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Title: Prof. Saugata Roy called the attention of the Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Textiles to the situation arising out of Dilution of Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use) Act, 1987 and steps taken by the Government in this regard.

MADAM SPEAKER: Now, we begin the Calling Attention. Prof. Saugata Roy.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY (DUM DUM): Madam, I call the attention of the Minister of Textiles to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of dilution of Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use) Act, 1987 and steps taken by the Government in this regard. "

श्री शरद यादव (मधेपुरा): अध्यक्ष जी, एक मिनट ... (व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER : I have started the Calling Attention. आपको ज़ीरो आवर में हम बुला लेंगे। आप बैठ जाइए। अभी कॉलिंग अटेंशन चलेगा। It is listed.

â€¦ (व्यवधान)

MADAM SPEAKER: Shri Saugata Roy, have you finished it?

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : I have called the attention of the hon. Minister.

MADAM SPEAKER: Have you received the copy of the Statement?

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Yes, I have received the copy of the Statement.

MADAM SPEAKER: So, I would ask him to lay it on the Table of the House.

Hon. Minister, I would request you to lay it on the Table of the House.

*THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY AND MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): Yes, Madam. with your permission, I beg to lay on the Table of the House a copy of the Statement regarding the Calling Attention on Jute.

The jute sector occupies an important place in the Indian economy and especially so for the States of Eastern India. This sector provides direct employment to nearly 3.7 lakh workers and supports livelihood of nearly 40 lakh farm families. I share the concern of Members of this august House that the livelihood concerns of the farmers and workers associated in this sector must be protected.

The Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 (JPM Act) provides the legislative framework under which Government provides for compulsory use of jute packaging material in supply and distribution of certain commodities in the interest of production of raw jute and jute packaging material and the persons engaged in the production thereof. The decision on norms for mandatory packaging of food grains and sugar in jute packaging material is taken after obtaining recommendations of the Standing Advisory Committee constituted under the Act.

For the Jute Year 2012-13 (1st July 2012 to 30th June 2013), Government approved mandatory packaging in jute bags a minimum of 40 per cent of the production of sugar and 90 per cent of the production of food grains, after providing an upfront exemption of 3.5 lakh bales of HDPE/PP bags for food grains for excess of Khariff production.

The Ministry of Textiles accordingly notified these minimum packaging thresholds which do not exclude the possibility of greater utilization of jute bags in case of sufficient availability.

The Government in taking this decision, has in no way, diluted the JPM Act and has fully kept in mind the interest of all stakeholders engaged in the jute sector. Experience over the years has shown that demand for jute bags has outstripped the supply and during the Khariff Marketing Season 2012-13, against the requirement of 14.07 lakh bales of jute bags, only 12.97 lakh bales were supplied by jute mills, leaving a shortfall of 1.10 lakh bales. For the coming Rabi Season 2013-14, we have projected a requirement of 20 lakh bales during November 2012 to May 2013 against which the jute industry has indicated a supply line of 16 lakh bales, leaving a shortfall of 4 lakh bales. Even this seems to be an optimistic projection.

The production of raw jute this year is estimated to be at a level of 93 lakh bales which shall be fully consumed by jute

mills which uses this material for other jute products as well.

The Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute for the Jute Year 2012-13 has been fixed at Rs. 2,200 per quintal as against Rs. 1,675 per quintal in the previous year. At present, the market prices of raw-jute are above the MSP levels, though the Jute Corporation of India is fully prepared and has already commenced MSP operations in lower grades of jute. Contrary to an impression of unemployment in jute mills, there are reported labour shortage.

