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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR, TEXTILES AND SKILL
DEVELOPMENT**

(2024-25)

(EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF TEXTILES

**Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/
Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Fifty-Third
Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Development and Promotion of
Jute Industry' pertaining to the Ministry of Textiles.**

EIGHTH REPORT



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

August, 2025/ Shravana, 1947 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 06.08.2025

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 06.08.2025



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NEW DELHI

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR, TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

(2024-25)

Shri Basavaraj Bommai – Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2	Shri Mani A.
3	Shri G. M. Harish Balayogi
4	Shri Aashtikar Patil Nagesh Bapurao
5	Shri Partha Bhowmick
6	Shri Yogender Chandolia
7	Shri Ram Prasad Chaudhary
8	Shri Chandra Prakash Choudhary
9	Shri G. Lakshminarayana
10	Shri Asit Kumar Mal
11	Shri Kali Charan Munda
12	Shri Rudra Narayan Pany
13	Shri Kartick Chandra Paul
14	Shri Tanuj Punia
15	Shri Pradeep Purohit
16	Shri Mukesh Rajput
17	Shri Raja Ram Singh
18	Shri Adhikari Soumendu
19	Shri V. K. Sreekandan
20	Shri Manoj Tigga
21	Shri Chavan Ravindra Vasantryao

RAJYA SABHA

22	Smt. Jaya Amitabh Bachchan
23	Shri Ritabrata Banerjee
24	Shri Naresh Bansal
25	Shri Govindbhai Laljibhai Dholakia
26	Shri Rajendra Gehlot
27	Dr. Syed Naseer Hussain
28	Shri Maharaja Sanajaoba Leishemba
29	Shri Shibu Soren
30	Vacant
31	Vacant

SECRETARIAT

1.	Shri Lalkithang	-	Joint Secretary
1.	Ms. K. Muanniang Tunlut	-	Director
2	Shri Sandeep Kumar Malhotra	-	Assistant Executive Officer

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Labour, Textiles and Skill Development (2024-25) having been authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Eighth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Fifty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Development and Promotion of Jute Industry' pertaining to the Ministry of Textiles.

2. The Fifty-Third Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 7th February, 2024. The Ministry of Textiles furnished their replies on 27th May, 2024 indicating Action Taken on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Fifty-Third Report. The Committee considered and adopted the Draft Report at their sitting held on 31st July, 2025.

3. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Fifty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) is given at Appendix.

4. For ease of reference, Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

***New Delhi;
31 July, 2025
09 Shravana, 1947 (Saka)***

***BASAVARAJ BOMMAI
CHAIRPERSON,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR,
TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT***

CHAPTER- I

REPORT

This Report deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Fifty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on 'Development and Promotion of Jute Industry' of the Ministry of Textiles.

2. The Fifty-Third Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 7th February, 2024. It contained 30 Observations/Recommendations. Replies of Government in respect of all the Recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:-

(i)	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government – Rec. Para Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28 and 29.	Chapter-II Total:24 Percentage: 80.00
(ii)	Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply – Rec. Para No. 27.	Chapter-III Total:01 Percentage: 3.33
(iii)	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration – Rec. Para Nos. 1, 13 and 30.	Chapter-IV Total:03 Percentage: 10.00
(iv)	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature – Rec. Para Nos. 12 and 26	Chapter-V Total:02 Percentage: 6.67

3. **The Committee desire that Action Taken Notes in respect of Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter-I and final action taken reply in respect of the Recommendations contained in Chapter V of this Report for which interim reply has been given by the Government, may be furnished to them at the earliest.**

4. **The Committee will now deal with some of their earlier Observations/Recommendations which either require reiteration or merit further comments.**

I. Shortage of Skilled Workers in Jute Industry

Recommendation (Para No. 1)

5. The Committee had noted that as on November 2023, there are 108 composite jute mills, out of which, the State of West Bengal has 79 jute mills, Andhra Pradesh 14 mills, Uttar Pradesh 3 mills, Bihar 4 mills, Odisha 3 mills, Assam 2 mills, Chhattisgarh 2 mills and Tripura 1 mill. Further, ownership-wise, 6 mills are under the Government of India, 1 mill each is owned by the Government of Tripura and Odisha respectively, 1 mill in Assam is in the cooperative sector and the rest 99 mills are privately owned. The Committee were apprised that 5 new jute mills were established in last 3 years while 5 jute mills declared closure during that period. The Committee were also apprised that two jute mills are proposed to be set up in Telangana by an industrial house, whereas, the Ministry of Textiles has no proposal to set-up new jute mill or upgrade the existing mills. The reasons for closure of mills in jute sector inter alia include problems in management, labour troubles and financial difficulties. The Ministry have also stated that usually, the jobless workers of the closed jute mills are engaged in nearby working jute mills as jute mills are facing shortage of skilled workers. While appreciating that two new jute mills are being set up in Telangana by an industrial house, the Committee, while considering that, 99 out of 108 mills are privately owned, had desired the Ministry to have a comprehensive policy with regard to reviving the closed mills or setting up new mills by the Government. The Committee had also called upon the Ministry to develop suitable mechanism, in consultation with the stakeholders viz. mill owners, workers etc., to address the factors leading to closure of mills. The Committee had also desired the Ministry to devise suitable Scheme in consultation with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship to minimize the shortage of skilled workers in jute industry.

6. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“As on date, there are 111 composite jute mills out of which the state of West Bengal has 82 jute mills with Andhra Pradesh having 14 mills, Uttar Pradesh 3 mills, Bihar 4 mills, Odisha 3 mills, Assam 2 mills, Chhattisgarh 2 mills and Tripura 1 Jute Mill. Ownership-wise 6 mills are under the Government of India, 1 mill each is owned by the Government of Tripura and Odisha respectively, 1 mills in Assam is in

the cooperative sector and the rest 102 are privately owned. In last 3 years 3 jute mills have declared closure while 12 new jute mills have come up. The reasons for closure of Mills *inter-alia* include problems primarily due to labour trouble. The jobless workers of the closed jute mills are usually engaged in nearby working jute mills as jute mills are facing shortage of skilled workers. The private mills sometimes restart under a new management or owner after the mill is sold or given on lease. The mills which restart after closure are given Government orders for packaging foodgrains on behalf of different State Procurement Agencies (SPAs). To address the recommendation of the Committee, the Stakeholders viz. mill owners, workers, etc. may be consulted for Skill Development of jute workers.”

7. The Committee find that their recommendations to formulate a comprehensive policy with regard to reviving the closed mills or setting up new mills by the Government, developing suitable mechanism to address the factors leading to closure of mills in consultation with the stakeholders and devising suitable Scheme to minimize the shortage of skilled workers in jute industry in consultation with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, have not been addressed in the Action taken Note furnished by the Ministry. Rather than according due seriousness to these issues, the Ministry have casually stated that the stakeholders viz, mill owners, workers, etc. may be consulted for skill development of jute workers. In the opinion of the Committee, consultations with all the stakeholders should have been initiated long back and a roadmap prepared for skill development of jute workers to re-invigorate the jute industry and equip the rural youths with skills for better livelihood. The Committee, hence urge the Ministry to take prompt action in this regard without further delay. The Committee also reiterate their recommendation regarding formulation of a comprehensive policy for reviving closed mills or setting up new mills by the Government and developing suitable mechanism to address the factors leading to closure of mills in consultation with the stakeholders, and desire to be apprised of the progress made towards such efforts.

