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Title: Problems faced by Jute mills in the country.

SHRI MD. BADARUDDOZA KHAN (MURSHIDABAD): Hon. Speaker Madam, I beg only three minutes from you to just ventilate my grievances to this House.

I rise to draw your kind attention as well as of the entire House to the serious crisis being faced by a major foreign exchange earning industry, the jute mill resulting in loss of earning as well as livelihood of around thirty five lakh jute growers mostly in my state West Bengal. Around two lakh jute workers voiced their protests and grievances against such a situation through one day total strike in all the jute mills in West Bengal on 26th June.

Madam, owing to this crisis around 58 jute mills in West Bengal have drastically cut down their production or resorted to closure. One of the main reasons of this crisis is consistent dilution of Jute Packaging Act and such dilution of jute packaging is being consistently done by successive Governments at the centre. The present Government has reportedly decided to put the last nail in the coffin of JPM Act to phase out completely over next two to three years.

The reservation of jute packaging for sugar has been gradually reduced from 100 per cent in 2009-2010 to 20 per cent in 2013-2014. In addition to this a large scale dumping of jute sacks from Bangladesh in Indian market has already reached 1.45 lakh tonnes with the indulgence of customs duty exemption by the Indian Government. Still now, the Central Government is reluctant to initiate any anti-dumping measure against such imports.

Besides that, 35 lakh jute growers are facing serious problems because they are not getting Minimum Support Price also. The Government is saying that there are 171 departmental purchase centres of JCI to purchase raw jute at MSP but jute farmers are always facing bitter experience from JCI. This year also, jute farmers are compelled to sell their production at the rate of Rs. 1600 per quintal only though the MSP of jute is Rs. 2400 per quintal. I want to know where the JCI is to purchase jute.

Madam, lastly I want to say, to save two lakh jute workers and 35 lakh jute growers, we should stop importing jute sacks from Bangladesh and make 100 per cent jute packaging compulsory for sugar and food grains to save the jute workers and jute grower of our country. Thank you, Madam.