During the last Rabi season 2012-13, that jute mills were unable to supply jute bags in time and we had to issue relaxation orders of 1.6 lakh bales of HDPE/PP bags to food grains procuring agencies of Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh and Food Corporation of India. This year, we have requested for an advance mandatory indent plan for the whole year from the States and advance monthly commitment of jute production from jute mills to avoid bunching of orders and supply. I request the cooperation of all State Governments including the State Government of West Bengal to ensure timely indenting, production and supply of jute bags to avoid disruption in the larger interest of this industry.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Before I ask my question, I would like the Minister to check up if the Statement is correct or there has been any printing mistakes in his Ministry. He has said that during the Kharif marketing season 2012-13, against the requirement of 14.07 lakh bales of jute bags – it should be tonnes of jute bags. Normally, jute bags are measured in tonnes. Again, it is mentioned in the Statement - only 12.97 lakh bales were supplied by jute mills – again it should be tonnes and not bales.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Both are used.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: No, the figure is totally wrong. If these re bales, then, the figure in bales would be much higher. Please check up. You are handling the dual charge. Maybe, you have not checked up the figures. I think, this is wrong. If you could correct, kindly reply. ...(*Interruptions*) Bales can also be mentioned. It can be mentioned in bales. You see your Cabinet Note. There is a mistake. In your Cabinet Note, you had said that the total Government requirement would be 32.2 lakh bales; 10.67 lakh MT. I am quoting from your Cabinet Note – Page 5. I think, you are making the total mistake on the figure.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I must draw your attention. First of all, Cabinet Note is a secret document. This is a Calling Attention.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY :No, you have stated this. It is a wrong figure. It is about the difference between bales and tonnes. ...(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): You were the Minister in the Government. You know the rules. How can you quote the Cabinet Note? ...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Mr. Narayanasamy, you do not know. I have every right to quote it.

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (GHATAL): Your Cabinet Member is giving. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Why are you standing? Please take your seat.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record.

(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: What is happening? Something so important as Jute is being discussed. Why are you getting into this? Please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : How is it illegal if a Member procures a copy of the Cabinet Note, what prevents the Member from raising it in the House? Under what law, and under what sub-rule of the Business Transactions of the Lok Sabha.
...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing will go on in the record.

(Interruptions)*

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: May I ask my question? What I want to actually say is that the Minister may be due to ignorance or lack of knowledge about jute, the figure quoted in bales are wrong; they should be in tonnes. But I am not going into that. I am just referring to the background of this Jute Packaging Materials Control Order. In 1987, it was promulgated by the late Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi to save the jute industry, which as you know and has been mentioned in the Minister's reply, employees 3.4 lakh workers and several million jute farmers.

Now, the intention was to protect the jute goods which are natural fibres. As you know, jute is produced in West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Tripura and there are jute mills in Andhra Pradesh also. So it covers 5-6 States. This is a very vital industry and especially in our State it employs directly 2 lakh workers and there are 4 million jute farmers. The late Rajiv Gandhi had promulgated this order to protect the jute industry so that they have an assured market and the employment was assured. The synthetic lobby has been pressurising since then to dilute it. The jute lost out to the synthetic lobby where cement was totally taken away from the Jute Packaging Order. Earlier, a certain percentage of cement was to be packed in jute bags. That was taken away. Now, what the Minister has done for the coming season is this. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, in its meeting on 11th October, decided that there will be dilution in jute packaging. What they did is that for sugar, they decided that only 4 per cent of sugar would be packed in jute bags and only 90 per cent of food grains would be packed in jute bags. Now, the logic the Minister is giving is that not enough jute bags are produced to pack all the sugar and food grains produced in the country. But actually this is a victory of the synthetic lobby and also the sugar lobby because they say synthetic is cheaper. So they say that if sugar is packed in synthetic bags, it will be profitable for the sugar industry. But the jute industry would die.

Madam, now I want to ask the Minister my specific question. He is saying that there is a shortage of jute bags. Now raw jute is being utilised only to the extent of 70 per cent. This year, raw jute production is 93 lakh bales. There is no shortage of raw jute at all. Now if we utilise the complete raw jute, then there will be no shortage of jute bags.

Section 4 (2) of the Jute Packaging Materials Control Act says that the Government must assess the requirement of jute bags and accordingly place indent on the jute mills for supply to the Government. Now, the jute industry does have the capacity to supply the entire requirement for jute bags if the complete raw jute is utilised for this purpose.

