secretary Textiles, Raghvendra Singh.

Weavers' Service Centres (Field Office for Handlooms) was designated as supervising agency for effective coordination with banks, district administration and weavers, he added.

Addressing a press conference in New Delhi, Singh, said that special focus was deliverables in the districts of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Mizoram and Manipur.

In several districts, the deliverables were substantial, for example coverage of almost cent percent in each district.

Specially for the weavers, yarn-passbooks have been distributed which make available the required yarn to them at subsidies rates.

The marketing events organised in these districts generated substantial sales during the 100-day period for the artisans and weavers.

Raghvendra Singh told media persons that quality certification is a requirement before e-commerce. Apart from the awareness campaign, around 53,000 labels were issued, applications received and registrations done under the Handloom Brand. Similarly, weavers and artisans were also enrolled under the social security insurance scheme.

To increase the earnings of the weavers and artisans the Promotion Council for Handlooms and Handicrafts signed MOUs with Weavers' Societies and artisans from amongst the focus district of MSME outreach programme for promoting exports through design, skill and such other interventions.

Textiles Secretary informed that Centres of Excellence, comprising 55 display outlets have been set up in Varanasi for the sale of products which are G.I. tagged. Similarly, children have been facilitated in various districts to avail of the learning opportunities through IGNOU and NIOS wherein the Textile Ministry provide 75% of the cost for girls and children belonging to SC,ST and BPL categories.

Tufting frames and carpet looms have been provided to Carpet weavers of Bhadohi in UP.

A. Cotton		
Spot price- Shankar-6 (Ex-Gin) 28.5 to29 mm		
Rs/Bale	Rs/Candy	USD Cent/lb
19904	41600(-100)	74.80
Domestic Futures price (Ex-Warehouse Rajkot) February		
Rs/Bale	Rs/Candy	USD Cent/lb
20150	42114(-229)	75.72
International Futures		
NY ICE USD Cents/lb. (March 2019)		69.86(+0.8)
ZCE Cotton: Yuan/MT (May 2019)		15115(+15)
ZCE Cotton: USD Cents/lb.		101.42(+0.31)
Basis difference (ICE March -Domestic Spot)		4.94(-0.67)
Cotlook A Index - Physical		79.40(-0.50)
WTI Crude USD / Barrel		53.90(+0.10)
B. Currency		
USD/INR	Close	Previous Close
Spot	70.86	70.81(+0.09)
USD Dollar Index	97.20(+0.50)	

Cotton Guide

The ICE March futures ended almost neutral with a positive uplift of just +8 points. Infact all the other ICE contracts ended with the bulls showing a marginal victory. The ICE May and the ICE July contract ended with a slight change towards north at 71.40 and 72.74 cent/lb respectively. The Change that was noted was +29 and +30 cents for the two contracts respectively. Total volume seen in the ICE contracts were 64,956 contracts, with May contract having the lead in the volumes 29,037 contracts and March having the volumes at 21,657 contracts. We expect the prices to show a downward trend. Today is the last day where the largest long only spec fund will roll positions from March to May.

The MCX contracts on the other hand ended with negative numbers even further. The MCX February, MCX March and MCX April contract all ended with the same change of -110 Rs/bale at 20,150 Rs/Bale, 20,430 Rs/Bale, 20,720 Rs/Bale respectively. The total volume at MCX was at 2663 lots which is a decline of (-123) lots whereas the total open interest is at 9517 lots with a decline of (-168).

Arrival figures in India are estimated to be around 161,000 lint equivalent bales (1 Bale=170Kg) (source cotlook) including 49,000 registered in Maharashtra, 44,000 in Gujarat, 28,000 Andhra Pradesh. We need to note that the arrivals this year have still not yet crossed 200,000 bales. Prices of Shankar 6 are now at 41,600 Rs/Candy. Further price reduction in the domestic spot market seems to be difficult or it may take a dip, but not too deep. Cotlook Index

A has been further readjusted to 79.40 cents/lb with a negative decline of -0.50.

