

Textile & fabric industry in Amarapura, Myanmar

Myanmar has a long history of making yarn, fabric and garment. Amarapura Township, Mandalay Region is an important conversion hub and is one of the leading players in the region for exports of garments, high quality silk/cotton textiles and fabrics. There are small and medium manufacturers and retailers of silk/cotton wear and longyis in Amarapura. Most of them have factories located just behind the retail outlet with 5~75 workers (office workers, weavers and dyeing specialist etc.)



Ms. Kamioka, Project Manager of Trade and Investment Division, ASEAN-Japan Centre visited Saunder Weaving School (SWS) located in Amarapura in March 2017 with a resource person, Ms. Noriko Okura, and officials of the Ministry of Commerce. SWS has the 100-year history being of high quality and the school enjoyed many years as a great vocational school producing high quality students. The Small Scale Industries Department (SSID) in the Ministry of Co-Operatives developed a plan to upgrade the school to become the Saunder Weaving and Training Institution to include both weaving and training in other vocational sectors. On the request of SSID, UNDP commissioned an institutional capacity assessment of the school in March 2014.

The ASEAN-Japan Centre also dispatched Ms. Okura to this school for design development in 2013. Their textile products are exported to Japan through a Japanese buyer and introduced at the Tokyo International Gift Show every year. Recently, the institute became one of the popular spots for visitors including tourists and able to supply high-quality handmade products.

The headmaster of Saunder Weaving and Vocational Science, Ms. Tint Tint and two staff members participated in the seminar on Handmade Textile and Design to Promote Myanmar organized by Myantrade, Ministry of Commerce held at Mandalay to recognize to compete on the international market in productivity, production capacity etc.



Myanmar traditional clothes, “Longyi” and “Eingyi” are produced by manufacturers and retailers in Amarapura and supplied to all over the Myanmar. Typical design of daily use longyis are shown in pictures (left) and popular design for lady’s formal longyi is in pastel tone with colorful embroidery (right).



Her Excellency Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the First and incumbent State Counsellor is pleased with modest design of longyi. The things Her Excellency wore are caught on Myanmar people. Photos shown below are one of Aung San Suu Kyi model and sample of color variations.



High demand ladies' "Longyi" style is monotone groundwork cloth with simple embroidery (left). They wear a one-piece dress while traditional Myanmar cloth is two-piece dress. Organdie and lace are in fashion for ladies as skeleton materials used for "Eingyi" (right).



During 2013, a number of international garment factories came to do business in Myanmar either through 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) or Joint Venture (JV). Most of factories are located in the Yangon region and industrial zones of Bago and Ayeyawady regions. Amarapura can be one of local supply chain for textiles and fabric. It should play a role as a platform to expand "made in Myanmar" brand to the world, but it still potential as of now.

The Myanmar Garment Manufacturers' Association (MGMA) reported its 10-year strategy (2015-2024) for developing a local supply chain in Myanmar; "to develop a local supply chain the industry will encourage local suppliers to design their products specifically to meet the needs of the industry, thereby reducing the need for imports and encouraging the grow of local market (2016 onward)."

MGMA also mentioned that to strengthen linkages between different industry stakeholders, the Ministry of Commerce has also planned a separate technical support committee for the implantation of the National Export Strategy (NES) by the Myanmar Trade Development Committee (MTDC).

The Centre continues to follow those action plans of the textile and fabric industry in Myanmar. (mk)