



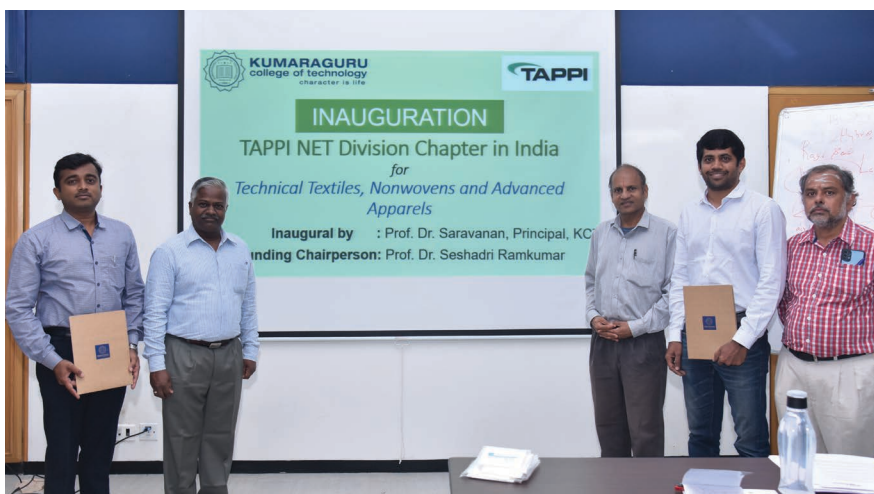
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TAPPI Journal Editorial Board

Nonwovens sector provides opportunities for professional and advanced textiles growth

With inflation still lingering, global fiduciary regulatory agencies like the U.S. Federal Reserve are handling the issue by hiking base interest rates. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has exposed lagging investments for advanced and agile manufacturing in developed economies in the recent past. Because of this situation, governments have begun taking policy initiatives, such as boosting support for infrastructure in the United States, creating a National Mission on Technical Textiles in India, and many initiatives in the United Kingdom and European Union to boost clean energy, fight climate change, and encourage sustainable manufacturing.

Advanced textiles involving materials like nonwovens have found application in combating health issues, are environmentally sustainable, and enhance agile and advanced manufacturing. With the pandemic, nonwoven fabrics like spunmelt nonwovens gained the global spotlight and became an essential part of kitchen table discussions, as products like surgical drapes, face masks, and filters played important roles in curbing the spread of microbes, pollutants, etc.

After supply chain issues emerged with the pandemic, developed economies began looking into investments in high-end manufacturing, such as semiconductor chips, electric vehicles, and lightweight automobiles. Nonwovens and industrial textile products have found applications in clean-room drapes (which are essential for semiconductor manufacturing), battery separators, insulating materials, and construction products to fight climate change. These advanced products are gaining mainstream attention and discussion because of recent events, as well as their impact in improving human life.



Members of TAPPI's new NET Division Chapter in India that was founded in summer of 2022.

Global collaboration and nonwovens diplomacy

Nonwovens and advanced textiles provide opportunities for global collaboration in terms of R&D and knowledge exchange. In this scenario, professional associations like the Technical Association of the Pulp and Paper Industry (TAPPI) and the Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry (INDA) are rightly doing their part by helping with the exchange of professional and technical knowhow among global stakeholders.

In the summer of 2022, TAPPI formed the Nonwovens, Engineers and Technologists (NET) Division's India Chapter by initiating a collaboration with a leading engineering academic institution, Kumaraguru College of Technology in Coimbatore, India. In February 2023, INDA's chairperson of the Board and its president represented INDA in the World Textile Conference (WTC-3). The WTC-3 is organized by Textile Association (India), the world's largest professional association in the field with over 25,000 members, and it was held in the textile city, Ahmedabad, India. This event comes at a time when bilateral relationships between the United States and India are strengthening in the areas of trade and manu-

facturing, as is evident in the proposed purchase of a number of Boeing aircrafts by India. The nonwovens sector will continue to have good opportunities for growth in trade and R&D between developing and developed economies, as the field is nascent in many textile powerhouses in the Middle East and East and South Asia.

Open-source knowledge sharing is critical to sharing cutting-edge and timely new information in burgeoning fields like sustainable nonwovens, new fiber-based materials such as hemp products, wearable textiles, functional finishes, and environmentally sustainable products. As *TAPPI Journal* is an open-source publication where accepted peer-reviewed research is published at no fee to authors, it is an important source of information for the nonwovens industry and academia. Most importantly, it serves as a recognized publication platform for researchers in situations where funding support for publication may be limited.

TAPPI's NET Division has endeavored to enhance its global outreach by organizing its first international chapter in India, encouraging researchers to publish in *TAPPI Journal* and supporting active participation by global members in dis-

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cussions and presentations in different committee meetings that occur monthly.

In summary, the nonwovens field offers enormous opportunities for the creation of new knowledge and product development in the future. TAPPI remains an important supportive organization for the growth of professionals in the fields of nonwovens and advanced textiles. **TJ**

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Biomass Processing & Conversion Pathways

- ▶ Innovative Technologies to Transform Biomass

Innovative Bioproducts and Biopolymers from Wood & Nonwood Biomass

- ▶ Lignin Recovery and New Products
- ▶ Bio-based Polymers, Chemicals and Products

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