There is this fear looming amongst market participants about the results that the talks between the US-China bring. We need to take note, that when there is fear about results going either ways, the bears usually take the victory. On the other hand both the US and Chinese representatives want a trade settlement soon as the deadline of March 1, 2019 is nearing.

As shown price is moving towards the 100% Fibonacci extension as it failed to hold the crucial support at 70.60-70.00 zones. The RSI in daily charts continued to trade below 50 at 31 suggesting momentum is still missing for price to move above the 21 day EMA at 71.12. In the near term strong supports exists around 69.00-68.80, followed by 68.00 levels in March futures. Likewise crucial resistance seen around 70.90, 71.80, followed by 74.60 levels. For the day price is expected to consolidate in the range of 69.20-70.90 range with downside bias. Only a close below 69.60 would push price further towards 69, 68.80 levels. In the domestic markets trading range for Feb futures contract will be 20050-20300 Rs/Bale.

Currency Guide

Indian rupee may witness choppy trade amid mixed cues but general bias remains weak. Weighing on rupee is firmness in crude oil price and general strength in US dollar. Brent crude trades higher above \$63 per barrel supported by Saudi's pledge to deepen production cuts. The US dollar index rose 0.4% as Fed's dovish stance and downbeat inflation data was countered by weaker European economic data and higher bond yields. However, supporting rupee is upbeat economic data and general strength in global equity markets. Hopes of US-China trade deal has improved risk sentiment. US President Trump told Wednesday that talks to resolve the US trade war with China are making good progress. Earlier this week, President Trump also indicated that he is willing to extend the March 1 deadline if talks progress well. Rupee appreciated sharply in last few days however the rally is faltering. General strength in US dollar and firmness in crude oil will weigh on Indian currency. USDINR may trade in a range of 70.5-71 and bias may be on the upside.

MSME loan bonanza! Rs 20,900 crore loans in just 100 days under outreach scheme

Financial Express

<https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/sme/msme-loan-bonanza-rs-20900-crore-loans-in-just-100-days-under-outreach-scheme/1486559/>

Loans to the tune of Rs 20,900 crore have been sanctioned under the 100-day outreach programme for MSMEs across 104 districts announced in November, a top official said Wednesday. Secretary in the Department of Financial Services Rajeev Kumar said 33 lakh MSMEs have been provided facilities under the 100-day outreach programme. Out of these, 6.36 lakh MSMEs in 39 districts are under the textiles sector. "Loans to the tune of Rs 20,900 crore have been provided to MSMEs in 104 districts, including Rs 6,500 crore for the textiles sector enterprises," Kumar said at an outreach event for MSMEs in the textiles sector.

In November last year, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced a slew of measures, including sanction of loans of up to Rs 1 crore to small and medium enterprises in 59 minutes through a special portal and 2 per cent interest subvention or rebate for GST-registered MSMEs on incremental loan of up to Rs 1 crore, among others. He had also launched the 100 days programme for support and outreach to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs),

identifying 100 districts across the country.

Textile Minister Smriti Irani said as many as 21 crore Indians are linked to the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, while Rs 3,000 crore has been disbursed as claim amount. "Whether it be Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana or Suraksha Bima Yojana, today 21 crore Indians are linked to these two schemes and money is disbursed as soon as the claim is filed. Till today Rs 3,000 crore has been given under these two schemes," Irani said. Kumar said the Department of Financial Services is ensuring that claims filed under the two insurance schemes are processed in a timely fashion.

Size India: Exercise to measure people to begin next month	Financial Express https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/size-india-exercise-to-measure-people-to-begin-next-month/1486683/
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A large percentage of shoppers face difficulty in finding clothes that fit perfectly according to their body measurements, as there is no standard size chart at present.

