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Claims that antidumping measures will hurt consumers

27 February 2006

The Federation of the European Sporting Goods Industry (FESI) remains deeply concerned at the impact of proposed antidumping measures on Chinese and Vietnamese leather footwear, although it welcomes the proposal to exclude special technology athletic footwear (STAF) and children's shoes.

It is misleading to say that the impact of the measures on consumer prices will be limited. Under anti-dumping rules, footwear brands and the retail sector are forced to reflect the cost of the duties in their sales prices. There is no doubt that consumer prices will increase by up to 20% if antidumping duties of such magnitude as proposed by the European Commission are imposed," FESI President Horst Widmann said.

The exclusion of STAF is a reflection of economic reality. Special Technology Athletic Footwear is a well-established category which has been excluded without a price threshold from trade defence measures including quotas for over a decade, and imports under this category have not significantly increased."

The proposed duties would not ease the alleged difficulties of the Southern European shoe industry - which is complaining about imports of cheap shoes - but give an unfair advantage to European-manufactured shoes over high-end imports from China and Vietnam. A percentage duty across the board would mean that the higher the value of the shoe, the greater the duty paid.

A minimum import price would be a far more appropriate solution. Applying a minimum import price instead of a percentage duty is often done in the EU, most recently in the Norwegian Salmon case, and would ensure a fairer impact of the measures," Widmann added.

Omniflex forms joint venture with Etcetera

27 February 2006

Omniflex, LLC, of Greenfield, Massachusetts, a manufacturer of waterproof-breathable barrier films, has formed a joint venture with Etcetera LLC, based in Northampton, Massachusetts. The new entity will operate as Etcetera, LLC and will provide infection and odour control technologies to be incorporated in Omniflex's line of Transport and Vacuflex brand films in apparel, footwear, medical textile, and automotive interior fabric applications.

The Omniflex-Etchells union will provide a global marketing arm for Etcetera's infection and odour control products. Omniflex sells its specialty film products globally to textile laminators, adhesive coaters and converters, the specialty films market and selected OEMs.

Paul Darby, Omniflex president, commented, Merging our resources will soon result in the introduction of several new Omniflex film products that incorporate Etcetera's anti-bacterial technology. In addition to making a garment waterproof and breathable, these new films will be capable of controlling perspiration odour in hunting apparel, footwear and other performance textile applications.

Turkish fashion fabrics exhibition a success

27 February 2006

The 8th Turkish Fashion Fabric Exhibition (TFFE) which was held at Olympia 2, London, was considered a success by the 80 leading Turkish fabric manufacturers who took part. There were increased numbers of UK visitors, including some of the UK's top fashion retailers, among them John Lewis, Marks & Spencer, Next, Debenhams, Miss Selfridge, Principles, River Island, Top Shop and Tesco. Attendance figures grew by 14% compared to February 2005.

The Turkish Fashion Fabric Exhibition is organised by ITKIB – the Istanbul Textile and Apparel Exporters' Association.

ITKIB is now considering moving the exhibition dates for 2007 forward. Adnan Bakkal, member of the ITKIB board, said: We are looking at the feasibility of moving TFFE London to two to three weeks after Premier Vision from 2007; with the PV dates being earlier in the season and Milan Unica changing dates the European circuit of fabric fairs is now very close together. Moving our dates later means buyers visit TFFE London with ease and it gives us an opportunity to play to our strengths."

European Design Contest held by German Apparel Industry Foundation

27 February 2006

The prizes have been awarded for the European-wide competition of the German Apparel Industry Foundation 2006. Local – Global" was the topic and the task was to combine these local elements into new, up-to-date and globally attractive symbols, which could represent an attitude and identity in the market. Entries were also

requested for a special Fashion and Brand" prize, which was awarded in collaboration with the brand consulting company Interbrand Zintzmeyer & Lux.

