

ment. In order to facilitate their employment, they are being given relaxation with regard to age. In several cases they have been trained in order to make them employable.

Considering that the total employment in the projects is estimated to be only 12,000 and the above mentioned position, the total employment of the displaced persons may not exceed 5,000 as currently assessed by the project authorities. The feasibility of providing self-employment to the displaced persons, employment in ancillary industries/services etc. are being explored.

Better International Market for Jute

778. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry will treat the problems of jute industry of West Bengal like the textile industry in Maharashtra and Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the specific economic measures Government propose to take to create better international market for jute and to save the sick or closed units of jute industry in West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND COMMERCE AND SUPPLY (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b). The problems of Jute and Textile industry are not identical. However, the problems of the jute industry are receiving the desired attention of the Government and the Government has been taking necessary corrective steps, from time to time, to improve the functioning and viability of jute mills and its competitiveness in the international markets. The steps taken by the Government include:—

- (i) Grant of increased CCS on export of jute goods;
- (ii) Involving STC in assisting exports of CBC to North American Markets by forming STC-Jute Industry Consortium on 50:50 loss sharing basis;
- (iii) Constituting a new Jute Manufactures Development Council and a Jute Fund out of proceeds of

jute cess to give boost to R. & D efforts and export promotion;

- (iv) Purchase of jute goods by Govt. (DGS&D) from jute industry on cost plus basis;
- (v) Introduction of compulsory use of 100% new jute bags by cement industry;
- (vi) Persuading other user departments to use more jute bags instead of synthetic substitutes for packing of fertilizers;
- (vii) Free import of raw jute from Nepal through Jute Corporation of India;
- (viii) Setting up of a Standing Committee under the auspices of RBI to study viability of jute mills and to suggest a package of financial measures for the rehabilitation of potentially viable units;
- (ix) With a view to improving the supply position of raw jute, the Government have taken the following steps:—
 - (a) Regulating the stock holdings of jute mills under the Jute (Control and Licensing) Order, 1961 to bring about more equitable distribution of raw jute;
 - (b) Authorising Jute Corporation of India to arrange for import of 5 lakh bales of raw jute from abroad. However, against the above authorisation, JCI have been able to contract for import of about 3 lakh bales.

Overdrafts by Government of West Bengal in five years

779. SHRIMATI PHULRENU GUHA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of occasions for which Government of West Bengal had to resort to overdraft from the Centre during the last five years; and