Starting next month, the government will launch an exercise to measure a group of people to prepare comprehensive "India Size" chart, which can be adopted by the country's apparel industry, a top official said Wednesday. State-of-the-art machines will be used in the project for the body measurement of people to develop the standardised size chart. "We want that we should have Indian size for two things. It can boost our retail market. South Asian size will also get fillip, plus our own diaspora which is outside, we will become influence drivers for foreign companies also. We are actually rolling out the exercise in March itself," Textiles Secretary Raghendra Singh told PTI.

He said the government is trying to complete the project as soon as possible, so that a standardised size chart can be prepared for the ready-to-wear industry, based on body measurements of the domestic population. According to Singh, the move assumes significance as in the near future, the country's retail market along with China is going to be the biggest in the world. "Therefore this initiative is one element of making an indigenous effort for occupying that space. Otherwise, you never know, we may end up making space for others to come in. So, this one effort is an exercise in that direction," he said at a press conference here. Singh said the exercise will affect the entire South Asia because the size has regional variations as well. "We have launched the Size India project. Right now there is a US size, a UK size but no India Size. We have to wear what we get. So, we have ordered machines through NIFT which will arrive this month itself," the textiles secretary said.

The project approved earlier by the government will entail measuring of 25,000 male and female Indians in 6 cities across 6 regions of the country: Kolkata (East), Mumbai (West), New Delhi (North), Hyderabad (Central India), Bengaluru (South) and Shillong (North-East). Using 3D whole body scanners and computers that will extract hundreds of measurements from scan. At present, India's apparel industry uses size charts which are tweaked versions of sizes of other countries, so returns of the garments are in the range of 20 per cent to 40 per cent and is increasing with the growth of e-commerce and the main reason for returns are poor garment fit.

Providing well fitting garments in the absence of standardised size chart is proving to be a big challenge for the domestic textile and apparel industry, which is projected to reach USD 123 billion by 2021 and holds 5th position in apparel imports. Once ready, the standardised size chart will impact various other sectors like automotive,

aerospace, fitness and sport, art and computer gaming, where insights from this data can produce ergonomically designed products, which are suited for the domestic population.

A large percentage of shoppers face difficulty in finding clothes that fit perfectly according to their body measurements, as there is no standard size chart at present. Moreover, there are differences in anthropometric built of people in different geographical regions across the country. Till date 14 countries have successfully completed national sizing surveys: the US, Canada, Mexico, the UK, France, Spain, Germany, Korea, China and Australia.

U.S. to discuss trade, e-com rules with India

The Hindu

<https://www.thehindu.com/business/us-to-discuss-trade-e-com-rules-with-india/article26261454.ece>

Review of India's eligibility for GSP may figure in talks between Ambassador Juster, Minister Prabhu

U.S. Ambassador Kenneth I. Juster will lead a delegation of officials to hold talks with Union Commerce Minister Suresh Prabhu on Thursday to resolve several sore trade points, including the concerns of American CEOs regarding doing business in India and bilateral trade imbalance.

The status of the review of India's eligibility for the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) is also likely to come up in the light of recent developments where the U.S. has again threatened to withdraw the export exemptions for India. U.S. Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross will participate via video conferencing. Other issues that had particularly incensed American businesses are India's new data localisation rules that force foreign companies to store Indians' data within the country, and rules amending FDI rules in e-commerce that had hurt American giants like Amazon and Walmart. These are likely to be high on the agenda of Thursday's Indo-U.S. CEO Forum.

Higher import tariffs

Trade tensions between the two countries rose last March when U.S. President Donald Trump notified the imposition of higher import tariffs on steel and aluminium, which affected several countries, including India. In retaliation, India announced counter-tariffs on 29 American goods, worth about \$235 million, but has delayed implementing them in the hope of resolving the matter.

President Trump's order was followed closely by the office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) announcing that it was putting India's eligibility for GSP — under which India is allowed duty-free exports to the U.S. for about 2,000 product lines — under review. While the move was protested by the Indian government and industry chambers alike, the review was still in progress.

