



NEWSLETTER

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Sri Lankan Apparel Exports Show Resilience

Sri Lanka's apparel sector demonstrated mixed performance in May 2025, with exports dipping slightly by 0.63% year-on-year to \$365.08 million, according to the Joint Apparel Association Forum (JAAF). While shipments to the EU grew 5.15% and non-traditional markets surged 11.1%, declines in the US (-7.59%) and UK (-6.81%) markets offset gains.

Despite May's slowdown, the industry's cumulative January-May 2025 performance reveals stronger recovery, with total exports climbing 9.8% to \$2.02 billion. The EU (excluding UK) led growth at 15.36%, followed by non-traditional markets (13.12%), while the US and UK posted moderate increases of 6.52% and 3.74% respectively.

Industry sources indicate that Sri Lankan exporters are preparing for potential US tariff relaxations, which could boost shipments significantly in coming months. "We're seeing early signs of renewed interest from American buyers," revealed a top manufacturer, requesting anonymity. "If tariff barriers ease, we're positioned to scale up quickly."

The sector's strategic pivot is showing results, with value-added products and sustainable manufacturing helping offset Western market volatility. JAAF noted the industry's resilience stems from diversification efforts and operational upgrades implemented post-pandemic.

"Year-to-date performance confirms our sector's adaptability," a JAAF spokesperson said. "However, long-term competitiveness requires stable trade policies and continued government support to navigate global challenges."

With apparel exports contributing nearly 6% to Sri Lanka's GDP, the sector remains crucial for economic stability. As orders for the back-to-school and holiday seasons begin materialising, manufacturers cautiously anticipate stronger second-half performance, particularly if anticipated US trade policy changes materialize.

Source: Ceylon Today





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Star Garments opens state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Togo



Togo Council President Faure Gnassingbé officially inaugurating the factory



Star officials giving a tour of the Togo factory

Star Garments Group, a powerhouse in Sri Lanka's apparel industry and part of Charles Komar and Sons, officially inaugurated its groundbreaking textile manufacturing facility at the Adétikopé Industrial Platform (PIA) in Togo.

The ceremony, presided over by Togo Council President Faure Gnassingbé, marks a transformative milestone for both the company and West Africa's textile industry.



This historic inauguration represents Star Garments' first manufacturing expansion outside of Sri Lanka, positioning Togo as a strategic gateway for the company's global growth and the development of West Africa as a new hub for apparel manufacturing. Sri Lanka will continue serving as the company's service centre, with operations expanding to support Star's integrated global manufacturing network.

The 3.7-hectare facility will create 2,000 direct employment opportunities for Togolese nationals, with over 60 percent of positions designated for women. This significant job creation initiative extends beyond immediate employment, with projections indicating up to 4,520 direct and indirect jobs by 2030, fundamentally transforming the local economic landscape.

Charles Komar & Sons CEO Charlie Komar said: "This is more than just a factory. It represents a long-term commitment - Komar's commitment to the people of Togo—for jobs, training, and elevating global production standards based on dignity and excellence. The choice of Togo is no coincidence. We chose this country because we see a rising nation, a government focused on economic stability, infrastructure development, and investment appeal."

The facility's comprehensive training programs will equip Togolese workers with world-class manufacturing skills, creating a skilled workforce that enhances the country's industrial capacity. These initiatives align with Togo's national development objectives while establishing sustainable career pathways for local talent.

Investment Promotion Minister Manuella Santos praised the inauguration, stating: "Backed by over 40 years of textile expertise, Star Garments chose Togo as its first location outside Sri Lanka—an important signal for our country and a strong vote of confidence in our industrial vision."

At full operational capacity, the facility can produce fifty thousand garments daily, specialising in nightwear, loungewear, and layered garments serving international markets. The facility's focus on export-oriented production will generate significant foreign exchange earnings for Togo while establishing the country as a competitive player in the global textile market.

True to Star Garments' position as the only group of apparel companies in Sri Lanka to be certified as carbon neutral across all its processes, the Togo facility too will operate under strict environmental standards and pursue LEED certification, serving as a model for sustainable manufacturing practices across West Africa. Earlier this year, Star Garments Group was bestowed with the Gold Award for Textile and Garment Sector under the Extra-Large Category at the NCE Export Awards 2024 in Sri Lanka.

Source: Daily FT



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EXPORT OF APPAREL STATISTICS

Export of Apparel for the Month of May 2020 - 2025

	2020 US\$. Mn	2021 US\$. Mn	2022 US\$. Mn	2023 US\$. Mn	2024 US\$. Mn	2025 US\$. Mn	2024/2025 Change %
Total Exports	204.78	344.12	446.42	383.17	367.41	365.08	-0.63
US	99.02	136.05	191.74	147.30	140.66	129.99	-7.59
EU	54.23	103.93	129.33	123.03	115.76	121.72	5.15
UK	28.71	54.32	61.59	50.18	55.49	51.71	-6.81
Other	22.82	49.82	63.76	62.66	55.50	61.66	11.10

Export of Apparel January - May (Cumulative) 2020 – 2025 to All Countries

	2020 US\$. Mn	2021 US\$. Mn	2022 US\$. Mn	2023 US\$. Mn	2024 US\$. Mn	2025 US\$. Mn
Chapter 61	793.36	1,171.41	1,337.29	1,090.06	1,051.79	1,167.67
Chapter 62	617.53	719.26	869.26	753.16	745.38	806.81
Chapter 63	41.99	50.99	49.42	40.91	43.93	47.06
Total	1,452.88	1,941.66	2,255.97	1,884.13	1,841.10	2,021.54

Export of Apparel in the Month of May 2020 - 2025 to All Countries

	2020 US\$. Mn	2021 US\$. Mn	2022 US\$. Mn	2023 US\$. Mn	2024 US\$. Mn	2025 US\$. Mn
Chapter 61	116.26	215.60	268.04	224.31	222.69	216.32
Chapter 62	72.79	119.24	168.65	150.28	136.80	138.60
Chapter 63	15.73	9.28	9.73	8.58	7.92	10.15
Total	204.78	344.12	446.42	383.17	367.41	365.07