II. Violation of the JPM Act, 1987

Recommendation (Para No. 2)

8. The Committee had noted that the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987 (JPM Act) has been enacted to provide for the compulsory use of jute packaging material in the supply and distribution of certain commodities in the interests of production of raw jute and jute packaging material, and of persons engaged in the production thereof, and for matters connected therewith. Under the mandate of JPM Act, 1987, the Government keep percentage of mandatory packaging of food grains and sugar in jute material. During the last 5 years, the Government has been keeping 100% food grains and 20% sugar mandatory packaging in jute. The Notification issued by the Ministry is valid upto 30 June, 2024.

9. The Committee were been apprised that O/o Jute Commissioner has requested multiple times to Chief Director(Sugar), District Magistrates and Sub-Divisional Magistrate to initiate appropriate action against sugar mills found to have violated the stipulations of the Order issued under JPM Act, 1987. However, no response has been received from all concerned. The Committee had impressed upon the Ministry/JCI to take up the matter at the highest level and ensure that strict action is taken against the violators of the JPM Act, 1987.

10. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“The Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987 (JPM Act) has been enacted to provide for the compulsory use of jute packaging material in the supply and distribution of certain commodities in the interests of production of raw jute and jute packaging material, and of persons engaged in the production thereof, and for matters connected therewith. A copy of the JPM Act, 1987 is attached.

The Government attempts to provide as much reservation as possible to utilize the jute crop that is produced in the country, without creating the bottle-neck in the supply-distribution chain of the commodities. The present Order notified on 26.12.2023 stipulates the following percentage of commodities to be packed in jute packaging material for jute year 2023-24 (July to June):-

Commodity	Minimum percentage to be reserved for packaging in Jute
Foodgrains	100% of the procurement*
Sugar	20% of the procurement**

* Initially 10% of the indents for foodgrains would be placed through reverse auction on the GeM portal.

** In diversified jute bags under direct purchase by the procuring agencies from the mills or open market.

The above Notification is valid upto 30th June, 2024.

The level of reservations recommended by the Government in the past few years are furnished below:-

Mandatory Jute Packaging Orders issued under the JPM Act, 1987			
Order date	Year	Sugar	Foodgrains
30.11.2018	2018-19	20%	100%
20.12.2019	2019-20	20%	100%
26.11.2020	2020-21	20%	100%
27.12.2021	2021-22	20%	100%
31.03.2023	2022-23	20%	100%
26.12.2023	2023-24	20%	100%

As per stipulations of the Order, different state foodgrains procuring agencies including FCI purchase jute bags to the tune of around 35.0 lakh bales for packing foodgrains. The total purchase currently constitutes about 80.9% of the total production of jute goods. Such purchase has led to help the jute industry to maintain its production.

Office of Chief Director (Sugar) has issued instructions to the sugar mills to comply with the mandatory packaging requirements of

20% as provided by the JPM Act. The office of Jute Commissioner has coordinated with the jute mills and o/o Chief Director (Sugar) to resolve the issues relating to implementation of the JPM Act for sugar mills.“ As per information received from Directorate of Sugar, D/o Food & Public Distribution, the quantity of 15.55 LMT sugar has been packed in around 3.11 crore jute bags (18,038 MT) during the current sugar season. In association with D/o Food & Public Distribution, efforts are being made to ensure for compliance 20% sugar mandatory packaging in jute.”

11. The Committee had impressed upon the Ministry/Jute Corporation of India to ensure strict action against the violators of the Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, (JPM Act) 1987. The reply of the Ministry indicated that efforts are being made to ensure compliance of 20% mandatory packaging of sugar in jute, however, no mention has been made regarding action taken against the sugar mills found violating the mandatory requirements as stipulated in the Order notified under the JPM Act. The Committee, hence reiterate their recommendation and urge the Ministry/JCI to ensure that appropriate action is initiated against the defaulting sugar mills promptly under intimation to the Committee.

III. Training to Registered Jute Farmers

Recommendation (Para No. 12)

12. The Committee had noted that one of the important components under Jute ICARE is to provide training to the Registered Jute Farmers, wherein the farmers are made aware and motivated for adopting better agronomic practices for jute cultivation by Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (CRIJAF) at various stages of jute production. The Committee were deeply concerned to note that till the 9th phase of I-CARE project, out of estimated 40 lakh farmers, only 4.35 lakh farmers (10%) have been registered and the remaining 35.65 lakh farmers are yet to be registered. The Committee were apprised that in the tenth phase of I- CARE scheme, it has been planned to carry out survey so as to have reliable estimate of total number of jute farmers through an outside agency. The Committee had impressed upon the Ministry/NJB and JCI to ensure that the survey is undertaken and completed in a time bound

manner so that the welfare schemes being implemented/proposed to be implemented for the welfare of jute farmers are truly extended to them. Further, considering the fact that only 10% jute farmers are registered, the Committee had recommended that all possible steps be taken on priority for registration of jute farmers so that they get the training benefits being imparted by CRIJAF.

13. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“JCI will carry out registration under Jute I-CARE scheme to ascertain actual number of jute farmers in the upcoming phase of the scheme so that the welfare schemes being implemented or proposed to be implemented for the welfare of jute farmers may be extended to them in true manner.”

14. The Ministry/National Jute Board (NJB) and Jute Corporation of India (JCI) have been impressed upon by the Committee to ensure that survey on jute farmers be undertaken and completed in a timebound manner. The Committee had also recommended that in view of only 10% jute farmers being registered under Jute I-CARE Scheme, all possible steps for their registration be taken on priority. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry have stated that JCI will carry out registration under the Jute I-CARE Scheme to ascertain the actual number of jute farmers in the upcoming phase of the Scheme. The Committee trust that the agency to conduct the survey on jute farmers has been identified and necessary infrastructure put in place to ensure registration of all the eligible jute farmers within a specified timeframe and desire to be apprised of the status in this regard.

IV. Availability of Certified Jute Seeds

Recommendation (Para No.13)

15. The Committee had noted that JCI had entered into MoU with National Seeds Corporation (NSC) for distribution of certified jute seeds on commercial basis during 2020-21. The Committee were apprised that the new varieties JRO-2024, JBO-2003H have gained popularity under Jute ICARE and inculcated confidence about better results to increase jute production. While appreciating the steps taken by JCI with regard to ensuring timely availability of certified jute seeds at the doorsteps in all States, the Committee had desired that stringent action, in coordination with State Governments, be taken against those providing spurious seeds so that the efforts made by farmers during jute cultivation do not go waste

and result in increasing production and income through availability of certified seeds.

16. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“The recommendation of the Hon’ble Committee to ensure availability of Jute certified seeds to the jute farmers have been noted for compliance. The Jute Corporation of India conducted Awareness Programmes mobilizing participation of Jute Farmers on usage of Jute certified seed, advanced agronomic practices and enhanced retting practices. 361 number of mobile campaigns have been undertaken. Physical demonstration in this regard has also been conducted.

Purchase Centres of JCI has Seed License for seed distribution purpose. JCI will ensure that all outsourced agencies to be registered with JCI for carrying out activities of ICARE Scheme (including Seed Distribution) in future, will have valid Seed License as per Seed Act 1966. Moreover, JCI will coordinate with the Department of Agriculture of all Jute growing states urging them to distribute Certified Seeds to the farmers through different Field Level Demonstrations (FLDs) of the State Governments and to take necessary vigilance on the business of spurious seeds by the private parties.”

