

The import prices of knitted fabrics from China are even lower than our yarn export prices. This blatant pricing disparity highlights the unfair advantage enjoyed by Chinese manufacturers, putting our domestic industry at a severe disadvantage.

Steps may be taken to restrict the import of fabrics from China and protect our vital industry. We need concrete measures to create a level-playing field and safeguard the livelihoods of millions of our citizens.

The Government may consider aligning the import customs duty on knitted fabrics with that of woven fabrics. This move would help to rectify the existing imbalance and provide much-needed support to our domestic producers.

I urge the Government to take immediate action, implement effective trade-protection measures, and ensure a fair and sustainable environment for our domestic textile industry.

Demand for development of cruise tourism in Chennai

SHRI R. GIRIRAJAN (Tamil Nadu): Sir, cruise tourism is emerging as one of the rapid growing segments of the leisure industry globally. The Indian tourism sector is providing major contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE), as well as for providing employment. Chennai Port is one of the oldest ports in the country in the southern part of India from the time of East India Company. During the British period, passenger services were operating regularly from Chennai to Malaysia, Burma and Andaman.

India's first international cruise was flagged off from Chennai to Sri Lanka in June, 2023. The MV Empress with 750 passengers on a five-day sea cruise will cross three ports. Cruise tourism holds huge opportunity for our maritime sector and this cruise will further boost tourism and generate employment and strengthen the economy. The cruise was launched from Chennai's International Cruise Terminal built at a cost of INR 17.21 crore. The main aim of the Government is to develop Chennai as a cruise tourism hub. This initiative has the potential to greatly contribute to the economic development and tourism growth in India.

By 2024, the Government plans to build three new international cruise ports with additional ferry routes through India, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar. At the moment, there are only ferries plied by private companies and the cost is on the higher side. Therefore, I urge the Government of India to ply Government-sponsored ferries at an affordable cost so that more and more tourists will experience cruise tourism in Chennai.