Madam, I enquired from Kolkata this morning and came to know that the price of raw jute is falling by Rs. 300 per quintal and if this goes on, it will fall further and jute farmers will be forced to commit suicide because of the wrong policy of the Government of India. The Minister says that 'no', the price is at the right level. I am saying that since the issue of this order, the price of raw jute has fallen by Rs. 300 per quintal. I am saying this with all the authority at my command. I am also saying that now the full production is not there. But one month hence, the jute mills will cut their shift and they will slowly reduce the workers.

Madam, we have to remember that there are many jute mills in my constituency. In jute mills, there are permanent workers, there are special *badlis*, there are *badlis* and there are part-time workers and many of the jute mill workers come from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, those who do the hard work. They will be laid off in the jute mills.

Now, I want to ask two specific questions to the hon. Minister. Firstly, I would like to know whether he would correct the figures which he has given in bales.

Secondly, in view of the deep distress that will be caused to the jute industry, jute mill workers and the jute farmers, I would like to know whether the Minister would take back this order and uphold the dream of late Rajiv Gandhi, whose dream is being destroyed by this order, and save the jute industry.

These are my specific questions to the Minister.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): Madam, jute is the most important industry in the State of West Bengal. The economy of the State mostly depends on jute industry.

In order to protect the jute industry, to protect the workers as well as the farmers, Jute Material Packaging Act was enacted in 1987. It was a big movement by the workers, by the farmers and the Government was compelled to enact the legislation to provide protection to the farmers as well as the workers.

There are more than three lakh workers engaged in the jute industry in the State of West Bengal as well as Bihar. There are a few jute mills in Bihar also, say, in Katihar.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : In Andhra Pradesh also.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: There are some mills in Andhra Pradesh also.

Madam, when Bengal was partitioned after Independence, the jute growing area went to East Pakistan and jute mills remained in West Bengal. In order to help the jute industries to survive, the first Prime Minister of India, Pandit Nehru, appealed to the farmers of West Bengal to produce jute so that the jute mills could survive. The farmers of West Bengal took up the challenge and started producing raw jute so that West Bengal became self-sufficient in the production of jute.

Today, what is happening? Madam, I have the figures as to how gradually this JMPA is being diluted. In 1998-99, in case of food grains, it was 100 per cent; sugar was also 100 per cent; urea was 20 per cent; and cement was nil. Next year, that is, in 2001-02, in case of food grains it was 100 per cent; sugar was also 100 per cent; and urea was nil. In 2002-03, in case of food grains it came down to 75 per cent and for sugar also it came down to 75 per cent; for urea and cement it was nil. Next year, further there was a reduction, in case of food grains, it was 60 per cent; in case of sugar, it was 50 per cent. Gradually, the dilution of this Jute Material Packaging Act is being done by the Government due to the pressure of synthetic lobby.

The synthetic lobby went to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court observed that "the JMPA protected the rights of the workers and their livelihood and that the violation of the JMPA could violate the fundamental rights of the farmers engaged in jute cultivation." That was the observation of the Supreme Court. If the JMPA is diluted, it means it is a violation of the fundamental rights of the farmers of not only West Bengal but farmers of the country because jute is grown in North-Eastern part of our country also.

Madam Speaker, that Act also created a Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) and it was mandatory that if the Government feels that there should be some dilution, some reduction in regard to compulsory packaging of jute material, then the Standing Advisory Committee should decide. But, when, this year, the Government decided to dilute, to reduce in case of food grains and sugar – now sugar has come down to only 40 per cent and food grains 90 per cent – what will happen? Many of the jute mills will not be able to achieve their capacity. Their capacity will be reduced. If their capacity is reduced, then a large number of workers will be rendered surplus, jobless in jute mills in the States of West Bengal, Bihar as well as Andhra Pradesh. So, it will affect the livelihood of the workers engaged in jute mills. Further, not only there is the case of workers, four million, that is, 40 lakh farmers are engaged in the production of raw jute. What will happen to the livelihood of these 40 lakh farmers?