A jury composed of internationally experienced experts from design, industry, marketing, media and commerce selected the prizewinners according to set criteria. Participation this year was three times higher this year than in 2005, and was spread out over more countries, but four of the five winning projects and prizewinners come from the former East Germany. The other team came from Switzerland.

Thanks to the support of ispovision, the prizewinners will receive additional communication services such as a trade fair booth and the award ceremony within the framework of ispovision. Consequently, they will present their work to approx. 55,000 trade visitors and more than 2,000 international journalists.

Chinese Ministry of Commerce claims EU decision is biased

28 February 2006

China's Ministry of Commerce has said that the decision by the European Union (EU) to impose duties as high as 19.4% on Chinese shoe imports was discriminatory.

The EU, which imported shoes worth $5.9 billion from China and Vietnam in the last year, will impose tariffs starting at 4% on some imports from China and Vietnam on April 7. The duties will rise to a maximum 19.4% on Chinese shoes after five months and 16.8% on Vietnamese imports. The phase-in is designed to ensure that European retailers with goods in transit are not faced with sudden changes in tariffs. The duties will cover 9% of the shoes sold in the EU market, but will exclude children's shoes and some sports footwear.

US and Colombia sign FTA

28 February 2006

The United States and Colombia have signed a free-trade agreement (FTA).

In a press release, US Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns said, I applaud the hard work of the US and Colombian negotiators who today concluded free trade agreement negotiations between the US and Colombia that will open new export opportunities for our farmers and ranchers."

Under the agreement products that will receive immediate duty-free treatment include beef and cotton.

Keen makes its mark on the European footwear market

28 February 2006

In only its first full year of business, Keen Europe has made noticeable tracks on the European footwear market. Following its premiere at the 'OutDoor 2004' show in Friedrichshafen, the US outdoor specialist has worked on building up a comprehensive distribution network throughout Europe. From its offices in Oberhaching on the outskirts of Munich, Germany, Keen Europe today runs a marketing team to serve all the key markets in Europe.

Supported by a technologically demanding product programme with unique and functional all-round shoes for outdoor and street wear, Keen has managed to position itself as a trendy "in"-brand with high quality standards.

The orders generated for the latest spring/summer collection—which offers nearly twice the number of models as the previous year—are already at a sales level to match the whole of last year.

In order to exploit the existing sales potential, Keen plans to continue expanding its services in the departments of distribution, marketing and operations.

Warnaco reports results

28 February 2006

The Warnaco Group, Inc. has reported a drop in revenues for the fourth quarter ended December 31, 2005. Net revenues fell 3.2% to $362.5 million, from $374.4 million in the prior year period, primarily due to swimwear sales not meeting expectations, fewer than anticipated replenishment orders in intimate apparel and sportswear and the company's inability to meet demand for certain intimate apparel product offerings. However net revenues rose 5.6% to $1.50 billion for the full year from $1.42 billion in fiscal 2004. All three operating groups contributed to the revenue increase, led by the Sportswear Group, which recorded a 13.6% increase in net revenues. The company's Chaps brand, which continued its successful launch to the mid-tier channel of distribution in 2005, was the largest gainer with revenue growth in excess of 25%.

The Warnaco Group, Inc., headquartered in New York, designs intimate apparel, menswear, jeanswear, swimwear, men's and women's sportswear and accessories under such owned and licensed brands as Speedo, Ocean Pacific, and Chaps.

Oakley athletes take 52 medals at Winter Olympics

28 February 2006

Manufacturer of high-performance sunglasses, prescription lenses and frames, goggles and technology-enabled eyewear Oakley, Inc. has announced that a total of 52 medals were awarded to Olympic athletes who wore the company's goggles and performance eyewear

featuring High Definition Optics (HDO). More than 150 competitors from over 20 countries used Oakley technologies at the 2006 Winter Games. Gold medals were awarded to 17 Oakley-wearing Olympians. An additional 19 silver and 16 bronze medals were awarded to athletes wearing the company's products.

