

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:221
ANSWERED ON:23.02.2010
COIR INDUSTRY
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Will the Minister of MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the coir industry is on the verge of closure due to shortage of coir/coir fibre;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has any proposal to ban the export of coir/coir fibre including to China;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) Whether the Government has received any proposals/ representations from various State Governments and organizations in this regard; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof, State-wise including Tamil Nadu?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR MICRO, SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SHRI DINSHA PATEL)

(a) & (b) There was a temporary and seasonal shortage of coir fibre in the export oriented production sector of the coir industry in Kerala during the second half of 2009 which has affected the functioning of small scale coir units in the export oriented production sector of Alleppey in Kerala.

The shortage of white fibre used in the export oriented sector in Kerala was mainly due to non availability of green coconut husk in the market caused by a fall in coconut price. In addition there has been a slow down in the fibre production activities in Kerala due to drudgery in operation, increasing awareness of pollution aspects of the environment due to retting, increased use of coconut husk for firewood purpose, etc. The non-existence of adequate number of functioning fibre extraction units and husk collection mechanism in Kerala are also causes for shortage of coir fibre.

(c) to (f) The Government of Kerala and the Federation of Indian Coir Exporters Associations have made representations to the Government of India for banning/restricting the export of coir fibre and make available the same to the coir industry in Kerala. However, the shortage of coir fibre in the State of Kerala was temporary and seasonal. Reports indicate that the availability of coconuts has since increased in the market resulting in the fall of price of coconut fibre. The Coir Board, a statutory body under the administrative control of Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, in association with the Government of Kerala has initiated several steps to improve the supply position of coir fibre in Kerala. The Board has taken up a project for revival of two defibering units, established by the Govt. of Kerala, by modernizing the machinery so that the State Government could take up the work of revival of remaining units. The Coir Board has also facilitated the COIRFED, an apex federation of Government of Kerala to source coir fibre from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh in addition to Tamil Nadu. The Central Coir Research Institute (CCRI), Kalavoor (Coir Board) has developed a mobile defibering machine which can be taken to the interior villages where the small quantities of husks collected can be converted into coir fibre. The first mobile defibering machine developed by the CCRI has been transferred to the Government of Kerala for popularization.