Now, he has said in his statement – I do not know from where he has got the information – that the Minimum Support Price is Rs. 2200 per quintal. The Government has declared and it has been increased from Rs. 1600 per quintal to Rs. 2200 per quintal. He has stated that farmers are getting more than the Minimum Support Price. Then there is no need for Jute Corporation of India (JCI) to come to the market.

The farmers of jute producing districts in West Bengal are not getting the Minimum Support Price. They are forced to sell jute. Why? Mr. Sharma, you are not aware that it is even less Rs. 1000 per quintal. This is the situation in the State of West Bengal. From where did you get this information that farmers are getting more than the Minimum Support Price? Nowhere they are getting it. Distress sale is taking place. The situation is very bad. Last year, the jute...(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY): Basu *da*, you should not mislead the House....(*Interruptions*)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: यह क्या हो रहा है? अधीर रंजन जी, बैठ जाइये।

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go in record. What is this?

(*Interruptions*)* â€

अध्यक्ष महोदया: अब आप खड़े हो गये। जूट का जो विषय है, यह बहुत सीरियस है।

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : यह भी तय हुआ है...(व्यवधान) यह भी बहुत सीरियस है।...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: हां, बहुत सीरियस है, लेकिन बीच-बीच में लोग खड़े हो रहे हैं। आप जल्दी बोलिये, इतना लम्बा मत करिये।

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : जल्दी कैसे होगा, इतना महत्वपूर्ण विषय है।...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: उसका मतलब यह थोड़े ही है ; you should be very precise. You are a senior Member.

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : इस मुद्दे के साथ पश्चिम बंगाल के तीन लाख मजदूर और 40 लाख किसान जुड़े हुए हैं तो कैसे इतना जल्दी होगा, हमें थोड़ा बोलने दीजिए।...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: नहीं, आप तो इतने वरिष्ठ सदस्य हैं, आप बहुत पाइंटिड प्श्न पूछिये।

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : हम पाइंटिड ही पूछ रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: हां, बिल्कुल और उसे इतना विस्तृत मत करिये।

श्री बसुदेव आचार्य : मंत्री जी इसके बारे में बतायेंगे। यह भी तय हुआ है कि ...(व्यवधान) वह तो कर दिया, दस फीसदी फूड ग्रेन्स में घटा दिया और चीनी को चालीस फीसदी में ला दिया, यह चालीस फीसदी होगा। ...(व्यवधान) साठ फीसदी चीनी में घटाया है। ...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : अब आप क्यों बोल रहे हैं?

वेह!(व्यवधान)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Madam, there is 60 per cent reduction in case of sugar. In addition to that, now, the Government has decided that if they feel that there should be further reduction in future, they can reduce it to the extent of 30 per cent. The Hon. Minister will tell the House whether it is a fact or not. अगर जरूरत होगी तो तीस फीसदी भी फूड ग्रेन्स के बारे में वह घटा सकेंगे, यह भी तय हो गया है। I would like to know whether it is a fact or not.

Now, about SAC, it is a very important organization, a Committee. उनसे कोई सलाह-परामर्श नहीं किया, उनको अलग कर दिया। अब सरकार खुद फैसला ले लेगी। There was no consultation with SAC. Then, why was this SAC created by the Act? Without consulting with SAC, the Government unilaterally decided to reduce the compulsory use of jute material packages by 10 per cent and by 60 per cent. There is no shortage of raw jute. He is saying that the raw jute can be utilised for other purposes. Now, you are reducing your quota. You are advising the jute mills to utilise the their jute for other purposes....(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप बैठ जाइए। आपने प्श्न पूछ लिया है।

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Madam, I have not asked my question.