"GSP boosts the competitiveness of American manufacturers by lowering their costs," Sanjay Budhia, chairman, CII National Committee on EXIM, said. "Approximately two-thirds of U.S. imports under GSP are raw materials, components, or machinery and equipment used by U.S. companies to manufacture goods in the U.S. for domestic consumption or for export. These benefits are real."

The USTR received applications to review India's GSP eligibility from the National Milk Producers Federation and the

US Dairy Export Council, and the another from the Advanced Medical Technology Association.

“As described in the India Chapter of the 2018 National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers, India has implemented a wide array of trade barriers that create serious negative effects on U.S. commerce,” the USTR notice document said. Mr. Ross will also try to resolve trade imbalance between India and the U.S., a sore point raised by President Trump. India's exports to the U.S. in 2017-18 stood at \$47.9 billion, while imports were \$26.7 billion. He had earlier raised the issue of unequal trade and tariffs between the two countries, especially India’s seemingly high import tariffs on Harley Davidson motorcycles.

India's first Centre for Textiles Trends Forecasting soon in Delhi

Business Standard

https://www.business-standard.com/article/news-ians/india-s-first-centre-for-textiles-trends-forecasting-soon-in-delhi-119021301230_1.html

In keeping with its status as a major textiles market as well as exporter, India will soon have its first Centre for Textiles Trends Forecasting to be set up in the national capital, an official said on Wednesday.

Briefing reporters here, Textiles Secretary Raghvendra Singh said the proposed centre had already received government approval and is slated to become operational as early as within this month in a prime property of the ministry located in the heart of the city.

The complex of facilities in the centre designed to boost India's exports would include an Incubation and Innovation Centre designed to aid "design interventions" and incubate textile start-ups, as well as a first of its kind Crafts and Textiles Depository, Singh said.

"India doesn't have a trend forecasting centre...we depend on international trends, which we then pass on to the craftsmen to make copies.

"It is high time that we became influencers (of trends)," he said. Announcing that the forecasting centre would be set up this month, the Secretary said that it would make use of commercial intelligence in the sector "to forecast what trend would come in the next six months".

On the proposed Incubation and Innovation Centre for textiles, he said that the Centre had already approved the setting up of this facility to make "imminent design interventions" which will also incubate start-ups.

"The Centre is being launched to contemporise efforts in the textiles sector," he added.

He also cited the progress made under the 100-day outreach programme for MSMEs launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 2 in 100 districts, of which 40 were allotted to the Textiles Ministry.

During this outreach, around 65,000 artisans and 2.5 lakh weavers were issued identity cards that allow them to avail benefits, Singh said. "Around 13,000 artisans and 9,500 were enrolled for the Mudra loan facility for disadvantaged sections which resulted in Rs 6,500 crore worth of loans granted to MSMEs in the textiles sector," he added.

Academicians call for thrust on entrepreneurship

Business Standard

https://www.business-standard.com/article/pti-stories/academicians-call-for-thrust-on-entrepreneurship-119021301422_1.html

Academicians stressed on the need for inculcating entrepreneurship among the youth at the three-day "North Bihar Conclave" hosted by the Purnea University which concluded here on Wednesday.

A highlight of the conclave was setting up of an "entrepreneurship cell" at the Purnea University, in collaboration with Colorado-based "Youth Lab" founded by Bihar-born serial entrepreneur Ajay Jha.

Speaking on the occasion, Vice Chancellor of the Purnea University Rajesh Singh said, "Bihar is known for producing labourers on one hand, and bureaucrats on the other. The time has come to encourage entrepreneurship among the people here in view of the emerging international trends".

Jha said, "We would be working with the university to increase employability among the young generation. There is plenty of scope in areas like agro-based industries, textiles, fisheries, health care and IT sectors."

