

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER
Price Policy for Raw Jute for
1992-93 season**

17.01

[English]

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BLARAM JAKHAR): The Government of India has fixed the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for TD-5 grade of raw jute in Assam for the 1992-93 season at Rs. 400 per quintal. This marks an increase of Rs. 25 per quintal over the price fixed for the last year. The corresponding prices for other varieties and grades of raw jute shall be fixed by the Jute Commission of India, Ministry of Textiles, in the light of normal market price differentials.

The Jute Corporation of India (JCI) will undertake price support operation in raw jute as and when required. The Corporation would take its decisions in respect of jute transactions on a commercial basis and make its purchases from the cultivators at prices that may be warranted by the prevailing market conditions, but in no case below the MSP.

The increase in Minimum Support Price is expected to encourage the farmers to invest more in jute cultivation and raise the production/productivity of raw jute.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Drought situation in various parts of the country-contd.

17.02 hrs.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Bhogendra Jha.

SHRI BHOGENDR JHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to seek just one clarification from the hon. Minister on Jute. There is the need to do something as the Jute Corporation of India is not directly procuring jute from the farmers, but from the traders who buy at cheaper rates from the farmers.

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): The matter will be taken up with the Minister of Textiles and we have asked them to intervene in the market. We have conveyed it to them. You better take up the issues with the Ministry of Textiles.

SHRI BHOGENDR JHA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to dwell on the rivers of Central Bihar viz Sone, Punpun and Falmu which flow in the opposite direction. I have come from the area only yesterday and lots of water flows down these rivers and if it is tapped from both sides, then to a large extent irrigation requirements can be met.

Secondly, I would like to suggest that by constructing small 'Cross Dams', water can be stored and used for irrigating large areas. The danger with these dams is that during floods they might get washed away, but even then these are cost-effective as within a week hundred times more land could be irrigated. The hon. Minister will give the excuse of it being a State subject, but due to paucity of funds these cannot be built even if willingness is there. Right now I do not want to dwell on the sincerity element. Drought situation in North Bihar can be effectively tackled if in addition to installation of tubewells and pumping sets, cross dams are built without delay.

Thirdly, I would like to dwell on tubewells. I would like to make a suggestion that the Government of Bihar has promised to provide 90 percent grant for tubewells. However more than this needs to be given to the marginal, small and even to big farmers and it will be appreciated if some assistance is also made available to them by the Centre. Despite my request the Government of Bihar is not prepared to buy P.V.C. pipes and I smell something fishy in it, probably some commission is involved. P.V.C. pipes are easily available at half the rates. Therefore, the Government of India should make these available on large scale. It will be nice, if the tubewells are installed by providing 90,60 or 40 percent of grant is given by state Government of Bihar, these will also prove to be