17. The Committee, while appreciating the steps taken by the Jute Corporation of India (JCI) with regard to ensuring timely availability of certified jute seeds at the doorsteps in all States had desired that stringent action, in coordination with State Governments, be taken against those providing spurious seeds. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry have outlined the efforts made by JCI such as, awareness programmes on usage of Jute certified seed, mobile campaigns, registration of all outsourced agencies with JCI, distribution of certified seeds, necessary vigilance on the business of spurious seeds by the private parties, etc. while silent on the action taken against those providing spurious seeds. The Committee lay stress on rooting out production and supply of spurious seeds and urge the Ministry to act upon their recommendation in right earnest so that stringent action, in coordination with State Governments, is taken against unscrupulous private parties supplying spurious seeds. The Committee also desire to be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

V. Jute Retail Outlets

Recommendation (Para No. 17)

18. The Committee had noted that to facilitate existing and new Artisans/Entrepreneurs, for promotion & Sale of JDPs through Retail Outlets/Showroom, 140 Jute Retail Outlets of Jute Diversified Products are to be opened at a total financial outlay of Rs.12.60 crore. The Committee had further noted that 48 JROs are in operation till October, 2023 incurring expenditure of Rs. 0.49 crore and, as informed by the Ministry, the remaining 92 JROs would be selected and start operation during remaining implementation period of the Scheme viz. upto 2025-26. The Committee were not satisfied with the progress made with regard to operation of JROs as during 2021 to October, 2023, against the cumulative target of setting up of 70 JROs, only 48 JROs are operational and 22 more JROs are to be set up upto March, 2024. The Committee, had therefore, called upon the Ministry to intensify efforts and take immediate action so as to ensure that the remaining 22 JROs are set up during 2023- 24 and, thereafter, the target of setting up 70 JROs during 2024-25 to 2025-26 is achieved before the scheduled completion of the Scheme. The Committee had also urged the Ministry to ensure that the guidelines regarding sourcing 50% of JDPs sold by JROs from Women Self Help Group and Jute Artisans are strictly adhered to.

19. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“The recommendation of the Hon’ble Committee to intensify efforts to ensure to set up the JROs to meet the targets during 2023-24 to 2025-26 and to ensure to implement the guidelines on sourcing 50% of JDPs sold by JROs from WSHGS and jute artisans, has been noted for compliance.”

20. Being dissatisfied that 22 more Jute Retail Outlets (JROs) are yet to be set up till March 2024, the Committee had called upon the Ministry to intensify efforts and take immediate action in this regard and thereafter, achieve the target of setting up 70 JROs during 2024-25 to 2025-26. The Committee had also urged the Ministry to ensure that the guidelines regarding sourcing 50% of Jute Diversified Products

(JDPs) sold by JROs from Women Self Help Group and Jute Artisans are strictly adhered to. In their Action Taken Reply, the Ministry have stated that the Committee's recommendation has been noted for compliance, which is vague and needs to be substantiated with specific measures adopted for its implementation. The Committee, hence call for a comprehensive reply to their recommendation indicating the status of setting up of JROs and adherence to the guidelines regarding sourcing 50% of JDPs sold by JROs from Women Self Help Group and Jute Artisans.

VI. Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills /MSME JDP Unit

Recommendation (Para No. 23)

21. The Committee had noted that the objective of the Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills/MSME JDP unit is to provide support to the jute workers girl children and family for providing higher education to the girl children and improvement in the education standard. Under the Scheme, scholarship is provided to Secondary Exam pass outs @ Rs.5000 and to the Higher Secondary pass outs @ Rs.10,000. The target for five years viz. during 2021-22 to 2025-26 is to provide scholarship to 22500 girl children [10th Pass out Girl Children: 15000 (3000 children each during 2021-22 to 2025-26) and 12th pass out Girl Children: 7500 (1500 children each during 2021-22 to 2025- 26)] at a total financial outlay of Rs.15.00 crore (7.5 crore each to 10th and 12th pass outs during 5 years period).

22. The Committee had further noted that during 2021-22 and 2022-23, 8172 (4404 in 2021-22 and 3768 in 2022-23) girl children (90%) were benefitted against the target of 9000 intended beneficiaries. As stated by the Ministry, the reason for less number of girl children participation under the scholarship scheme is attributable to less number of girl children passed in Secondary/Higher Secondary Examinations as compared to 2021-22. The Committee had also noted that the beneficiaries covered during 2022-23 belonged to 42 Jute Mills and 6MSME JDP Units in three States viz. West Bengal, Assam and Kerala despite the fact that there are 108 Jute Mills in 08 States. As informed by the Ministry, the applications from remaining 5 States were not received due to non-response from the jute mills.

23. The Committee had felt that the primary reason for not achieving the target is lack of awareness amongst the intended beneficiaries and non-availability of their data base. The Committee, had thereupon, impressed upon the Ministry/NJB to intensify the awareness campaigns at the grass root level through direct contact with jute mill workers/authorities and also coordinate with District Administration/education authorities so as to maintain data base of intended beneficiaries, which in turn, would also help in fixing/revising target during the remaining period of the Scheme.

24. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“The recommendation of the Hon’ble Committee to intensify the awareness campaigns at the grass root level through direct contact with jute mill workers / authorities and District Administration /education authorities so as to maintain data base of intended beneficiaries for fixing / revising target has been noted for compliance.”

25. The Committee had felt that the primary reason for not achieving the target under Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills/MSME JDP unit is lack of awareness amongst the intended beneficiaries and non-availability of their database and had impressed upon the Ministry/NJB to intensify the awareness campaigns at the grass root level through direct contact with jute mill workers/authorities and coordination with District Administration/education authorities so as to maintain database of intended beneficiaries. The Ministry have submitted that the Committee’s recommendation had been noted for compliance. The Committee find the reply of the Ministry inadequate and desire a comprehensive reply incorporating the details of awareness campaigns held so far regarding the Scheme and the status of maintaining database of the intended beneficiaries in coordination with District Administration/education authorities at the earliest.

VII. Incorporation of Allied Fibre with Jute in the Mandate of NJB Act, 2008

Recommendation (Para No. 26)

26. The Committee had noted that Flax fibre has wide use in the textile sector for its higher strength and luster. The Committee were apprised

that at present, the domestic production of quality flax fibre suitable for the apparel sector is almost negligible and, in order to meet the domestic demand of flax fibre and/or fabric (linen), the manufacturers of linen fabrics have to import the flax fibre/fabrics from countries like Belgium, France, China, Netherlands, etc. for which expenditure to the tune of Rs. 800 Cr. Is annually incurred. In 2020, India exported \$3.54M processed Flax Fibres mainly to Bangladesh, Lithuania, Belgium, Indonesia and China and imported \$47.7M worth Flax mainly from Belgium, France, Lithuania, Belarus and Egypt. The Committee were concerned to note that India does not have significant presence among the flax fibre producing countries. The Committee, had however, noted that the domestic demand for flax could be met by domestic supply as India has good supply of linseed to produce flax fibre domestically.

27. The Committee had further noted that the mandate of National Jute Board Act, 2008 is connected with the development of the cultivation, manufacture and marketing of jute and jute products and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto. The Committee had found that an exercise was undertaken in 2022 to analyse the importance of Allied fibre (Sunhemp, Ramie, Sisal, Flax, Banana Fibre, Pineapple Fibre, Hemp Fibre and Nettle Fibre) for incorporating them in the mandate of National Jute Board Act, 2008, however, the same has not yielded the desired results. The Committee were apprised that there is a need for detailed study for analyzing this sector and intervention in the cultivation of Allied fibre needs to be taken up with the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare as the matter comes under its purview.

28. Considering the fact that India has potential to meet its domestic demand for flax, the Committee had impressed upon the Ministry to urgently take steps to undertake exhaustive study and explore incorporation of Allied Fibre with jute in the mandate of National Jute Board Act, 2008 through consultation with the Ministries/stakeholders concerned including the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, etc. in the larger interest of Jute Sector/Industry.

29. The Committee had appreciated that a Project on 'Development of Modern Mini-spinning Machinery for Processing of Jute and Allied Fibres for Small Industries' is being executed by ICAR-National Institute of Natural Fibre Engineering and Technology w.e.f. 27.06.2023 for a period

of 3 years for which Rs.82.50 lakh has been allocated. The Committee had wished to be apprised of the progress in this regard.

30. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“In respect of recommendation of the Hon’ble Committee to undertake exhaustive study for analyzing cultivation of Allied fibres with Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers’ Welfare and explore incorporation of Allied fibres with jute in the mandate of National Jute Board has been noted for compliance. It is submitted that at present NJB is dealing with National Jute Development Program (NJDP) for development of jute sector with meager manpower as some posts were got deemed abolished. For implementing the recommendations of Hon’ble Committee, NJB would require substantial augmentation of manpower, especially in the technical area as the organization has limited institutional knowledge and expertise on “other natural fibres”. Further, this is becoming a focus area in the country only recently – hence it may take some time to develop sufficient knowledge base and expertise. It is submitted that the mid-term evaluation study of the NJDP is to be commenced during 2024-25 where apart from evaluation of ongoing schemes necessary inputs related to allied fibres will also be gathered. Those inputs will be considered by the experts / technical experts for moving ahead in the area of allied fibre through detailed study for analyzing this sector. Hence, the incorporation of allied fibres with jute may be explored after wider consultation with line Ministries/Departments with appropriate manpower in NJB.

“Development of Modern Mini Spinning Machinery for processing of Jute and Allied Fibres for Small Industries” Project has been assigned to ICAR- National Institute of Natural Fibre Engineering And Technology. The Project has been commissioned on 27/06/2023 and will continue for 3 years.”

31. The Committee had impressed upon the Ministry to take urgent steps for undertaking exhaustive study and exploring incorporation of Allied Fibre with jute in the mandate of the National Jute Board Act, 2008 through consultation with the Ministries/stakeholders concerned. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry have stated that incorporation of allied fibres with jute may be explored after wider

consultation with line Ministries/Departments with appropriate manpower in NJB. Keeping in mind the larger interest of the Jute sector/industry and India's potential to meet its domestic demand for flax, the Committee urge the Ministry to commence consultations with line Ministries/Departments without delay and augment the manpower in NJB including induction of experts/technical experts in the field of allied fibres.

VIII. Timely Submission of EPF/ESI Contributions of Workers by Jute Mill Owners

Recommendation (Para No. 29)

32. The Committee had noted that Office of the Jute Commissioner often receives complaints/ grievances of the jute mills workers or Workers' Association regarding various issues like payment of Gratuity, Provident Fund, other retirement benefits. The Committee were apprised that Jute Corporation of India (JCI) has a designated Grievance Officer for redressal of all grievances raised through CPGRAMS portal or received directly from individual complainants and whenever any complaint is received through the portal or otherwise, its reply is sent within the stipulated time. The Committee had appreciated that out of 30 complaints/grievances received by the Office of the Jute Commissioner during the last three years (from 01st January, 2021 to 22nd November, 2023), 29 complaints/grievances have been disposed of and one is under process. The Committee had desired that the pending single grievance be disposed of on priority and awareness campaign about existence of grievance redressal mechanism be launched for the benefit of workers. The Committee had further noted that Office of the Jute Commissioner have issued instructions to all the mills to submit monthly returns on fulfilment of statutory dues of the labour. The Committee had impressed upon the Ministry/JCI to ensure that the instructions issued by them are strictly enforced so as to ensure that contribution on account of EPF and ESI of the workers are timely submitted so that they do not face any inconvenience on this aspect. The Committee had also desired the Ministry/JCI to maintain close coordination with EPFO, ESIC and Labour Commissioner of State Governments in the larger interest of jute mill workers.

33. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“The Office of the Jute Commissioner has a designated Grievance Officer for redressal of all grievance received through CPGRAMS. The one complaint referred in the report has been addressed. O/o Jute Commissioner checks the portal regularly and resolves the grievances within given timeline. The O/o Jute Commissioner maintains close coordination with the appropriate authorities like Labour Commissioner, Govt. of West Bengal, Employer provident Fund Organization (EPFO), Jute Mills, etc. for resolution of the grievances.

The Jute Corporation of India has grievance redressal mechanism with a dedicated grievance officer. All grievances received through CPGRAMS/DARPG portal or directly from individual complainants are acted upon where necessary and reply is sent within stipulated time. No grievances are pending at the Corporation.”

34. The Committee find that though the Ministry/Office of the Jute Commissioner have addressed the issue regarding disposal of the complaints/grievances of the jute mill workers or workers’ association, the reply is silent on strict enforcement of the instructions/guidelines issued to the mills for timely submission of contributions on account of EPF and ESI workers. The Committee attach priority towards the social security and health care of the vulnerable mill workers and their families and urge the Ministry to ensure timely submission of monthly returns on fulfillment of statutory dues of the labour/EPF/ESI contributions to avoid any inconvenience to the workers. The status of submission of monthly returns by mill owners and the pending statutory dues, may be communicated to the Committee.

Recommendation (Para No. 30)

IX. Overall Assessment of National Jute Development Programme

35. The Committee had noted that the National Jute Development Programme (NJDP), an Umbrella Scheme for development and promotion of Jute Industry /Sector, comprising the Schemes/Sub-Schemes for jute agriculture (JUTE-ICARE), modernization (CSAPM),

diversification (JRCPC, JRMB, JRO, JDRC, PLI and MDPS) and workers' welfare (Scholarship) is being implemented during 15th Finance Commission period (2021-2022 to 2025-2026) at total financial outlay of Rs.485.58 crore. During 2021-22 and 2022-23, out of the allocated amount of Rs.170.95 crore, Rs.86.50 crore (50%) was utilized and approximately Rs.400 crore (82% of total outlay of Rs.485.58 crore) is to be utilized during the remaining period of implementation viz. during 2023-24 to 2025-26. The Committee while analyzing all the Schemes/Sub-Schemes under NJDP had found that the physical and financial progress of NJDP during the first two and half years of its implementation is not encouraging and despite the efforts being made by the Ministry, NJB and JCI, a lot still needs to be done to achieve the objectives of various Schemes. The Committee, had therefore, exhorted the Ministry to address the underutilization of funds, strengthen coordination, monitoring & implementation mechanism and bring forth robust interventions to considerably improve performance of the Scheme in physical and financial terms. The Committee had also taken cognizance of the fact that in order to assess the performance of the Schemes being implemented under NJDP, an MoU has been signed between the Ministry and NJB to evaluate the Schemes through a third party agency during the first quarter of 2024-25. The Committee had desired that the evaluation exercise be completed in a time bound manner and the recommendations so made be also examined and implemented within the stipulated time frame for development and promotion of Jute Industry/Sector.

36. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:-

“The recommendation of the Hon’ble Committee to strengthen coordination, monitoring and implementation mechanism for improvement of physical and financial performance of schemes and evaluation exercises in a time bound manner has been noted for compliance.”

37. While analyzing all the Schemes/Sub-Schemes under the National Jute Development Programme (NJDP), the Committee had found that the physical and financial progress during the first two and half years of its implementation has not been encouraging and had exhorted the Ministry to address the underutilization of funds, strengthen coordination, monitoring & implementation mechanism and bring forth robust interventions to considerably improve the performance of the Scheme. Further, the Committee had desired completion of evaluation exercise of the Scheme through a third party agency during the first quarter of 2024-25 in a time bound manner as well as examination and implementation of the recommendations so made within the stipulated timeframe for development and promotion of the Jute industry/sector. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry had conveyed that the Committee's recommendation has been noted for compliance without going into specifics thereby reflecting a casual approach towards the recommendation of the Committee. The Committee, hence desire that the Ministry should act upon their recommendation in right earnest and apprise them of the status of the evaluation exercise and robust interventions for improving the performance of the Scheme. The achievements under NJDP, in physical and financial terms, may also be furnished.