Iconix expands Joe Boxer business

28 February 2006

Iconix Brand Group, Inc. has announced that it has recently entered into three new licence agreements for its Joe Boxer brand in Canada and Northern- Europe.

Under the new agreements, Boxer ehf will have the right to open and operate Joe Boxer retail stores in Northern Europe and elsewhere; the second agreement is with Maple Hosiery to manufacture and market Joe Boxer socks and hosiery in Canada; and lastly, Carmen Jewellery will have the right to manufacture and market Joe Boxer watches and alarm clocks in Canada.

Regarding Joe Boxer's debut in Scandinavia Olafur Karlsson, president of Boxer ehf, stated, "Our team looks forward to building on the success of the Joe Boxer name. The brand has a very high international awareness and we see an amazing growth opportunity for additional stores openings. The initial stores that we have opened in Reykjavik and Copenhagen have had great initial success and we are excited about their prospects for this year."

EATP announces programme for 2006 Conference

28 February 2006

EATP (the European Association for Textile Polyolefins) has announced details of the programme for its annual Executive Seminar, to be held in Berlin on May 15-16. The theme of the Seminar is 'Polyolefin textiles in the age of global competition'.

Introducing the programme, EATP Chairman Allan Thompson said, With 18 presentations on key industry issues and activities from leading companies and consultancies, the 2006 EATP Executive Seminar will provide new information, new ideas and new contacts for the large number of industry leaders who will be present. Last year's Executive Seminar in Rome attracted over 100 CEOs and senior executives from 16 countries in Europe, Asia and North America, and we expect even more interest this year.

Highlights of the programme will include a global economic overview, from the chief economist of one of the world's largest chemical companies; a senior executive from one of Europe's leading polymer producers, on the European market, the impact of globalisation and the role of innovation; a prominent consultant on global feedstock and polymer trends; the largest Indian PP polymer producer, on developments in India; and the experience of the USA's largest polyolefin yarn producer.

Perry Ellis extends licence for Nike Swim

28 February 2006

Perry Ellis International has extended its licence for Nike Swim through to 2009. The new agreement includes men's, women's and children's swimwear, performance and casual swimwear products, apparel and swim equipment.

Perry Ellis International also announced that it was expanding its Irvine, California, operations to become the West Coast hub for its swim and action sports division.

Perry Ellis International, Inc. designs and distributes a line of men's and women's apparel, accessories and fragrances, including dress and casual shirts, golf sportswear, sweaters, dress and casual pants and shorts, jeans wear, active wear and men's and women's swimwear.

EC approves Tommy Hilfiger acquisition

01 March 2006

Tommy Hilfiger Corporation has announced that the European Commission has approved the company's agreement to be acquired by funds advised by Apax Partners. This follows a previously announced termination of the waiting period under the US Hart-Scott-Rodino Antitrust Improvements Act of 1976.

Subject to shareholder approval and other previously disclosed conditions, the company expects the transaction to be completed in April 2006.

Tommy Hilfiger Corporation designs, sources and markets men's and women's sportswear, jeanswear and childrenswear. The company's brands include Tommy Hilfiger and Karl Lagerfeld.

UGG boosts Deckers Outdoor results

01 March 2006

Footwear design company Deckers Outdoor Corporation has reported record financial results for the fourth quarter and fiscal year ended December 31, 2005.

For the fourth quarter, net sales increased 22.6% to a record $91 million versus $74.2 million in the same period last year. Net earnings for the quarter increased to $12.1 million compared with $9.2 million last year.

For the full year, net sales increased 23.3% to a record $264.8 million versus $214.8 million last year. Net earnings for the year increased to $31.8 million, compared with $25.5 million a year ago.