I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether the Government consulted with SAC, when they had decided in the month of October, to reduce in case of food grains by 10 per cent and in case of sugar by 60 per cent. I would like to know as to whether the SAC advised the Government for such reduction in the usage of jute packages. ...(Interruptions)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आप कितने क्वेश्चन पूछेंगे?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: My second question is this. I would like to know as to whether the Jute Corporation of India will purchase raw jute at the Minimum Support Price and open their counters throughout the jute producing districts of West Bengal, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, North-East and other jute producing districts of our country so that farmers are not forced to sell their jute less than Rs. 1,000 per tonne. This is the situation.

My third question is this....(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: No, you have to ask only one clarificatory question. You are asking so many. बसुदेव आचार्य जी, अब आप बैठ जाइए।

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: In view of such a serious situation in West Bengal and other States, I would like to ask the Government whether they will withdraw the decision, which will adversely affect more than 3 lakh workers as well as more than 40 lakh farmers, in the interest of workers as well as farmers.

MADAM SPEAKER: Now, the hon. Minister.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Madam Speaker, I am coming from that State. Kindly allow me to speak. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: You could have given me a notice earlier. Not now.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : Madam, I will take only two minutes. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: There is constraint of time today. No, please.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA: Madam, please allow me to speak only for two minutes. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: No. There is no such thing. I am a prisoner of time. I am sorry.

...(*Interruptions*)

श्री शैलेन्द्र कुमार (कौशाम्बी): अध्यक्ष महोदया, मैंने भी एक नोटिस दिया है। ...(*व्यवधान*)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : सभी बातें आ गईं।

â€¦(*व्यवधान*)

श्री गुरुदास दासगुप्त : अध्यक्ष महोदया, सभी बातें नहीं आई हैं। ...(*व्यवधान*)

अध्यक्ष महोदया : आपका सवाल भी उन्होंने पूछ लिया है।

...(*व्यवधान*)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA : Madam, just one minute. I am asking only one thing. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: I have no time. This is not the way. We are in the Calling Attention. This is not the way. You know that.

Now, the hon. Minister.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Hon. Speaker, I have carefully listened to Prof. Saugata Roy and also Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

At the outset I would like to clear some misunderstanding about the implementation of the Act about the mandatory packaging as well as the recommendations of the SAC. I would like to assure Shri Basu Deb Acharia that the Government does not take *suo motu* decisions. The SAC recommendations are very much there. The SAC recommendations are mandatory. The Government considers them and also takes into account all the factors – the production, the demand, and the capacity of the mills to provide jute bags and also the projected production of sugar, food grains, particularly wheat. After that, the decision is made.

Now, look at the figures which I have said in my statement, and the figures are correct. Prof. Saugata Roy, my old friend, was not or I will say less than charitable about our figures and numbers. One tonne of bag is three bales; 14.07 lakh bales are 4.6 lakh metric tonnes; 12.97 lakh bales are 3.3 lakh metric tonnes. The figures are correct. ...(*Interruptions*)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Please check the figures. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I have checked them. That is why, I am saying that the figures are correct. ...(*Interruptions*) As you were speaking, my officials were busy checking. These are all the re-verified figures and not from the original statement.

Now, we are talking of the projected production. I agree with what Prof. Saugata Roy has said, and he has agreed with the figures that I have given in my statement, that is, 93 lakh bales of 180 kg per bale; that is, 31 lakh bales is the opening

stock and the production is 93 lakh bales. That is exactly what we have said. So, I do not know where the mismatch comes.

If there is a shortfall, it is not of raw jute. If it is not of raw jute, it is the availability of bags. I must inform this House, Madam, that the recommendation of the SAC was true – 100 per cent for food grains but it was only 20 per cent for sugar. Whereas we have not accepted 20 per cent packaging for sugar though the sugar industry was particular that for exports and for sugar fortified with vitamins in smaller consumer bags they cannot use jute bags. It is also cement and sugar what is being referred to, and there is hydroscopic element that also has to be borne in mind. â€¦ (Interruptions)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : You are again giving wrong figures...(Interruptions)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, I do not want to be interrupted...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Prof. Roy, please cooperate. Please take your seat.