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

JUTE PACKAGING MATERIALS (COMPULSORY USE IN PACKING COMMODITIES) ACT , 1987

(Recommendation Para No. 2)

The Committee note that the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987 (JPM Act) has been enacted to provide for the compulsory use of jute packaging material in the supply and distribution of certain commodities in the interests of production of raw jute and jute packaging material, and of persons engaged in the production thereof, and for matters connected therewith. Under the mandate of JPM Act, 1987, the Government keep percentage of mandatory packaging of food grains and sugar in jute material. During the last 5 years, the Government has been keeping 100% food grains and 20% sugar mandatory packaging in jute. The Notification issued by the Ministry is valid upto 30 June, 2024.

The Committee were been apprised that O/o Jute Commissioner has requested multiple times to Chief Director(Sugar), District Magistrates and Sub-Divisional Magistrate to initiate appropriate action against sugar mills found to have violated the stipulations of the Order issued under JPM Act, 1987. However, no response has been received from all concerned. The Committee impress upon the Ministry/JCI to take up the matter at the highest level and ensure that strict action is taken against the violators of the JPM Act, 1987.

(Reply of Government)

The Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory Use in Packaging Commodities) Act, 1987 (JPM Act) has been enacted to provide for the compulsory use of jute packaging material in the supply and distribution of certain commodities in the interests of production of raw jute and jute packaging material, and of persons engaged in the production thereof, and for matters connected therewith. A copy of the JPM Act, 1987 is attached.

The Government attempts to provide as much reservation as possible to utilize the jute crop that is produced in the country, without

creating the bottle-neck in the supply-distribution chain of the commodities. The present Order notified on 26.12.2023 stipulates the following percentage of commodities to be packed in jute packaging material for jute year 2023-24 (July to June):-

Commodity	Minimum percentage to be reserved for packaging in Jute
Foodgrains	100% of the procurement*
Sugar	20% of the procurement**

* Initially 10% of the indents for foodgrains would be placed through reverse auction on the GeM portal.

** In diversified jute bags under direct purchase by the procuring agencies from the mills or open market.

The above Notification is valid upto 30th June, 2024.

The level of reservations recommended by the Government in the past few years are furnished below:-

Mandatory Jute Packaging Orders issued under the JPM Act, 1987			
Order date	Year	Sugar	Foodgrains
30.11.2018	2018-19	20%	100%
20.12.2019	2019-20	20%	100%
26.11.2020	2020-21	20%	100%
27.12.2021	2021-22	20%	100%
31.03.2023	2022-23	20%	100%
26.12.2023	2023-24	20%	100%

As per stipulations of the Order, different state foodgrains procuring agencies including FCI purchase jute bags to the tune of around 35.0 lakh bales for packing foodgrains. The total purchase currently constitutes about 80.9% of the total production of jute goods.

Such purchase has led to help the jute industry to maintain its production.

Office of Chief Director (Sugar) has issued instructions to the sugar mills to comply with the mandatory packaging requirements of 20% as provided by the JPM Act. The office of Jute Commissioner has coordinated with the jute mills and o/o Chief Director (Sugar) to resolve the issues relating to implementation of the JPM Act for sugar mills.“ As per information received from Directorate of Sugar, D/o Food & Public Distribution, the quantity of 15.55 LMT sugar has been packed in around 3.11 crore jute bags (18,038 MT) during the current sugar season. In association with D/o Food & Public Distribution, efforts are being made to ensure for compliance 20% sugar mandatory packaging in jute.

(Ministry of Textiles O.M. No. J-3/2/2020-Jute Section dated 21st May, 2024)

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 11 of Chapter-I.

I. JUTE PACKAGING MATERIALS (COMPULSORY USE IN PACKING COMMODITIES) ACT, 1987.

(Recommendation Para No. 3)

The Committee also desire the Ministry to have close coordination with Department of Food and Public Distribution, Food Corporation of India, State Governments and District Authorities so that the orders regarding mandatory packaging of food grains and sugar in jute material are complied with in letter and spirit.

(Reply of Government)

After detailed discussion among State Procurement Agencies, Food Corporation of India, D/o Food & Public Distribution(DF&PD), O/o Jute Commissioner, Indian Jute Mills Association and Ministry of Textiles it is ensured the availability of jute bags to the indenting agencies, generally six months prior to every crop season (Rabi &Kharif), different State Government foodgrains procuring agencies including FCI plan their requirements of jute bags. After receipt of

requirement of jute bags from all the states & FCI, a consolidated month wise plan for requirement of jute bags are being devised by Department of Food & Public Distribution, GoI. Moreover, while preparing the month wise schedule, the manufacturing capacity of the jute industry is also taken into consideration by the DF&PD.

As per stipulations of the Order, different state foodgrains procuring agencies including FCI purchase jute bags to the tune of around 35.0 lakh bales for packing foodgrains. The total purchase currently constitutes about 80.9% of the total production of jute goods. Such purchase has led to help the jute industry to maintain its production.

Inclusion of jute geo-textiles in the schedule of rates of various State Governments.

(Recommendation Para No. 4)

The Committee note that Jute Geo Textiles (JGT), an eco- compatible product enables to address critical geo technical problems such as soil erosion, consolidation of soft soil, construction of rural roads, stabilizing the slopes and for various agro textiles applications. The Committee were apprised that the use of Jute Geo Textiles in rural road construction through State Governments is one of the prime agenda of NJB for JGT promotion and for the purpose, the Ministry of Textiles have approached all State Governments for inclusion of Jute Geo Textiles in schedule of rates. The Committee note that while no State has expressed reservation in this regard, only 9 States have conveyed that they are including Jute Geo Textiles in schedule of rates. The Committee were apprised that the Ministry have already taken up the matter with the Chief Secretaries of the remaining States for inclusion of Jute Geo Textiles in the schedule of rates. In addition, the user agencies under State and Central Governments have also been approached for execution of MoUs for institutional buying of Jute Geo Textiles products. Further, the National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited (NHIDCL) have expressed their willingness to execute MOU with NJB for institutional buying of jute geo textiles products.

Taking into account the steps being taken by the Ministry for promotion of Jute Geo Textiles and their institutional buying, the

Committee recommend that concerted efforts be continued in coordination with the State Governments, user agencies, etc. for including Jute Geo Textiles in the schedule of rates of various State Governments so as to have an inbuilt mechanism for institutional buying of the Jute Geo Textiles products. The Committee agree with the views of the Ministry that for promoting jute products, the Government procurement agencies should buy jute products as office stationery for Conferences/Seminars/Workshops etc. and desire the Ministry to take up the matter with all concerned on priority.

(Reply of Government)

National Jute Board (NJB), as measure for promotion of Jute Geo-Textile, has been organizing awareness programs in collaboration with State Govt. end users. The Chief Secretaries of the State Governments have been approached for inclusion of Jute Geo-Textile in Schedule of Rates (SoR). In response, nine states have shown their interest to include jute geo-textile in SoR.

NJB organized Jute Symposium with special focus on Jute Geo-textile/Agro textile on 21st December 2023 in New Delhi with active participation of Govt. organizations including National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited(NHIDCL), Karnataka Rural Road Development Agency(KRRDA), Indian council of Agricultural Research(ICAR) and various Textiles Research Associations (TRAs). Viz. National Institute of Technology (NIT),Bombay Textile Research Association(BTRA), Synthetic & Art Silk Mills' Research Association (SASMIRA), National Institute of Design (NID) etc. In the Symposium, MOA between NJB and NHIDCL was entered into and Technology Transfer exercises by the developers to the industry partners for commercialization were undertaken. Further, in the Mega event of the Ministry of Textile-Bharat Tex held during 26th-29th February 2024 at New Delhi, NJB signed two MoUs with– (i) NRIDA and M/o Rural Development for promotion of uses/application of Jute Geo-Textiles in rural roads and projects of NRIDA, and (ii) Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad for Industrial scaling up of biodegradable, non-polymer super-hydrophobic jute fabric exhibiting excellent water repellence & stiffness for shopping/hand bag products.