Including sales from both the wholesale divisions and the consumer direct (Internet, catalogue and retail outlet division) business, Teva net sales for the fourth quarter were $11.3 million compared with $11.8 million in the same period last year. UGG net sales increased 30.4% to $78.5 million versus $60.2 million a year ago, driven by strong sales across the board. Simple sales decreased 44.4% to $1.2 million for the fourth quarter compared with $2.2 million for the same period last year. For the full year, Teva net sales were $85.2 million compared with $88.2 million in 2004, UGG net sales in 2005 increased 47.7% to $171.6 million versus $116.2 million last year, and Simple net sales were $7.9 million compared with $10.3 million a year ago.

The company's products are offered under the Teva, Simple and UGG brand names.

Lanxess portfolio adjustments making progress

01 March 2006

German chemical company Lanxess has reported that it has made progress with the portfolio adjustments announced at the end of last year. The group has now successfully concluded the sale of its Dorlastan fibres business, with production sites in Dormagen, Germany, and Bushy Park, South Carolina, USA, to the Japanese company Asahi Kasei Fibers Corporation (AKF). Now that the responsible antitrust authorities have issued their approval, the transaction takes legal and economic effect from March 1.

Texon International to launch new cellulose insoling material at APLF

01 March 2006

Developer of structural component solutions for the global footwear industry Texon International, will launch Texon Aloe, a new cellulose insoling material, at the Asia Pacific Leather Fair (APLF) in Hong Kong on March 28-31.

Combining the benefits of aromatherapy with a new anti-odour technology, Texon Aloe provides an oxygenating and anti-microbe action to inhibit the formation and release of bacteria while releasing a pleasant scent.

During the Texon manufacturing process, the cellulose material is enriched with two active ingredients, Aloe Vera which contains aloe vera plant gel and Texon Inodore, a new anti-odour treatment which prevents odour from escaping by lowering the vapour pressure of unpleasant odours and neutralising their effect.
The two materials interact to create a freshening effect when pressure is applied during wear.

The two active ingredients are enclosed in microcapsules made of a special resin to prevent damage to the plant cell elements during the cellulose manufacturing process as well as the footwear manufacturing process.

Flowserve launches GCX single cartridge chemical pump seal

01 March 2006

Flowserve Corp., a global provider of fluid motion and control products and services, has launched its new Flowserve GCX single mechanical cartridge seal. The GCX is specifically designed for ANSI and DIN pump services, where the pumps and seals are required to operate in multiple chemical environments without chemical compatibility change-outs.

The Flowserve GCX seal is ideally suited for intermediate and batch chemical processes in short-run chemical plants and in multiple campaign specialty chemical and pharmaceutical plants using solvents and steam for decontamination.

Built with durable metals to withstand corrosion and harsh chemical conditions, the GCX features an alloy C-276 bellows, 316 stainless steel components, and flexible graphite foil secondary seals. Elastomer components used in competing seals are not suited for variable, harsh chemical conditions, and are susceptible to corrosion and degradation, especially in multiple chemical applications. The metallurgical components in the GCX also enable it to operate in a wider temperature range than elastomer-based seals.

With no dynamic O-ring, the stationary bellows design of the GCX, based on the Flowserve ISC bellows seal, avoids seal hang-up in coking applications. Its canned sleeve design prevents installation damage to its silicon carbide rotor, which is held in compression with a graphite foil secondary seal for maximum chemical compatibility.

Teva sponsors English surf kayaking team

01 March 2006

Watersports footwear brand Teva has unveiled its UK sponsorship calendar for 2006. Teva is sponsoring the English Surf Kayaking team including Peter Blenkinsop and Chris Harvey who will participate in the surf kayak world final in Scotland later this year. Renee Godfrey will also benefit from Teva’s range of high performance footwear. The surfer won the Welsh Open Tsunami Challenge and the Southerndown Welsh Cup in 2005.

The on-going sponsorship of the GB Rafting Team will continue for 2006 following the team’s performance at the recent IRF World Rafting Championships in Ecuador.

