

## EDITOR'S NOTE

# German textile machinery manufacturers remain strong partners of Pakistan's textile industry

Textiles and clothing industry is one of the oldest industries in Germany. In historical perspective, the textile and clothing industry settled in densely populated areas or in rural areas with beneficial location factors, low mountain range regions. Centres of textile and clothing industry: North-Rhine-Westphalia, Baden-Wuerttemberg, Bavaria and Saxony. Cities with important tradition of textiles are Aachen, Albstadt, Apolda, Augsburg, Aschaffenburg, Bad Hersfeld, Bielefeld, Bocholt, Chemnitz, Crimmitschau, Krefeld, Mönchengladbach, Nordhorn, Plauen, Wuppertal and Zittau.

The first German textile factory was built in 1784 in Ratingen near Düsseldorf. In fact textile industry was in the forefront of mechanisation of industrial processes. Centres of specialisation developed such as Aachen for thread manufacturing and Krefeld for silk and velvet. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century Krefeld supplied velvet, silk and brocade to a great many countries. Elaborate fabrics from Krefeld were the choice for emperors, kings and church rulers. The first German spinning machines were built in Chemnitz in 1782 and the town subsequently became a pioneer in engineering. Subsequently, spinning, weaving and finishing machinery manufacturers supplied state of the art machinery to the German textile industry. Being close to the industry these manufacturers were able to deliver the technology according to the demands of their customers.

While the textile industry was the initial driving force behind the industrial supremacy of Germany, the traditional textiles eventually moved to the East. Textile machinery manufacturers in Germany were ready to find new markets and brought their superior base of textile technology to the rest of the world including Pakistan.

In 1947 Pakistan was a country without a significant textile industry, which was ironical as the Indus Valley civilisation now part of Pakistan was where cotton textile industry took birth five thousand years ago. That is why when the cotton growers and agriculturists of Pakistan were provided the opportunity to establish a textile manufacturing base to meet the ever growing requirements of a newly born country, they took this challenge with great expectations. Textile industry soon started to flourish, and the first installations in Pakistan's textile industry were primarily from England. However, in a matter of years the German textile technology was introduced in Pakistan by renowned names such as Schlafhorst, Truetzschler, Thies, Goller, Monforts and many more. These leading companies along with their counterparts in UK, Switzerland and Italy, can rightly be attributed to the firm establishment of a solid base for Pakistan's textile industry in the decades of 1950s and 60s.

As a result, Pakistan is now one of the key suppliers of quality textile products all over the world, from yarns and fabrics to high value added garments, knitwear and home textiles. The quality of Pakistani cotton textiles is improving by day and despite many setbacks Pakistan today enjoys the unique position in the region to have the duty free GSP Plus status accorded by the European Union.

The present issue is devoted to the German textile technology. This feature has also become part of our 64 year old tradition when many of our present advertisers from Germany such as Schlafhorst (Saurer), Monforts, Truetzschler, Suessen, Thies and Bruckner, started to promote their technology through Pakistan Textile Journal. After six decades these leaders continue to bring state of the art and much needed technology to Pakistan to meet the ever stringent requirements of their customers in Pakistan.

It is indeed heartening to note that German textile machinery exports to Pakistan continue to climb every year. In 2013 German textile machinery exports to Pakistan increased by 36% to reach \$39.46 million. While spinning machines from Germany constituted the major part, finishing machines exports to Pakistan showed a healthy growth rate of 114%.

Upcoming ITMA Asia + CITME 2014 in Shanghai from June 16-21 is the perfect opportunity to observe the German textile technology developments in the recent years where a large number of German textile manufacturers are participating as exhibitors. VDMA, the German Textile machinery Manufacturers Association with their members will be present at this important exhibition in Asia. A large number of visitors from Pakistan are expected to visit and to make their investment decisions in view of the new opportunities presented to them in 2014. ♦