NJB made its presentation with active participation of jute mills and MSME- JDP units and arranged display of wide range of jute products for having consumers' response/feedbacks. On 28th February 2024,

Jute Mark India App launched in the presence of Hon'ble Minister of State for Textile and Railways. In order to have an in built mechanism for institutional buying of Jute Geo Textiles, NJB executed MOU with National Rural Infrastructure Development Agency (NRIDA), MoRD and Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines, Dhanbad). It has been informed that MoRD/NRIDA have issued necessary direction to States on the use of new materials and technology which are environment friendly including Jute/ Coir/ Geo-Textile. The MOU specifies “ Use of Jute Geo- Textile in the rural roads construction where CBR value of the sub-grade soil is poor and less than 5%and requires ground improvements to meet the design criteria” NRIDA has conveyed that it will take required step in accordance with the MOU.

So far 9 states have conveyed that they are in the process of inclusion of Jute Geo- Textile in the Schedule of Rates. It is gathered that the R&B Dept., Govt. of Gujarat has approved inclusion of Jute Geo- Textile in their SoR and a circular has been issued on 22nd February 2024.

NJB as part of its promotional initiative has been organizing awareness programs/seminars on usage of jute and jute products as environment friendly in place of plastic/synthetics with active participation of jute entrepreneurs/exporters, local administration and Chamber of Commerce/ Business Council. The awareness programme is followed by BSM which facilitate the jute entrepreneurs to enter into business dialogues on jute diversified products. NJB also is having official interactions with the Govt. departments for supplying Jute diversified products including Jute File Covers, Stationery Items, Give away Bags, office Carry Bags etc. of late, Jute industry bagged 2.00 cr. piece of jute promotional bags from Govt. of Odisha.

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee for promotion of jute products through Govt. procurement agencies has been noted for compliance.

Workers' Welfare Scheme (SulabhSauchalaya)

(Recommendation Para No. 5)

The Committee note that NJB provided assistance to the jute mills for improvement of sanitation, health facilities and working conditions of jute mill workers through construction of toilets in jute mills. The

Committee were apprised that the Sulabh Sauchalayas provided workers the best sanitation and health facilities and a wide spread impact was felt by the workers and their families. The Committee were also apprised that NJB is planning to organize medical check-up camps for jute mill workers and their family members during 2023-24 in association with local administration /District Authorities and the Health Departments of respective State Governments. The Committee are of the considered opinion that the welfare measure proposed to be initiated is in the right direction and appreciate the approach of the Ministry for improving health of jute mill workers and their families through coordinated efforts with State Governments. The Committee desire that the exercise of conducting medical-health check up camps be conducted on regular basis on periodic intervals. In addition, the facility of follow up treatment be provided especially in the case of occupational diseases caused due to exposure of jute mill workers to the working conditions.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee for conducting medical health check-up camps on regular basis and follow up treatment facilities for Jute Mill workers has been noted for compliance.

A detail scheme following CGHS norms with financial outlay is under preparation in consultation with jute industry and on finalization, the same would be placed in the ensuing Board meeting of NJB for approval.

III

JUTE CORPORATION OF INDIA

(Recommendation Para No. 6)

The Committee note that Jute Corporation of India (JCI) has its presence in six jute growing States namely West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura and, at present, it has 110 Departmental Purchase Centres (DPC). The Committee further note that to replace hand and eye method to identify the grading of raw jute and the allowable moisture content in jute, the JCI is in the process of procuring lightweight digital moisture meters developed by Indian Jute Industries Research Association (IJIRA) for equipping all the DPCs. The Committee were apprised that 63 digital moisture meters have been distributed to the field units and by the end of the year 2023, all the centres would be equipped with these meters. Considering the fact that moisture content of

jute is an important parameter to determine its quality, the Committee trust that all the remaining 47 Departmental Purchase Centres (DPC) have been provided digital moisture meters. The Committee wish to be apprised of the progress in this regard.

(Reply of Government)

All 110 purchase centres of the Corporation have already been equipped with lightweight Bluetooth enabled moisture meters. Further, orders have been placed for portable hand held digital instruments for measuring quality parameters for all the purchasecentres and 14 regional offices.

(Recommendation Para No. 7)

The Committee further note that JCI, in association with ICAR-National Institute of Natural Fibre Engineering and Technology (NINFET), has set up its first Instrumental Jute Grading Common Facility Centre (Laboratory) at Katwa, West Bengal and the second laboratory is proposed to be setup at its Head Office in Kolkata. The Committee were apprised that this step will bring more scientific testing which is one of the important requirements for jute to comply on the quality parameters. As Jute crop cultivation is primarily concentrated in three States, namely, West Bengal, Assam and Bihar, the Committee desire that such laboratories be set up in Assam and Bihar also so that jute farmers get to know about the grade/quality of their jute, which, in turn, will help them in determination of the correct price of their jute.

(Reply of Government)

The first common facility centre for instrumental jute grading was set up at Katwa west Bengal last year. Instruments have also been procured for HO at Patsan Bhawan, Kolkata. To strengthen the quality and jute gradation awareness amongst farmers in all the jute growing states the Corporation has already ordered Bluetooth enabled hand held portable digital tensile testers and digital lustre meters for all its 110 procurement centres and 14 regional offices. Awareness camps under I-CARE also cover the jute grading system. Further different grades of raw jute along with their quality parameter scores and grade-wise rates are displayed at all the purchase centres. The suggestion of

setting up laboratories at Assam and Bihar has been noted for compliance.

(Recommendation Para No. 8)

The Committee further note that JCI in association with the National Jute Board (NJB) has entered into MoU with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC-ISRO) for the Jute Crop Information system for Jute Crop surveillance and monitoring of the agronomy. While appreciating the initiative taken by JCI and NJB, the Committee desire that the coordinated efforts be continued so as to ensure that the endeavour is drawn to its logical conclusion and information system for surveillance and monitoring of the agronomy is established in a time bound manner.

(Reply of Government)

The Corporation along with NJB has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC-ISRO) for development and implementation of the Jute Crop Information System. The Jute Crop Information System would consist of estimation of the total jute sowing/cropping area, estimation of total production of the jute crop and determining the jute crop health status from time to time. NRSC is to provide a dashboard for data collection and display for three years along with hand holding of concerned JCI and NJB officials. After three years the Corporation as well as NJB would be in a position to independently conduct jute crop surveillance and monitoring of its agronomy, bringing the project to its logical conclusion.

During last two years, there has been significant increase in Crop-Cutting Experiments (CCE) from 314 to 796. This year, the figures would go up further. As an outcome, it is expected that a more accurate forecast of the jute crop would emanate from this ensuing year's Report.

IV. **NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)**

A. **Jute –ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise) Scheme**

(Recommendation Para No. 9)

The Committee note that NJB has been implementing Jute-ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise) Scheme since 2015-16 in a phased manner in association with Jute Corporation of India Ltd. (JCI), Central Research Institute for Jute & Allied Fibres (CRIJAF), Ministry of Agriculture, National Institute of Natural Fibre Engineering and Technology (NINFET) and Indian Jute Industries Research Association (IJIRA). The objective of the Scheme is to improve quality and productivity in jute cultivation with introduction of a package of modern and scientific agronomic practices through distribution of High Yielding Varieties (HYV) of certified jute seeds @ 50% cost to increase the quality, productivity and farmer's income; free of cost distribution of (i) CRIJAF Sona (a microbial Consortium) to jute farmers for fast and quality retting of jute fibre and (ii) modern & scientific agronomic tools *viz.* seed drills, cycle nail weeder.