Testex accredited for PPE

01 March 2006

Testex, an independent Swiss textile testing Institute based in Zurich, is expanding its range of services. The company has been accredited by the Swiss Accreditation Service (SAS) as the only Swiss certification body for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to date. The accreditation as a product certification body is also valid in the EU.

Following two years of preparation, Testex is now able to verify professionally, reliably and efficiently whether PPE – in particular high-visibility and weatherproof clothing – fulfils legal requirements and can be brought on to the market by manufacturers.

The accreditation comes in the same year that Testex will celebrate its 160th anniversary.

Testex tests the physical and chemical properties - as required - of all customary textile raw materials, intermediates and end products throughout the world. The company has also been a member of the Öko-Tex community for more than 10 years and performs human ecology tests, i.e. residue and contaminant analyses, on textiles. It is one of the few institutions in the world which is still able to verify the quality of raw silk.

Tearfil launches new Outlast viscose

01 March 2006

Portuguese textile manufacturer unveiled its new Outlast viscose at the recent Expofil exhibition held in Paris. The new fibre is said to offer superior thermal regulation and a softer hand compared to the Outlast acrylic that the company previously offered. This allows for greater freedom of movement and improved comfort.

The improved softness means that this product has a wider number of applications, as it is better suited to intimate apparel and lighter summer apparel than acrylic.

Morgan Stanley to facilitate Ploucquet's future expansion

01 March 2006

German textile specialist Ploucquet announced its new financial partner at Première Vision held in Paris last week. Morgan Stanley, the global investment bank, has taken over the financing of the Ploucquet Group that owns the Outlast and Sympatex brands, in order to facilitate the group's expansion into an international technological company.

The Ploucquet Group specialises in fashion and technical products, with its core competence in laminates, coatings, finishing processes and membrane systems.

Market responds well to Première Vision Pluriel

02 March 2006

Over 50,000 textile and fashion professionals gathered in Paris for Première Vision Pluriel held last week and the new format of holding five complementary salons—Expofil, Première Vision, Le Cuir à Paris, Indigo and Mod'Amont—together has proved a success.

The February session brought together 1,332 exhibitors showing the major creative directions in terms of colours and fabrics, patterns and accessories. Le Cuir à Paris and Indigo, which enlarged their offer thanks to a significant increase in their number of exhibitors (+24% for Le Cuir à Paris and +7% for Indigo), both recorded strong increases in visitor numbers; and in spite of a particularly difficult calendar (with fashion shows in Italy, seasonal holidays in Germany and in Asia, etc.) Expofil, Première Vision and Mod'Amont maintained their visitor levels, with visitors coming from some 106 different countries. Overall, the two shows saw a slight decrease in visitor numbers of 2.8% compared with the March 2005 edition.

Change in senior management at Lanxess in Mexico

02 March 2006

Sébastien Masson has been appointed managing director of specialty chemicals company Lanxess in Mexico with effect from March 1. Mr Masson who was previously chief financial officer of Lanxess, S.A. de C.V, will replace Mario Correa who has left the company by mutual agreement.

In Mexico, the German company has sites in Mexico City and Lerma, where it produces pigments, processing chemicals and auxiliaries for the plastics, textile, leather and clothing industries.

VF Corporation names new president and COO

02 March 2006

Branded lifestyle apparel company VF Corporation has named Eric C. Wiseman as president and chief operating officer (COO). In his new role Mr Wiseman will assume responsibility for the company's day-to-day operations. He previously served as executive vice president, Global Brands.

Mr Wiseman has 28 years of experience in the apparel industry. He joined VF in 1995 as executive vice president of JanSport and has held a progression of leadership roles within and across VF's coalitions. With the acquisition of Bestform Intimates in 1998, he became president of Bestform Intimates. In 2000, he was appointed vice president and chairman of the Global Intimate Apparel coalition. In 2003, he was appointed vice president and chairman of VF's newly formed Sportswear Coalition, and in 2004 was named vice president and chairman of VF's Outdoor and Sportswear Coalitions. He became executive vice president, Global Brands for VF Corporation in May 2005.