Among those who took part in the three-day conclave were Tanveer Alam, joint director of the Indian Institute of Packaging based in New Delhi, and vice-chancellors of various other universities.

Probe into fall in sales of cotton to CCI

The Hindu

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Hyderabad/probe-into-fall-in-sales-of-cotton-to-cci/article26261674.ece>

Vigilance officials conduct inquiry in market yard

A team of officials from the Vigilance Department, Karimnagar, conducted inquiries in the Adilabad Agriculture Market yard in order to ascertain the reasons for farmers not selling cotton to Cotton Corporation of India though the market rate of the commercial crop was falling below the minimum support price of ₹ 5,450.

The CCI was making purchases in the market at the MSP as per the inherent regulations with regard to moisture content.

The team consisted of two officials of inspector of police rank who interacted with the farmers asking them for reasons. They, however, did not wish to be identified and said they will submit a report after the exercise to their department.

It may be stated here that the price of cotton has been falling consistently in markets across the district. It had fallen from ₹ 5,130 per quintal on Tuesday to ₹ 5,115 on Wednesday in Adilabad market.

The Vigilance officials also inquired about the role of middlemen in the trading process. Apparently suspecting that many of those who brought the produce to the market were not bonafide farmers, they asked some of them for

documents supporting their identity.

The officials also identified vehicles with Maharashtra registration plates and isolated them so that they could carry out their inquiries. They were wary of the fact that middlemen and other outsiders were purchasing cotton for low price and selling it off at a higher price in the market.

Guidelines on Public Procurement

New Delhi Times

<https://www.newdelhitimes.com/guidelines-on-public-procurement/>

The Public Procurement (Preference to Make in India), Order 2017 (as amended on 28.05.2018) (PPP-MII Order) was issued pursuant to Rule 153(iii) of the General Financial Rules 2017 as an enabling provision to promote domestic value addition in public procurement. The policy aims at incentivizing production linked through local content requirements, thereby encouraging domestic manufacturers' participation in public procurement activities over entities merely importing to trade or assemble items. This Order is applicable on procurement of goods, services and works (including turnkey works) by a Central Ministry, Department, their attached, subordinate offices, autonomous bodies controlled by the Government of India, Government companies, their Joint Ventures and Special Purpose Vehicles. As per PPP-MII Order, purchase preference is given to local suppliers who meet the minimum local content requirement. Further, various Ministries and Departments have been designated as nodal for notifying minimum local content for the relevant product categories.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Ministry of Electronics & Information technology, Department of Heavy Industry, Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Steel, Ministry of Railways, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Department of Fertilizers, Department of Defence Production, Department of Telecommunications, Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Mines, Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals, Ministry of New & Renewal Energy and Ministry of Textiles have issued notifications for Minimum Local Contents. The notifications issued by Nodal Ministries and Departments are available on the departmental website dipp.gov.in. Ministry of Civil Aviation, Department of Defence and Ministry of Power are yet to issue the notification for Minimum Local Contents for their respective product segments.

Following mechanism has been put in place for strict monitoring of implementation of PPP-MII Order by Central Government agencies: 1) All procuring entities have to certify compliance with the provisions of the Order while publishing any tender on Central Public Procurement Portal.

- 2) Stakeholders can lodge online complaint on Central Public Procurement Portal for alleged violation of the Order.
 - 3) A Cell has been created in DPIIT to take up grievances for alleged violation of the Order with procuring entities.
 - 4) Grievance redressal and sector specific meetings are held to resolve the grievances.
 - 5) Standing Committee has been constituted under PPP – MII Order to oversee the implementation.
- The proposed new Industrial Policy is to be a roadmap for all business enterprises in the country. In this regard, consultations have been held with stakeholders to get their ideas and feedback.