(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record except what the hon. Minister says.

(Interruptions)* â€¦

MADAM SPEAKER: Yes, Mr. Minister, please continue.

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, these are the recommendations, which I have referred to. The Government has considered them; and then, the Government has taken a very clear view.

Last year, a situation had arisen. Gopinath Mundeji is sitting here. The Leader of the Opposition, Shrimati Sushma Swaraj had led a delegation including the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and Cabinet Ministers, demanding immediate intervention of the Government. She had also called on the Prime Minister alongwith the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh. Soon after there was a crisis situation in the State of Haryana, in the State of Punjab, all the three Chief Ministers came to Delhi and met the Prime Minister; and met me. Because of non-availability of bags, the Government had to place the orders for the packing of food grains, which were lying out in the open. There was a non-fulfillment of commitment by 1.6 lakh bales. When we looked at the number of bags, which could not come, in fact, the committed quantity was not made available. As a result...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: What is this Mr. Basu Deb Acharia? Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record except the reply of the hon. Minister.

(Interruptions)* â€¦

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: When it comes to the HDPE, that is, High Density Polyethylene and the PP, that is, Polypropylene bags, these bags are required. These bags had to be of polypropylene and polyethylene....(Interruptions)

I think, if I am interrupted on every word, how would I speak?...(Interruptions)

Please listen to me what I am trying to explain. I am only responding to the Calling Attention and sharing with this House the facts. Now, when that shortfall was there, the Government had to intervene; the Government had to take a decision. If the hon. Member had read my statement, that during the Rabi season 2012-13, the jute mills were unable to supply jute bags in time; and the relaxation was given for 1.6 lakh bales, which I have mentioned for HDPE and PP bags to food grain procuring agencies of the States of Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and the Food Corporation of India.

Now, these are the facts, I want to inform the House about. This year, we have requested for an advance mandatory indent plan for the whole year from the States. Now, the States have to help. I have written to all the Chief Ministers that 'please give us the advance indent as to what is their requirement so that accordingly the orders, the Government of India, can place. And, also from the jute producing States, advance indent of monthly commitment of jute production has to be given to us; and that is the cooperation, which we are seeking. It is to avoid bunching of orders and supply. I have requested for cooperation of all the State Governments including the State Government of West Bengal to ensure timely indenting production and supply of jute bags to avoid disruption in the larger interest of this industry.

Madam, I would also like to mention that this 90 per cent and 40 per cent is minimum. If there is availability, then this 90 per cent can go up to 100 per cent. But the hon. Members would agree...*(Interruptions)*

Please allow me to speak.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Where is the guarantee? It has never happened...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record except what the hon. Minister is speaking.

(Interruptions) â€¦!*

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Well, the Government has the responsibility; and the responsibility is very clear. I have to ensure...*(Interruptions)*

Madam, I take strong objection to this constant hurling of accusations. Wheat producing States' interests, sugar producing States' interests, super cooperatives' interest have also to be protected. The Government of India has to consider their interests also. If there is non-availability, which I am informing the House...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please. What is this happening? Please do not do that. What is this?

...*(Interruptions)*

अध्यक्ष महोदया: यह क्या हो रहा है।

...*(व्यवधान)*

MADAM SPEAKER: You cannot just go on like this. Why are you going on like this?

...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM SPEAKER: Nothing else will go on record.

(Interruptions) â€¦!*

MADAM SPEAKER: Please take your seat. How will he give a reply? He wanted to give a reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM SPEAKER: Please sit down. Do you want him to give a reply? Or do you not want him to reply? Then, you please listen to him.

