



**ASEAN
INTEGRATION**
Textiles · Apparel · Leather

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Government and private sectors team up to drive Thai fashion exports with projected growth at 9% for 2010

DEP eyes BIFF & BIL 2010 to reaffirm Thailand's position as ASEAN Fashion Hub

Bangkok – 12 February 2010 - According to the Department of Export Promotion (DEP), Thai fashion exports are expected to surpass US20 billion in 2010, up 9-13% from 2009. A major contribution to this positive growth figure is that the government and private sectors are dynamically joining forces to extend competitive advantages and promote sustainable development in the Thai fashion industry on its course to stand out as ASEAN's fashion center.

Mrs. Srirat Rastapana, Director General of Department of Export Promotion, Ministry of Commerce, announced "Thailand earned US17.628 billion from fashion exports in 2009, a moderate increase of 2.24% from 2008. These include US6.443 billion from the textile sector, which experienced a 10.5% negative growth rate; US2.961 billion from garments, down 15.53 from the previous year; US1.422 billion from leather goods, travel kits and shoes, down 19.7%; while gems and jewelry jumped 18% to US9,761 billion."

"Despite export slowdown in 2009 due to global economic uncertainties, coupled with a decline in purchasing power of major import markets like the US and Japan, Thai fashion exports in 2010 appear to be very promising indeed as the world's economy is showing signs of recovery," continued Mrs. Srirat.

"The fashion export projection for 2010 is US20.315 – US20.999 billion, or 9-13% growth. The textile sector is expected to earn US7.058 – US7.205 billion, up 10-12% from 2009. Export of garments is projected to grow 10-15% to US3.238-3.386 billion, while export of fabrics and yarns is likely to make a 10% improvement, or US3.819 billion. For leather goods, the export value is forecast to grow 0.98% to US1.429 billion. Export of gems and jewelry is expected to increase by 10-15% to US11.826-US12.364 billion."

She said that, with a real commitment to gaining the regional leadership in fashion in areas of textile, garment, gems and jewelry, and leather, the Government had worked closely with related industry associations to identify proactive strategies in order to achieve the export target.

"For the textile and garment sector in particular, essential development approaches include encouraging product upgrades with focus on high-value items such as functional and technical textiles as well as eco-friendly products, improving distribution efficiency, supporting synergies between related sectors in order to increase the use of local contents, fostering industry clusters, and strengthening supporting manufacturers in fields of bleaching and dyeing, finishing and logistics, etc. For further development in human resources, the establishment of Thailand Designer Club and Asian Designer Club is anticipated to provide Thai designers with expanded reach to the global arena."



Strategic approaches for the gems and jewelry sector include, for instance, building trade relationship with neighboring countries to benefit the development of new sources of materials, promoting the Gem and Jewelry Institute of Thailand (Public Organization) or GIT as the center for testing and certification for Asia under CIBJO standards, and establishing the country's first Gems Bank.

For the leather sector, local manufacturers will benefit significantly from the visionary initiative, *Thailand's Leather Goods: Italy of the East*, which focuses on research and development as well as Thai brand building among other strategies.

Mrs. Srirat pointed out, "To help Thai manufacturers make the most of associated FTAs including AFTA, FTA ASEAN-China, FTA Thai-India, FTA ASEAN-India, FTA ASEAN-Japan and FTA ASEAN-South Korea as well as JTEPA, DEP is conducting an intensive study on essential deregulation and reduction of trade restrictions. We believe this effort will help increase exports to key markets, especially Japan that considers Thailand as textile and garment manufacturing hub for ASEAN."

DEP also expects BIFF & BIL 2010 to help encourage the rise of Thai and ASEAN fashion products in the global marketplace.

She said it would be a promising trade assembly for exhibitors and their prospective buyers from Japan, India, Korea, China, Taiwan, the Middle East well as America and Europe. With a complete range of products, services and material solutions on offer, covering everything from upstream, midstream to downstream sectors, the buyers will be given an opportunity to seek collaborations and trade relationship with leading ASEAN manufacturers.

Harnessing the theme, *Look East*, this year's mega event concentrates on showcasing the ASEAN brilliant fashion capability under the *ASEAN INTEGRATION* initiative.

To help match up supply and demand perfectly, the event will also play host to *Asian Designer Congress* and *Thailand Designer Contest*, and be packed with a series of conferences and seminars, 48 fashion shows, ASEAN Pavilion, Japan Pavilion, to name a few.

BIFF & BIL 2010 will be held on April 1-4, 2010 at Challenger Hall 1 - 3, IMPACT Muang Thong Thani. For more information please visit www.biffandbil.com or www.depthai.go.th.

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