Garment makers getting new buyers

The Daily Star

<https://www.thedailystar.net/business/global-business/news/garment-makers-getting-new-buyers-1701769>

Bangladeshi textile and garment manufacturers received positive response from international retailers at the Texworld exhibition currently taking place in the French capital, in what can be viewed as further encouragement for the country's apparel exporters.

Texworld is an international trade fair of the clothing and textile industry that takes place every six months in Le Bourget near Paris. It is one of the biggest exhibitions in the world where hundreds of buyers, manufacturers, suppliers and brands exhibit their products in Paris in France. The four-day mega event will end today.

"At least 35 new buyers came to me to place work orders in the first day of the fair," said Mohammad Abdullah Zaber, deputy managing director of Noman Group, the mother company of Zaber and Zubair, a leading local fabrics manufacturer and garment exporter.

Noman Group is the only apparel and fabrics manufacturing company in Bangladesh which crossed the one billion dollar mark in exports from the country four years ago.

"We have been getting more work orders for some reasons like we have new and diversified goods, new designs and our stall is located at the elite zone of the fair. Elite zone is allocated to select manufacturers," Zaber told The Daily Star at his stall in Texworld in Paris on Tuesday.

Another important reason for higher responses is the shorter lead time in the era of fast fashion. For example, the buyers want to use local fabrics so that the work orders can be catered very fast.

The Zaber and Zubair has its own fabrics so it does not need to import fabrics from China, India, Turkey or Pakistan to stitch as garment.

It takes four weeks to bring fabrics from China which also lengthens the lead time. If the factories can make garment items from local fabrics it takes a shorter lead time, he said.

Now the buyers are booking the work orders for next summer's sales which will start from the first of January next year, said Zaber.

The US-China trade war has also been playing a significant role for more work orders being grabbed from buyers by Bangladeshi garment exporters, said Zaber who is investing more than Tk 1,000 crore in his four new projects at Bhaluka to produce synthetic fabrics as per the demand from the buyers.

"Now many Bangladeshi garment factories import the synthetic fabrics mainly from China. If we can set up the new units, we can supply this item locally," he added.

He is also going to produce fabrics for sports garment items and outerwear. So the total workforce under the Noman Group will be 110,000 when the four new units go into operation by next two years. Currently the group has 80,000 workers.

Buyers are demanding sustainable goods made from recycled yarn and fabrics made through less water consumption, Zaber said.

"We need to bring in more companies from Bangladesh to Texworld so that the buyers can know more about us," said Md Shahidul Haque Mukul, managing director of Adams Styles Ltd sitting in his stall at Texworld in Paris. Some 29 garment and fabrics manufacturers have participated in the Texworld this time.

Bangladesh is quite a matured country in garment and fabrics as the country is very much capable of producing diversified products.

But people of the world are not aware of this diversification. For instance, denim is a very good success case story for Bangladesh in recent times, he said.

Among the diversified garment products, denim could show its strength. Now people know about the strength of Bangladeshi denim products, he said.

"We need ease in obtaining visas so that many representatives from many companies can participate in this unique exhibition," Mukul said.

Some participants could not come here due to visa problems although stalls were allocated for them, he said.

"I got 25 old and new buyers in the first two days of the fair. We are happy with the responses from the buyers," said Mohammad Robayed Suddique, deputy general manager (sales and marketing) of Argon Denims Limited and Evinco Textiles Limited, two leading fabrics manufacturers.

"We have been receiving an increased number of work orders from our buyers over the last six months which indicates that Bangladesh is becoming a beneficiary of the US-China trade war," said Siddique.

"The European markets are major ones for us. Nearly the full production of my factory is shipped to the European markets. So, I am satisfied with the responses from the buyers," he said.

South African unions on national strike over job losses

People World.org

<https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/south-african-unions-on-national-strike-over-job-losses/>

Trade unionists across South Africa are walking out in a national strike as the country faces a shutdown over “privatization, retrenchment and imperialism.”

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) called the strike – which is backed by affiliated unions covering most sectors including schools, hospitals, mining and textile workers – over job losses and privatization.