The Committee further note that from 2015-16 to 2020-21, the ICARE Scheme was spread to 2,58,324 jute farmers covering 1,10,893 hectare of land and 130 blocks under West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Odisha, Meghalaya, Andhra Pradesh and Tripura. Subsequently, the Scheme was extended and included under NJDP after incorporating the suggestions/recommendations of the third party evaluation. The target set for five years *viz* during 2021-22 to 2025-26 is to cover 290 jute growing blocks, 2,70,893 hectare land, 5,78,000 jute farmers including the achievements made in the earlier scheme implemented during 2015-16 to 2020-21 at a total financial outlay of Rs 69.31 crore.

The Committee note that the land covered upto 2020-21 was 1,10,893 hectares, the target for 2021-22 to 2025-26 is 1,60,000 hectare and out of which 80379 hectare has been covered during first three years of implementation of the Scheme *viz.* 2021-22 to 2023-24 and 79621 hectares (approx 50%) of land is required to be covered during 2024-25 and 2025-26. The Committee also note that 2,58,324 jute farmers were covered upto 2020-21, the target for 2021-22 to 2025-

26 is to cover 3,19,676 farmers and out of which 1,76,890 farmers have been covered during first three years of implementation of the Scheme viz. 2021-22 to 2023-24 and 1,42,786 (approx 45%) farmers are required to be covered during 2024-25 and 2025-26. The Committee further note that 130 blocks were covered upto 2020-21, the target for 2021-22 to 2025-26 is to cover 160 blocks and out of them, 82 blocks have been covered during first two years of implementation of the Scheme viz. 2021-22 and 2022-23 and 78 blocks (approx 50%) are required to be covered during 2023-24 to 2025-26.

The Committee find that progress in respect of land and farmers to be covered is slow as approximately 50% land and 45% farmers are required to be covered in two years viz. 2024-25 and 2025-26. The Committee trust that, as assured by the Ministry, the target will be met by 2025-26.

(Reply of Government)

The five year Targets (2021-22 to 2025-26) of Jute I-CARE project and achievements during (2021-22 to 2023-24) are furnished below:

Components	Achievements (2020-21)	Five-Year Targets	Achievements (2021-22 to 2023-24)	Target for Achievements (2024-25 to 2025-26)
Land Covered (Hectares)	1,10,893	2,70,893 (addl. 1,60,000)	80,379	79,621
No. of Blocks	130	290 (addl. 160)	116	44
No. of Farmers	2,58,324	5,78,324 (addl. 3,20,000)	1,76,890	1,43,110

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee has been noted for compliance. During 2024-25 and 2025-26, the activities will be expedited to cover Land and Farmers to meet the targets under Jute I-CARE project.

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

A. Jute –ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise) Scheme

(Recommendation Para No. 10)

The Committee were apprised that under ICARE Scheme, MGNREGA funds are being used for retting tanks. The Committee were also apprised that the process of construction of retting ponds under ICARE involves two phases i.e. construction and maintenance. Construction part is in convergence with MGNREGA, PMKSY and RKVY Schemes of Government of India and after completion of construction part, one time maintenance assistance @ Rs 5000/- per pond is given under ICARE Scheme of NJB being implemented at the field by JCI.

The Committee further note that 6771 farmers have expressed their willingness to provide land for construction of retting ponds and, out of them 194 tanks have been completed but none of the farmers have claimed financial assistance for the maintenance of constructed retting tanks indicating lack of awareness about the Scheme amongst the farmers. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry/NJB/JCI to intensify efforts and take all possible steps to ensure that the benefits of the Scheme are made available to the eligible farmers. The Committee also impress upon the Ministry to make coordinated efforts with the State Governments, District Administration and the nodal Ministries implementing MGNREGA, PMKSY and RKVY schemes so as to cover the remaining 6581 farmers, who have expressed their willingness to provide land for construction of retting ponds.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to make coordinated efforts with the State Governments, Districts' Administration and the nodal Ministries to cover the remaining farmers for construction of retting ponds has been noted for compliance. The matter has been sincerely followed up.

The acceptance of the farmers' proposals have already been forwarded to Districts' Administration and MGNREGA cell. So far 245 retting ponds have been completed.

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

A. Jute -ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise) Scheme

(Recommendation Para No. 11)

The Committee are concerned to note that there has been shrinkage in area under jute cultivation in all 10 Jute & Mesta growing States (except Meghalaya) from 8,38,000 hectares in 2013-14 to 6,67,300 hectares in 2021-22 i.e. the shrinkage is to the extent of 1,70,700 hectares in 09 years and one of the reasons for shrinkage is availability of alternate higher yielding option like real estate. The Committee have been apprised that new States *viz.* Jharkhand, Nagaland, Tripura and Andhra Pradesh have been included under Jute ICARE to increase the area under jute cultivation. While taking note of the assurance given by the Ministry that with implementation of Jute -ICARE, the total area under jute cultivation will increase, the Committee urge the Ministry to further strengthen the measures/initiatives and also taken other innovative steps in this direction.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to strengthen the measures/initiatives to increase the area under jute cultivation has been noted for compliance.

VI. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

i) Capital Subsidy for Acquisition of Plant & Machinery (CSAPM) for Manufacturing Jute Diversified Products

(Recommendation Para No. 14)

The Committee note that to facilitate modernization / upgradation of the existing Jute mills and MSME JDP Units for manufacturing Jute Diversified Products, incentive @ 30% of the cost of machinery facilitating investment of Rs 10,000 Lakh in acquisition of new machineries for production of JDPs by 100 Jute Mills/MSME-JDP Units, investment of over Rs 100 crore at total financial outlay Rs 30.00 crore

would be provided under Sub-Scheme of Jute Diversification Scheme. The Committee further note that during 2021-22 and 2022-23, 3 applications (3 units) were covered under the CSAPM Scheme and Rs. 71.10 Lakh was disbursed against investment of Rs.2.37 Crore. In addition, 13 units have submitted their applications of LOI for participation under the CSAPM Scheme from whom claim applications are awaited. The Committee find that the progress under this Scheme is not satisfactory as against the targeted investment of Rs. 100 crore in acquisition of new machineries, the investment of only Rs. 2.37 crore has taken place during first two years of the implementation of the Scheme *viz.* during 2021-22 and 2022-23. The Committee, therefore, impress upon the Ministry to intensify the measures already initiated besides resorting to other innovative measures so as to ensure that a sizeable investment in acquisition of new machineries is obtained before the completion of the Scheme.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to intensify the measures so as to ensure investment in acquisition of new machineries under CSAPM scheme has been noted for compliance.

VII. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

(Recommendation Para No. 15)

B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

ii) Jute Resource cum Production Centre (JRCPCs)

The Committee note that to spread jute diversification programme by providing Basic, Advance and Design development trainings to new artisans, rural youths and WSHGs for sustained employment for production of JDPs, 150 JRCPC Centres are to be set up to provide training to 18,000 artisans/beneficiaries and employment to 10,800 beneficiaries at a total financial outlay Rs 36.00 crore. The Committee note that out of 150 JRCPCs, only 41 JRCPCs (27% of the target for five years) have been set up and upto October, 2023, 1208

artisans/beneficiaries (6.7% of the target for five years) have been imparted training and out of them 282 artisans (2.6% of the target for five years) are employed in the production units or are self-employed and upto October, 2023, the expenditure incurred is Rs. 83.26 lakh (2.3% of the allocation for five years). The Committee, thus, find that during the remaining period of implementation of the Scheme viz. upto 2025-26, 99 JRCPCs (66%) are to be set up, 16792 (93%) persons are to be trained and, out of them, 10518 (97.4%) persons are to be provided employment. The Committee thus find that the physical and financial progress of the Scheme is well behind the target set for five years. The Committee have been apprised that NJB is in the process of increasing the number of training programmes by pursuing the matter with collaborating agencies / JRCPCs in various States to achieve the target under the scheme. The Committee call upon the Ministry to seriously look into the impediments being faced in implementation of the Scheme and take appropriate measures on war footing so as to achieve physical and financial targets under the Scheme so that the objective of providing training to new artisans, rural youths and WSHGs and sustained employment for production of JDPs is truly achieved.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to take appropriate measures to achieve physical and financial targets under JRCPC Scheme has been noted for compliance.