VF Corporation produces jeanswear, outdoor products, intimate apparel, image apparel and sportswear. Its principal brands include Lee, Wrangler, Bestform, Nautica, JanSport, Eastpak, The North Face, Vans, Reef, Napapijri, Kipling(R), and Red Kap.

Berghaus makes management changes

02 March 2006

UK-based outdoor brand Berghaus has announced several changes to its senior management team, which it states represent a strengthening of the team and put Berghaus in an even stronger position to tackle its growth plans, both in the UK and globally.

Richard Leedham, current head of product and its former UK sales manager, has been promoted to UK business director, reporting directly to Lewis Grundy, brand president. He replaces Simon Roberts who has decided leave the group.

A new role of product and marketing director has also been created. The responsibilities of these two areas will be combined in this new senior role and Berghaus is currently looking at external recruitment possibilities. In the interim Lewis Grundy, brand president, will take direct responsibility for this area to ensure the strategic direction of product and marketing is maintained. Caroline Smith will remain head of marketing, reporting to the product and marketing director on her return from maternity leave. In the meantime, Sarah Wilson will continue to manage the head of marketing role.

In a growing and critical area for Berghaus, a new position will be created to cover all supply chain responsibilities in the role of operations director. This role will also assume responsibility for the customer service function, starting with the UK and will be recruited externally.

BASF trains Egyptian textile employees at UN Workshop

02 March 2006

In an attempt to make the Egyptian textile industry more sustainable and thus more competitive, the UN organisation UNIDO (United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) and the Egypt National Cleaner Production Centre recently organised a workshop in Cairo, where textile finishers and processors learnt how to apply BASF's eco-efficiency analysis.

This analytical tool is intended to help Egyptian textile manufacturers to meet the demands of the global market, while at the same time keeping the environmental impact to a minimum. The workshop also offered participants the opportunity to establish contacts with European brand manufacturers and dealers. Those attending the workshop included the Otto Group with its own inspection institute Hansecontrol. The company cooperates closely with BASF in the field of sustainable textile production.

"At Otto we place particular value on offering environmentally friendly and socially responsible products," explained Hans-Günter Just, senior consultant of the Otto Group. "Our suppliers around the world comply with uniform environmental and social standards. To make sure these guidelines are fulfilled, we have so far trained manufacturers throughout the entire textile value-adding chain together with the industry in 17 countries."

As a partner of the textile industry and many brand manufacturers, BASF is offering its know-how on sustainable business management at the workshop and is showing how the eco-efficiency analysis tool can be put to valuable use. The purpose of the analysis is to harmonise economy and ecology. Both the costs and the environmental impact of products, processes or entire system solutions can be evaluated. BASF provides a special software program for this purpose. With this "eco-efficiency manager", small- and medium-sized companies can also make their working processes more economical and environmentally friendly.

"In this project partnership we are promoting the textile industry in Egypt, while simultaneously contributing to sustainable development , commented Dr. Brigitte Dittrich-Krämer from the BASF Sustainability Centre.

ADMET launches Dual Column, 10kN eXpert testing machine

02 March 2006

Provider of integrated materials testing systems ADMET has unveiled an extension to its recently introduced eXpert 560x line of tabletop universal testing machines.

The new machine, the eXpert 5605, features dual columns and a load capacity of up to 10kN (2250 lbf).

The flexible, tabletop design includes a top-acting detachable actuator that is said to be ideal for wet specimen testing and also accepts an optional neoprene bellows seal kit for further protection against dirt, dust, fibres and other contaminants to enable it to operate maintenance-free in harsh environments. It can be used in a horizontal configuration and in sub-zero or elevated-temperature chambers.