Figures released by Statistics South Africa today showed that there were 6.1 million people without jobs in the three months to the end of December 2018, one of the highest unemployment rates in the world.

The South African Communist Party (SACP) backed the walkout, calling for a national strategy to deal with job losses “higher than at workplace level.”

It claimed in a statement that the real “crisis level unemployment rate” was as high as 38 per cent, according to the expanded definition of unemployment. It said 9.8 million South Africans are unemployed, requiring “economy-wide interventions” to tackle the issue.

Cosatu affiliate the Chemical, Energy, Paper, Printing, Wood and Allied Workers Union (CEPPWAWU) warned of attempts by the ANC-led government to erode hard fought gains of the labor movement.

In a statement the CEPPWAWU said: “The responsibility falls upon all our members and the entire working class to revolt against privatization, retrenchments, unemployment and imperialism.”

The South African Democratic Teachers’ Union (SADTU) – the largest education workers’ union in the country – said its members were joining the strike, warning of unsafe schools “targeted by criminals.”

It called on the government to fund more teachers with overcrowded classrooms having a negative impact on children’s learning and called for the strike to be legally protected by the issuing of a certificate.

The Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA) will be joining today’s action calling on its members to walk out across all provinces to “highlight the negative impact of job losses in both the private and public health sectors in the country. “

The union is demanding government action to “fill vacant nursing positions in many health facilities in the country so that quality healthcare can be provided to communities.”

The action is the first national strike since President Cyril Ramaphosa came to power in February 2018.

Cosatu spokesman Sizwe Pamla said: “The strike is about fighting the ongoing job losses across all the sectors of the economy.”

South VN eyes increased FDI in manufacturing

English Vietnam

<https://english.vietnamnet.vn/fms/business/217597/south-vn-eyes-increased-fdi-in-manufacturing.html>

“In 2018 Binh Duong Province focused on attracting FDI in processing and manufacturing, trade, services and technology,” Nguyen Thanh Truc, director of the provincial Department of Planning and Investment, told Dau Tu (Viet Nam Investment Review) newspaper.

Binh Duong was the fourth biggest recipient of FDI in the country with US\$2.2 billion.

“There were a number of large projects getting licences,” Truc said.

They included two logistics and industrial real estate projects by the US-based Warburg Pincus in joint venture with Becamex IDC Corporation at Bau Bang and My Phuoc 3 Industrial Parks with total capital of \$135 million.

Japan’s Gunze Plastics & Engineering set up a plastics project worth \$40 million.

“This year, Binh Duong will promote FDI in high-quality services, industrial development support services, environment-friendly industries, and industries that are not labour-intensive,” Truc said.

“We will co-operate with industrial parks to promote infrastructure and trade promotion and review and support those seeking to expand production.”

According to a master plan for industrial parks for the period up to 2020, the 600-hectare Lai Hung Industrial Park in Bau Bang District will be used for science and technology enterprises.

The province has worked with a Dutch partner since early last year to promote the park.

At the end of last year the \$1 billion packaging project of Taiwan’s Cheng Loong Binh Duong Paper company completed the first stage of construction and began operations.

It received a licence in 2015 and is expected to invest a further \$700 million.

The planning and investment department of neighbouring Dong Nai revealed that the province attracted nearly \$1.9 billion worth of FDI, 91 per cent higher than targeted.

They included 33 projects with investment capital of over \$10 million each. Le Hoai Quoc, head of the Sai Gon High-Tech Park management, reported late last year that US electric car manufacturer is considering putting up a \$500 million plant to produce batteries. Viet Nam has signed off on many new-version free trade agreements, which is thought to be the most important factor in attracting FDI in manufacturing, especially in industries like textile and garment, furniture, food processing, and electronics accessories. “It is hoped that more large FDI projects will arrive in the Southern Key Economic Zone this year,” Truc added. –