



Anil Kumar, Sr. Vice President,
Indian Agro & Recycled Paper Mills Association (IARPMA)

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Mr. Anil Kumar, Sr. Vice President, Indian Agro & Recycled Paper Mills Association (IARPMA) said that “Union Budget for the year 2021-22

out of this down turn. My view is that the budget, by and large, met these expectations by clearly spelling out the Govt.’s resolve to put the country on growth path once again by going in for significantly higher spending, even at the cost of higher deficit. Budget will spur the economic activities and has been welcomed by all sections of society including economists, industry and trade. Growth of paper industry is also linked to general economic growth in the economy, therefore will gain out of these announcements”.

On a question about his expectations from the Union Budget 2021-22 to fuel growth of the Indian Paper Industry, he said that “By and large, the budget 2021-22 has met the expectations of paper industry as in any case issues regarding GST, growth of imports etc. are not part of the budget, therefore, I was not expecting any specific announcement on this front. However, during the **last year certain changes in import policy, like making declaration of country of manufacture mandatory, have already curbed growing imports to some extent. I am also hopeful that keeping in view the declared, “Atam Nirbhar Policy”, Govt. authorities would be alive to take any action in case of indiscriminate imports in any commodity”.**

While elucidating about the market

presented under a very unique set up of circumstances wherein entire economy was badly affected during the last year due to on-going Covid-19 Pandemic. GDP of

for writing and printing paper, Mr. Anil Kumar said that “Writing and Printing sector passed through a very bad phase during last one year. Since March 2020 all educational institutions and most of the offices were closed. Part of offices started opening up in 2nd half of the year, however, the educational institutions remain closed for most of the year and even today the opening is very partial. This significantly affected the demand of writing and printing paper and the prices crashed by almost 30% within this period, thus making entire operations of this sector unviable. “However, with gradual and continuous fall in infection rate from October/November 2020 onwards, barring a few spikes here and there and also recent approval of two vaccines in India and massive drive towards vaccination, sentiments have changed considerably. Further he added that most of the states have already announced partial opening of educational institutions. CBSE has also announced the schedule for final examination and general indications that are barring unforeseen circumstances, we are hopeful that next academic session for 2021-22 will start almost on schedule.” This has resulted in recent upturn in demand of writing and printing paper with corresponding appreciation in the prices of paper and I feel that this trend is here to stay in near future also”. He also pointed out

the country had shown downward figure of approx. 24% and 7% in 1st and 2nd quarter of the year respectively. Union Budget had to take a path forward to pull the economy

that “Govt. of India has already announced new education policy. This is scheduled to be implemented from the session 2022-23. This will require massive printing and publishing of new textbooks and other study material during 2021-22 resulting in higher demand of writing and printing paper, thus supporting the industry. My feeling is that 2021-22 should be a good year for this sector.

On a question about any impact on Raw material procurement due to Covid-19 Pandemic, Mr. Kumar said that there has been a very sharp increase in prices of wood pulp and recycled paper worldwide. Wood pulp prices have gone up by almost 100% in last few months. Similarly prices of recycled paper have also shown significant rise. He added that logistics of importing raw material have become a big problem with worldwide shortage of containers, sharp increase in freight and significant delay at various ports resulting in much higher transit time”. Further he optimistically pointed out that “things will settle down in 2nd half of 2021 and normalcy should return to this sector. However, part of increase in price is here to stay. I am hopeful that writing and printing sector of paper industry will come out from troubled time faced during last year and would again be on growth path in 2021-22”.