

**WELCOME ADDRESS BY THE CAI PRESIDENT SHRI ATUL S. GANATRA
AT THE INAUGURAL FUNCTION OF THE CAI CENTENARY
CELEBRATIONS ON TUESDAY, THE 18TH OCTOBER 2022 IN MUMBAI**

The inaugural function of the CAI Centenary celebrations took place at the Jio World Convention Centre, BKC, Mumbai on Tuesday, the 18th October 2022.

Shri Piyush Goyal, the Hon'ble Union Minister of Textiles, Commerce and Industry, Consumer Affairs and Food and Public Distribution, who was to attend the said function as Chief Guest could not come due to his unavoidable meetings and addressed the delegates across the value chain by a video recorded speech.

In his absence, Smt. Roop Rashi, Respected Textile Commissioner presided over the inaugural function. Other dignitaries present on the dais included Shri Suresh A. Kotak, Chairman, Textile Advisory Group, Dr. Pradeep Kumar Agarwal, CMD, Cotton Corporation of India, Shri T. Rajkumar, Chairman, Confederation of Indian Textile Industry, Shri Sameer Patil, Chief Business Officer, BSE Limited, Smt. Veena Srinivas, Chief Postmaster General, Maharashtra Circle and Shri Bhupendra Singh Rajpal, Vice President, Cotton Association of India. The CAI President Shri Atul S. Ganatra welcomed 1350 delegates across the value chain and since this week is a Hindi week, he delivered his welcome address in Hindi mixed with English.

The following is approximate translation of the welcome address of Shri Atul S. Ganatra:-

Friends, CAI has completed 100 years of service to the cotton and textile industry of the country and it has entered in a new century. We all are gathered here to celebrate this historic milestone achievement by the CAI.

I am indeed very happy to welcome you all to this inaugural function of the CAI Centenary celebrations. On behalf of all of you and my own behalf, I convey our heartfelt gratitude to Respected Textile Commissioner, who spared invaluable time from her busy schedule to remain present here today to bless us.

It is indeed gratifying to welcome such a galaxy of stalwarts present here today. Your presence has graced the occasion.

We welcome farmers from several cotton growing regions and top most eight industrialists from textile sector. It is indeed a privilege to have all the eight shining stars of our textile industry, whom we all have known by name till now. We are indeed very happy that they are present here today in person.

Our Association which was earlier known as East India Cotton Association Limited (EICA) was incorporated on 19th October 1921 and in 2007 its name EICA was changed to Cotton Association of India (CAI) to represent truly its all India character.

At the recommendation of the Indian Cotton Committee, the idea to form a National Cotton body was conceived for first time in 1919. Sir Ness Wadia, who was a member of Indian Cotton Committee was sent to UK to study the constitution and rules of Liverpool Cotton Association (now known as International Cotton Association). He presented to the Government a scheme for formation of EICA based on the model of Liverpool Cotton Association Ltd. The Government of India approved the scheme and

the birth of EICA took place. On 19th October 1919 EICA was incorporated as an apex cotton body representing farmers, ginning and pressing factories, textile mills, exporters, importers, dealers, brokers and other service providers.

Prior to the birth of CAI, powers to regulate cotton trading rested with Cotton Contract Board, which was a Government body. By the Bombay Cotton Contract Act, 1922, such powers were vested on EICA.

Rome was not built in a day. It took stupendous efforts, selfless contributions and plenty of time and energy from all my illustrious predecessors to fine tune CAI into a world class body now known as Cotton Association of India (CAI).

I am indeed fortunate to have the godsend opportunity of becoming a part of this august body and its President especially at a time when CAI has achieved this historic milestone. Now the CAI has entered a new century, our CAI Directors and I have a vision. A vision that we would like CAI to pursue in the coming years with the support and guidance from the Government as follows:-

1. We will work for increase of our cotton production in India.
2. The dream of our Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Bhai Modi to double the farmers' income is fulfilled during the cotton season 2021-22, when the farmers realised Rs.12000/- - Rs.13500/- per quintal for their produce.

We will work to bring new seed technologies for Indian farmers to get more yield to further increase the farmers income.

Our initial target is to achieve the world average productivity mark of 750 kgs. per hectare.

3. We will give necessary training to our farmers under CAI Farmers Training Centre.
4. We will improve ginning practices to reduce contamination and trash in our cotton.
5. We will start cotton training school for new comer students in our industry.
6. We will upgrade our By-laws.
7. We will try our level best for implementation of CAI-CITI Model Contract for our nation.
8. To resolve disputes of trade we will bring strong and faster arbitration systems.
9. We will improve our relations with our buyer and seller countries and if found good adopt their better cotton practices.
10. As on date CAI has 12 cotton testing laboratories in India almost in all cotton growing states. We will add new laboratories every year.

11. With support of all upcountry associations and ginnerers we will try to give more reliable cotton crop and cotton Balance Sheet.
12. We will work closely with research bodies like CICR and CIRCOT for innovation of new cotton products.
13. CAI will also promote technical textiles, coloured cotton and also encourage to other natural fibres like banana and bamboo.

Finally, cotton being the lifeline, we intend to make India outstanding cotton nation.

Friends, if we want India to scale new heights we want Indian cotton industry to scale new heights, we all have to combine our efforts to help our cotton farmers and ginnerers so that we can improve supply better quality cotton to our textile industry to enable them to compete international.

In the end, I would like to recite the following poem in Hindi.

कपास

जो दिल के करीब है ,वह जो आपकी कमीज है ,और दिये का प्रकाश है कपास।

कपास

जो छुए तो मरहम है ,उलझे तो डोर है ,ओढ़े तो पनाह है कपास।

कपास

जो किसानों की रोटी है, कारीगरों की आमदनी है ,पशुओं का अन्न है कपास

कपास

जो हवा में उड़ती तरंग है,नए सपनों की उमंग है ,मिट्टी से उपजा सोना है कपास। हिंदुस्तान का कच्चा सोना है कपास।

We have made a small video which traces the 100-year journey of CAI. I would like to present the same before you all.

Link of video: <https://youtu.be/EC26bo7cYKY>

Thank you