

matters connected therewith.

(b) At present, no amendment of this Act is under consideration.

More Funds for Teesta Barrage Project

204. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of WATER, RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether West Bengal Government has approached Union Government for allocation of more funds for the speedy and early implementation of the Teesta Barrage Project; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Chief Minister has been replied advising him to send a formal proposal to the Planning Commission.

Closed Jute Mills

205. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Jute Mills closed till date and employees and workers rendered jobless as a result thereof; and

(b) the steps taken or contemplated to re-open the closed and locked out jute mills?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES AND MINISTER OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b). The number of Jute Mills presently closed is 9, affecting a total of 21680 workers.

The reopening of closed and locked out

mills is the subject of the concerned State Government. However the Central Government have initiated a number of measures for the modernisation and diversification of the Jute Industry. These steps have been initiated to review demand in the domestic market and for exports. Some of the measures are as follows:

1. Establishment of the Jute Modernisation Fund for the modernisation and rehabilitation of jute mills.
2. Establishment of the Jute Special Development Fund for improving jute agriculture, research and development for diversification, schemes for the benefit of workers improvement of infrastructural facilities like construction of godowns etc.
3. Enactment of the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory use in Packaging Commodities) Act 1987 for compulsory packing of certain commodities in jute packaging materials.
4. Exemption from Customs Duty on certain specified items of jute machinery/accessories for modernisation.
5. Enhanced cash Compensatory Support for export of jute goods.
6. Introduction of External Market Assistance Scheme for the export of jute diversified products.
7. Introduction of an Internal Market Assistance Scheme for the introduction of jute diversified products in the internal market.
8. A major thrust to diversify into