The eXpert 5605 comes equipped with either ADMET’s eP Digital Controller or the MTESTWindows PC/Windows-based materials testing software system. Both feature a fast acting 32-bit microprocessor for accurate and repeatable testing. ADMET also offers a full line of grips and fixtures for a range of tension, compression and bend tests on materials ranging from plastics to metals, textiles, rubber, wire, biomaterials, ceramics, etc.

Lotto signs licence agreement in Indonesia

02 March 2006

Italian sportswear company Lotto Sport Italia has appointed PT Mitra Adiperkasa Tbk (MAP) as its exclusive licensee for Indonesia until December 31, 2010. The new licensing contract was announced at a press conference in Jakarta.

With MAP's experience in marketing, sales and distribution, Lotto Sport Italia aims to launch the brand in Indonesia and to establish itself as a leading sports brand, particularly during the World Cup year. The objective is to reach a sales turnover of $15 million in three years corresponding to a 10% market share, of which 65% is estimated to come from footwear and 35% from apparel. It also hopes to double sales in five years.

The product lines will include international models as well as a special collection, specifically tailored for the Indonesian market, with distribution through MAP's retail network of Planet Sports, The Athlete's Foot, Sport Stations, Soccer Stations, SOGO and many other independent sports retailers throughout the Indonesian archipelago.

The North Face wins counterfeiting lawsuit

03 March 2006

VF Outdoor, Inc., the US licensee of The North Face Apparel Corp. and manufacturer of The North Face outerwear and equipment, has announced that the company has been awarded a million-dollar judgment by the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York against Nabil Saleh, Ibrahim Saleh and Toufic Saleh, who - through a variety of corporate aliases - formed and operated a counterfeiting enterprise that sold counterfeit jackets bearing The North Face trademarks throughout New York City and the rest of the United States.

The North Face learned of the counterfeiting operations late in 2003 while investigating the source of counterfeit jackets bearing its trademarks and having obtained preliminary injunctions against the Salehs it then moved for summary judgment on its claims for trademark counterfeiting and infringement. After months of briefing, Judge Barbara S. Jones of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York granted The North Face's motion for summary judgment, awarding The North Face a $1 million judgment, plus reasonable attorneys' fees, against the Salehs.

Indian government increases funding for technology upgrades

03 March 2006

In his Union Budget 2006-07 speech, Indian Finance Minister, Shri P. Chidambaram said that having identified the growth potential of the textile industry, particularly cotton textiles, the Indian government has proposed increasing the allocation for its Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) from Rs435 crore ($98.12 million) to Rs535 crore. TUFS has considerably helped small powerlooms and large textile industries to modernise and face global challenges and has made Indian textiles more competitive in the international market.

The minister also added that the government intends to provide Rs189 crore for a scheme of Integrated Textiles Parks (SITP). Under this scheme, seven parks have been sanctioned and ten parks have been identified for development.

ispo Russia enjoys a successful winter premier

03 March 2006

Ispo Russia enjoyed a successful winter premier in the Crocus Center Moscow on February 20-23, following the summer event in September 2005. A total of 230 brands from 21 countries exhibited their latest fashion collections and sports products over an area of 11,000m2; the exhibitors also included national service and technology suppliers.

A total of 6,823 visitors from 69 different regions of Russia as well as 23 other countries attended the fair and exhibitors were said to be very satisfied with the quality of visitors and newly acquired contacts with retailers.

Ispo Russia summer 06 will take place in Moscow from September 20-23.

Huntsman updates soling technology website

03 March 2006

Huntsman Polyurethanes has announced that it has updated its smartLite website, aimed at ensuring customers are kept informed about the most recent developments of its soling technology.

The new-look website features the latest advances in slip resistance alongside the recognised benefits of light weight, performance, softness and aesthetics. smartLite offers a combination of durable, good-looking and comfortable soling with outstanding slip resistance.

