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3 September 2019  
D 2047 E

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## Lipex Engineering Basalt fiber production plant to Russia

The specialist in state-of-the-art technology for glass fiber processing Lipex Engineering GmbH, Munich/Germany, has become the general contractor for the construction of a basalt fiber manufacturing plant Southern Russia. ABV Holding Ltd., Gukovo/Russia, and Lipex have finalized a contract to build a turnkey plant for production of basalt fiber built on the territory of Gukovo, Rostov oblast. The production plant is expected to be completed within the next 2 years.

The project is supposed to raise € 50 million of mixed investments involving state funds and will create about 160 jobs. The annual capacity of the future plant is expected to reach 5,000 tons of basalt fibers and 100,000 tons of basalt fiber-based products. The contract is a further step in the Litex plans to focus more on basalt fiber production as a key area for future growth. Since a change of ownership in the end of 2017, Lipex Engineering has been committed to building new business and reputation with a

focus on customer orientation and new developments. The company says it plans to continue its growth focus on technology for basalt fiber production going forward, also with the aim to help increase the demand for basalt fibers.

In April 2019, the company announced plans to deliver a basalt fiber nonwovens production line to China. The delivery of the line will be during 2019 and the start-up is planned for 1<sup>st</sup> half of 2020. This line will produce basalt tissue mainly for Chinese niche composites market. The annual capacity of the line is over 140 million m<sup>2</sup> and running speed is up to 180 m/min, the company reports.

For ABV Holding, it has become the second attempt to start basalt fiber production in Gukovo advanced development zone. The first time they tried as LAVViP Aviation Concern LLC in 2011 with the investment project amounted to 5.3 billion rubles. The company hopes for a demand for basalt composites in a number of industries.

## Oerlikon Manmade Fibers Higher sales and robust order intake

In the 1<sup>st</sup> half (H1) of 2019, the Manmade Fibers Segment of OC Oerlikon Management AG, Pfäffikon/Switzerland, succeeded in sustaining its high level of performance. Order intake was with CHF 593 million 9.5 % lower, mainly due to the record order intake in Q1/2018. With CHF 298 million, order intake increased by 5.7 % in Q2/2019 compared with Q2/2018. Sales in Q2/2019 were 18.5 % higher (CHF 321 million) and represented the highest level of sales achieved by the segment since 2013. Sales in H1/2019 grew 11.7 %. Sales growth was recorded primarily in textile applications such as filament equipment and texturing, and was substantiated by a healthy demand for systems used in industrial yarn spinning (special filament) and nonwovens (plant engineering). A decrease in demand for carpet yarn technologies was noted.

## smartpolymer New nonwovens made of pure melamine

In May 2017, the smartMELAMINE development project was launched as part of the European Commission's Horizon 2020 public tender. At the Techtexil 2019 in Frankfurt/Germany, the results of the joint project of Melamin d.d. Kočevje/Slovenia, smartpolymer GmbH, Rudolstadt/Germany and smartMELAMINE d.o.o., Kočevje, were presented. The raw material, a modified melamine resin, has a thermoplastic processing window which makes it applicable in conventional thermoplastic processes. The melamine meltblown can be directly produced by a modified meltblown process developed at the Thuringian Institute of Textile and Plastics Research e.V. – TITK, Rudolstadt. No intermediate steps are needed to obtain a fabric. The received melamine meltblown nonwovens with the tradename smartMelamine received an inline treatment to gain the known thermoset properties of melamine. Masterbatches can be integrated conventionally into existing processing lines. The typical process parameters remain unchanged. smartMelamine has very good acoustic and thermal insulation properties at high temperatures due to its fine fibers down to 0.5 µm. It is an inherent flame-resistant material and does not burn, shrink, melt and drip. At decomposition emerging gases are low in quantity and non-toxic. The lightweight material has a high chemical and UV resistance and meets Oeko-Tex Standard 100 – Class 1.

## Unifi Cooperation with and texturing machine order from Oerlikon Barmag

Unifi Mfg., Inc., Greensboro, NC/USA, one of the world's leading innovators in manufacturing synthetic virgin and recycled performance fibers, has collaborated with Oerlikon Barmag, Remscheid/Germany, to develop a specially-designed eAFK Evo pilot machine that has been operating for the last 8 months, using it to manufacture various Unifiber virgin and Repreve-branded recycled polyester and polyamide yarns. Unifi has obtained exclusive rights in the Americas to their unique design, which enables the new machine to operate at considerably higher texturing speeds, delivers consistently high-quality yarn across a broad range of products, and enables new, innovative performance yarns.

At the ITMA, Unifi placed a significant order for these texturing machines which were unveiled to select clients by Oerlikon Barmag at the ITMA 2019 (see also p. 174 of this issue). Oerlikon exhibited a configuration of the eAFK Evo texturing machine at ITMA designed for the cost-efficient production of commodity yarns. At just 4.7 m in height, this compact machine still comes with a 4-deck

winding system. The most important foundation for both machines is the 300-mm-long EvoCooler with its active cooling technology. The EvoCooler's controllable cooling unit opens a huge production window, with titers ranging from around 30-300 dtex and including microfilaments; combining it with the EvoHeater increases texturing speed by about 20 %. The EvoCooler also enables very even yarn dyeing and provides significant benefits using no additional energy compared to current offerings. With the optimized, very energy-efficient EvoHeater and its connected peripherals, the machine offers up to 25 % energy savings.

Oerlikon exhibited Repreve yarns produced on the eAFK Evo pilot machine, along with fabrics made from the yarn, at the Oerlikon stand at the ITMA trade show in Barcelona. Among other areas, these sustainable yarns are used in the products of numerous companies operating in the apparel, outdoor, home textiles and automotive sectors.

Repreve = registered trademark  
Unifiber = trademark