

SHORTAGE OF SKILLED LABOUR IN JUTE INDUSTRY

2718. SHRI RAJA RAM SINGH:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES वस्त्र मंत्री
be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government intends to introduce appropriate policy measures to address shortage of skilled labours in Jute Industry, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether area of jute cultivation has declined, if so, the manner in which the Government aims to address the challenge of area decline, State/district-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has conducted any assessment of ICARE schemes for jute cultivation, production and improvement in quality and if so, the details of the assessment reports;
- (d) the number of Government owned and private jute mills along with the number of it that have been modernized and upgraded;
- (e) the details of total utilization of money sanctioned for the modernization of mills; and
- (f) the details of registered farmers and total number of training centres set up under the jute diversification programme?

उत्तर

ANSWER

वस्त्र राज्य मंत्री (श्री पबित्र मार्घेरिता)

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR TEXTILES
(SHRI PABITRA MARGHERITA)

(a): Government of India, through the National Jute Board (NJB), is implementing the Jute Resource-Cum-Production Centre (JRCPC) initiative to enhance the number of skilled artisans in the jute sector. Under this initiative, NJB, in collaboration with nominated agencies, provides training at various levels (Basic, Advance & Design Development) focused on the production of a wide range of Jute Diversified Products (JDPs).

(b): Raw jute cultivation in India is being actively strengthened through targeted government interventions aimed at enhancing both quality and productivity. Recognizing the challenges posed by factors such as crop diversification, variable rainfall, input-related constraints, and market fluctuations, the Government of India launched the *Jute-ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise)* programme. This initiative promotes sustainable and scientific farming practices by providing high-yielding variety (HYV) certified seeds, introducing retting accelerators, and encouraging modern agronomic techniques. Since its inception, the programme has seen significant growth, expanding from 130 blocks (covering 1,10,893 hectares) across 7 states in 2020–21 to 289 blocks (covering 2,15,246 hectares) in 10 states by 2024–25, demonstrating its wide acceptance and impact in boosting jute cultivation across the country.

(c): An evaluation of the Jute-ICARE pilot project, conducted by the National Productivity Council, New Delhi during 2018–19, confirmed several positive outcomes that underscore the effectiveness of the initiative. The assessment revealed notable improvements, including enhanced quality of jute fibre, an 8.65% reduction in the overall cost of cultivation, and a significant decrease in the retting period from 20 days to just 13 days. Further, the project led to increased adoption of certified jute seeds, a substantial rise in yield to 2,594.25 kg per hectare, and an overall 15% increase in farmers' income, highlighting the programme's impact on productivity and rural livelihoods.

(d) & (e): There are a total of 119 jute mills in the country. Of these, 6 mills are owned by the Government of India, while the Governments of Tripura and Odisha each own 1 mill. Further, 1 cooperative-sector mill operates in Assam, and the remaining 111 mills are privately owned. To modernize the jute industry, NJB implemented the *Incentive Scheme for Acquisition of Plant and Machinery (ISAPM)* from 2014–15 to 2020–21. The scheme aimed to replace outdated machinery with modern, technologically advanced equipment. A total incentive amount of ₹71.76 crore was disbursed to 199 (jute mills and MSME JDP units) during the scheme period.

(f): Under the ongoing *National Jute Development Programme (NJDP)*, NJB continued the implementation of JRCPC from 2021–22 to 2024–25. During this period, 100 training programmes were organized through 61 collaborating agencies across 12 states, benefitting 2,242 jute artisans and members of Women Self-Help Groups (WSHGs).