...*(Interruptions)*

अध्यक्ष महोदया: आप अभी बैठ जाएं, नहीं तो वह कैसे जवाब दे पाएंगे।

...*(व्यवधान)*

अध्यक्ष महोदया: आप क्यों बार-बार खड़े हो जाते हैं, आप बैठ जाएं। उन्हें बोलने दीजिए। इतना ज्यादा एजिटेट क्यों हो रहे हैं।

...*(व्यवधान)*

अध्यक्ष महोदया: आप बैठकर सुन लें।

पू. सौगत राय : लोगों को कैसर हो गया है।

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam Speaker, I would like to inform the hon. Members that the Government is very much sensitive to the jute growers and to the jute industry. There is not one but a number of mission mode initiatives that the Government has taken through the various institutions for improvement of production and training in skills because when we are saying that we are the largest producer of jute in the world...*(Interruptions)* Would you please listen? You are a very senior Member and if you are giving a running commentary...*(Interruptions)*

अध्यक्ष महोदया: आचार्य जी क्या कर रहे हैं।

पू. सौगत राय : कुछ कहें तो हम सुनें भी।

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, I can only place the facts. I cannot distort the facts. I am making a factually correct statement before this House....(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Basu Deb Acharia Ji, what is happening?

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I would also like to inform that jute is also used through diversification. It is used not only for packaging material. Today, because of the R&D that has been done through the institutions that we have, jute is also being used in construction industry. It is being used for paper. It is being used for construction of particle boards. ...(*Interruptions*) I am not diverting....(*Interruptions*)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: यह क्या कर रहे हैं।

Do you want to continue with your statement? Do you want to continue with your reply?

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I require just two minutes.

MADAM SPEAKER: All right.

Please listen to him.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: That is not correct. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: All these will not go on record.

(*Interruptions*)* â€

अध्यक्ष महोदया: अधीर रंजन जी, अब आप क्यों खड़े हो गए, आपको क्या हो गया है, आप बैठ जाएं।

What happened? Please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: All right, thank you so much.

Do you want to continue?

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Yes, if they listen, I will reply. I request them to listen, please. ...(*Interruptions*)

अध्यक्ष महोदया: तरुण मंडल जी आप बैठ जाएं।

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: Madam, I have given a detailed statement and request the hon. Members to carefully go through it. I am also telling Shri Basu Deb Acharia with regard to his specific question regarding the MSP operations. I would like to inform the House that we have increased this year the MSP price by 32 per cent, that is, Rs.2,200 per quintal. That is Rs.2200 per quintal. The Jute Corporation of India is already making purchasing wherever the MSP price is least. ...(*Interruptions*) Please listen to me Acharia ji. ...(*Interruptions*) Will you allow me to give the figure? ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : But, the farmers are not getting it. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: You sit down please.

...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, You please continue.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: The MSP operations are already on. Two lakh and sixty one thousand bales have been purchased by the Jute Corporation of India at Rs.2200 per quintal, that is, 32 per cent higher than the MSP price of last year. ...(*Interruptions*)

The last point which I want to make is this. ...(*Interruptions*) Please listen to me. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: The jute growers are committing suicide. ...(*Interruptions*)

MADAM SPEAKER: Please continue.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: These people do not have the intention to listen. ...(Interruptions) It is very, very clear that the purpose is political. They do not want to appreciate and acknowledge what the Government is already doing. ...(Interruptions)

The indented quantity of Government's order is 3550, which is 38.53 per cent more than the indented quantity of Government's order of the last year. ...(Interruptions)

MADAM SPEAKER: Why are you standing?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ANAND SHARMA: I am making it absolutely clear that the Government of India takes these decisions taking everything into consideration. ...(Interruptions) And what is being said by my friends in the Opposition is pure politics. They are not speaking for farmers. They are not placing the facts. ...(Interruptions) They are hurling accusations, which are unwarranted and which is very sad. ...(Interruptions) They have lowered this discussion to a level which is unacceptable in parliamentary democracy when a Minister of the Government's response is not heard and listened to. It is very clear that the intention was not to raise the issue of the farmers. ...(Interruptions) But I would like to assure the House that we, as a Government, are committed to protect the jute growers and the interests of the jute industry.

12.48 hrs

*At this stage, Shri Basu Deb Acharia and some other
hon. Members left the House.*
