

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TEXTILES
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:325

ANSWERED ON:19.03.2015

STRENGTHENING OF JUTE SECTOR

Satav Shri Rajeev Shankarrao;Sule Smt. Supriya Sadanand

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the jute industry plays a meaningful role in the economy of the country and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether meetings with various stakeholders have been recently held to strengthen the jute sector, create jobs and provide housing for jute mill workers and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government is also considering to utilise idle/unused assets such as land for economic activities in consultation with the State Governments and if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Union Government to promote jute industry in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 325 TO BE ANSWERED ON 19.03.2015.

(a): Yes, Madam. Jute Sector occupies an important place in the economy of the country in general and Eastern India in particular. The jute industry provides direct employment to about 0.37 million workers, and supports the livelihood of around 4.0 million farm families. The jute industry also contributes to exports to the tune of nearly Rs.1880 crore annually.

(b): Yes, Madam. A meeting under my Chairmanship was held in Kolkata on 23.02.2015 with various stakeholders of the jute sector including officers concerned from the Government of West Bengal. Several issues and challenges which are of immense importance for the development and promotion of jute industry and employment generation in the region were discussed in the meeting.

(c): Yes, Madam. The Government of India has been trying to utilise the idle/unused land assets of the nationalised jute mills in a productive manner. In the said meeting, suggestions were invited from the representatives of Government of West Bengal on the development and utilisation of assets of the mills owned by the National Jute Manufactures Corporation (NJMC) Limited.

(d): Government of India has taken up various steps for promotion of jute industry in the country. Some of these steps are as under:

i) The Jute Technology Mission (JTM) was launched as a major initiative for the overall development of jute industry and the growth of jute sector with a total outlay of Rs.355.55 crores. Under the JTM, several schemes were operational under the Mini Mission I, II, III & IV for the overall growth of jute sector. Mini Mission-I aimed towards strengthening agriculture research and development in jute sector for improving the yield and quality. Mini Mission-II targeted transfer of improved technology and agronomic practices in production and post harvesting phase. Under Mini-Mission-III, market linkage of raw jute was provided in all jute growing states. Mini Mission-IV provided for the modernization of jute industry, upgradation of skills, market promotion and exports which help increase demand of raw jute.

ii) In order to encourage jute production, Government provides for compulsory packaging of certain percentage of foodgrains & Sugar in jute under Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory use in packaging commodities), 1987.

iii) Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute and mesta is fixed every year to encourage farmers to grow more jute.

iv) The Government of India encourages extensive research in jute in order to increase production of Jute Diversified Products (JDPs) and promotion of Jute Geotextiles (JGT), which is one of the most important diversified jute products with huge potential to have large scale application. National Jute Board (NJB), a statutory body under this Ministry explores new market avenues for boosting use of jute goods to promote/increase the use of jute/jute products in the country and abroad. NJB regularly organises trade fairs in India and abroad to explore new markets for boosting use of jute goods.

v) As the jute industry is predominantly located in West Bengal, through various communications, the Ministry of Textiles has taken up the following issues with the Chief Secretary/Chief Minister of Government of West Bengal:-

Effective implementation of Jute Packaging Material Act, 1987 (JPM Act) for the packaging of rice and paddy in Bengal to generate additional demand for jute products.

Introduce mandatory packing of potatoes and other vegetables in the state in jute hessian bags.

Promote use of jute as geo-textiles in Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) roads, district roads and State Highways, in river embankments and in slop stabilization.

Evolve better agronomic practices in cultivation of jute.

Extend support under the Revival Scheme of National Jute Manufacturers Corporation (NJMC) Limited, and to help draw up a road map for utilizing the surplus land of closed jute mills of NJMC for textile related activities.

Remove the encroachments from the land of Birds Jute & Export Limited (BJEL) at South Dumdum municipality and grant necessary permission for alternate use/disposal of the land.

However, no response has been received from Government of West Bengal.