Bayer's management board approves €700million investment

03 March 2006

The Bayer AG Board of Management has approved an investment package totalling €700 million, which Bayer MaterialScience AG will use to expand its capacities for key products. In addition to two major projects at the Caojing site in Shanghai, the investment package also includes expansion of production in the United States and refurbishment of the future Group headquarters of

Bayer MaterialScience in Leverkusen.

The largest project in the package involves the establishment of a world-scale production plant for diphenylmethane diisocyanate (MDI) in Caojing near Shanghai with an annual capacity of 350,000 metric tons, which is scheduled to come online in 2008.

Approval was also granted for expansion of the polycarbonate plant currently under construction in Caojing, which will result in a total annual capacity of 200,000 metric tons. The first phase with an annual capacity of 100,000 metric tons should be available by the middle of this year and the second phase, which will add a further annual capacity of 100,000 metric tons, is planned for completion by the end of 2007. The transparent polycarbonate Makrolon is used in a number of applications including eyewear and helmets for skiers.

The MDI and polycarbonate projects are part of a larger investment programme in Caojing, some of which has already been completed.

The investment also includes the expansion of chlorine production at Bayer MaterialScience´s site in Baytown, Texas, where the intention is to increase current total annual capacity from 300,000 to 500,000 metric tons.

Chlorine is likewise an important starting chemical used in the production of polycarbonates and polyurethane components.

Finally investment will be made for refurbishment measures at the Bayer Chemical Park in Leverkusen.

Browzwear upgrades V-Stitcher

03 March 2006

Israeli developer of real-time 3D solutions for the fashion and apparel industry Browzwear International has announced a new release of its flagship application, the V-Stitcher which offers, among other features, a new Avatar structure which will enable the import of body scanner outputs.

Other enhancements include accuracy improvements in all the Avatars offered by the system including male, female and children, and improved simulation, functionalities and user interface. Most of these improvements have been made to reflect requests made by V-Stitcher customers.

V-Stitcher is said to be the only commercial and proven application for 3D design and visualisation currently available on the market and is currently used by more than 150 manufacturers such as Benetton, adidas, Triumph, Ocean Sky, VF, and Nan Yung.

Lemaitre Sécurité launches new safety footwear

03 March 2006

French manufacturer of safety footwear Lemaitre Sécurité has unveiled a new protective shoe, Helium, designed for professionals in the electronics, electrical, logistics and transport, and automotive sub-contracting industries, as well as those working in airports, white rooms and inspection zones.

The shoes are said to be exceptionally light and comfortable, while at the same time complying with all requirements for quality and safety. It is made of water-resistant full-grain leather, and is lined with Cambrelle for greater comfort. This 100% polyamide lining transfers moisture from the skin to the exterior and is highly resistant to abrasion. It absorbs perspiration while keeping the foot dry. There is also a version available lined with a Gore-Tex sock.

An anti-slip concave sole with a curved Parabolic profile (an exclusive patent of Lemaitre Sécurité) and a double-density insert under the heel offer grip on all industrial floor surfaces. Moreover, energy is released after the compression phase of walking, giving a dynamic, spring-like effect. Finally, a properly projecting heel ensures extra safety in hazardous situations (cluttered or irregular floors, ladders, etc.).

The shoes are fully non-metallic and non-magnetic and are therefore impervious to thermal variations and transfers from -10°C to +40°C. They are undetectable by security scanners and are resistant to hydrocarbons and acids.

Nike names VP of Sport Culture business

03 March 2006

Nike, Inc. has appointed executive Sandy Bodecker as vice president, Sport Culture, for the Nike brand, a newly created position designed to drive growth of Nike's sport-inspired footwear, apparel and equipment businesses. He will lead Nike's expanding sport culture opportunity, including action sports and skate. He will have responsibility for strategic leadership and direction, as well as partnering with Nike's product engines and regional management to expand Nike's opportunities world-wide. A 23-year Nike veteran, he will report to Nike brand president Charlie Denson.