VIII. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

(B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

(iii) Jute Raw Material Banks (JRMBs)

(Recommendation Para No. 16)

The Committee note that to supply jute raw materials at mill gate price to Jute Artisans, MSMEs JDP Producing units and beneficiaries of Jute Resource cum Production Centres (JRCPCs) to manufacture Jute Diversified Products, 140 Jute Raw Material Banks (JRMBs) are to be opened to provide Jute Raw Materials at a total financial outlay Rs 16.80 crore. The Committee further note that 72 JRMBs have been opened

till October, 2023 incurring expenditure of Rs. 2.91 crore. The Committee have been apprised that the existing MSME-JDP Units and WSHGs face difficulty in sourcing jute raw materials in smaller quantities locally or directly from the jute mills which hampers their production schedule and these JRMBs cater to their requirements. The Committee are satisfied with the progress made during 2021 to October, 2023, as against the target of setting up of 70 JRMBs, 72 JRMBs have been set up. The Committee desire that, as assured by the Ministry, the remaining 68 JRMBs be set up during the remaining implementation period of the Scheme *viz.* upto 2025-26 so that the benefits of the Scheme are truly extended to the intended beneficiaries.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to set up 68 JRMBs during 2024-25 and 2025-26 to extend benefits of JRMB Scheme to the beneficiaries has been noted for compliance.

IX. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

(B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

(iv) Jute Retail Outlets (JRO)

(Recommendation Para No. 17)

The Committee note that to facilitate existing and new Artisans / Entrepreneurs, for promotion & Sale of JDPs through Retail Outlets / Showroom, 140 Jute Retail Outlets of Jute Diversified Products are to be opened at a total financial outlay of Rs. 12.60 crore. The Committee further note that 48 JROs are in operation till October, 2023 incurring expenditure of Rs. 0.49 crore and, as informed by the Ministry, the remaining 92 JROs would be selected and start operation during remaining implementation period of the Scheme *viz.* upto 2025-26. The Committee are not satisfied with the progress made with regard to operation of JROs as during 2021 to October, 2023, against the cumulative target of setting up of 70 JROs, only 48 JROs are operational

and 22 more JROs are to be set up upto March, 2024. The Committee, therefore, call upon the Ministry to intensify efforts and take immediate action so as to ensure that the remaining 22 JROs are set up during 2023-24 and, thereafter, the target of setting up 70 JROs during 2024-25 to 2025-26 is achieved before the scheduled completion of the Scheme. The Committee also urge the Ministry to ensure that the guidelines regarding sourcing 50% of JDPs sold by JROs from Women Self Help Group and Jute Artisans are strictly adhered to.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to intensify efforts to ensure to set up the JROs to meet the targets during 2023-24 to 2025-26 and to ensure to implement the guidelines on sourcing 50% of JDPs sold by JROs from WSHGS and jute artisans, has been noted for compliance.

(Ministry of Textiles O.M. No. J-3/2/2020-Jute Section dated 21st May, 2024)

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 20 of Chapter I.

NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

(v) Jute Design Resource Centres(JDRCs)

(Recommendation Para No. 18)

The Committee note that for designing and development of market worthy innovative Jute Diversified Products and helping existing and new JDP manufacturers and exporters, 1600 Designs of innovative lifestyle jute products would be developed at total financial outlay Rs 5.80 crore. The Committee were apprised that NJB was in the process of procurement of machines through GeM Portal, however, due to non-

availability of machines through GeM Portal, a Tender Committee has been constituted for procurement of machines. The Committee desire that the target of developing 1600 designs of innovative lifestyles jute products be achieved in a time bound manner. The Committee hope that the JDRC being set up by NIFT, Kolkata at the newly constructed Patsan Bhawan would be operationalized by the end of January 2024, as assured by the Ministry and similar Bhawans be set up in other major jute growing States.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to operationalize JDRC at the newly constructed Patsan Bhawan and to set up similar Bhawans in other major jute growing States has been noted for compliance.

NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

(vi) Production Linked Incentive (PLI)

(Recommendation Para No. 19)

The Committee note that the objective of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) is to support/incentivize Jute Mills and MSME JDP units exporting JDPs to become cost competitive in the international markets and to help them to fetch export orders for JDPs. The Committee further note that during five year implementation period of the Scheme *viz* 2021-2022 to 2025-2026, 550 JDP manufacturing units would be provided incentive @ 3% of the export value or 5% of jute raw material cost, whichever is lower subject to maximum of Rs 12.00 Lakh per annum /unit at the total financial outlay of Rs 66.00 crore. The Committee were apprised that during 2021-22 to 2023-24 (upto Oct 2023), 103 JDP/exporter units (19%) have been provided incentive under the Scheme with the total expenditure of Rs. 8.14 crore (12%). The Committee are concerned to note that only 19% beneficiaries have been covered in the first 2½ years of implementation of the Scheme incurring only Rs. 8.14

crore (12%) of the financial outlay of Rs. 66 crore and the remaining 81% (447 JDP manufacturing units) are to be covered during the remaining 2½ year period of the Scheme with balance of financial outlay of approx. Rs. 56 crore, which in the opinion of the Committee is difficult to achieve in terms of physical and financial targets. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to seriously look into the impediments and take early steps to achieve the target by 2025-26.

(Reply of Government)

During 2023-24, under PLI scheme, total no of exporters to be covered is 110 at total financial outlay of Rs. 13.20 crore. The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee for looking into the impediments and taking steps to achieve the target has been noted for compliance.

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

B) Jute Diversification Scheme (JDS)

(Recommendation Para No. 20)

The Committee note that 17 projects are being undertaken for Product Diversification (R&D Studies) since November, 2021 to explore the possibilities of Jute in both the Textile and Non-Textile applications and out of 17 projects, 11 projects are scheduled to be completed by December, 2024. While appreciating the steps being taken by the Ministry for Product Diversification (R&D Studies) to develop JDPS, the Committee desire that the timelines fixed for completion of projects be strictly adhered to through optimum utilization of budget allocated for the purpose besides periodically increasing the allocation for R&D Schemes keeping in mind the evolving needs.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to strictly adhere to the timeline fixed for completion of the projects and optimum utilization of budget allocated for the purpose has been noted for compliance.

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

C) Market Development & Promotion Scheme (MDPS)

(i) Jute Mark Logo

(Recommendation Para No. 21)

The Committee note that Jute Mark Logo was launched on 9 July, 2022 for branding and positioning of Indian Jute globally in domestic and international markets. The Committee further note that Jute Mark India registration authenticates the product being manufactured are of pure jute and jute blended products of Indian origin. The measures initiated by NJB for creating awareness on usage of jute eco friendly product including jute bags *inter alia* include organizing outreach programmes for increasing awareness on usage of jute bags in place of plastic and publicity campaign on use of eco friendly jute bags “Bring your own bag”, etc. The Committee were also apprised that the impact assessment of Jute Mark Logo will be done in year 2024-25 alongwith other Schemes of NJDP.

The Committee feel that the logo will help jute farmers to get fair prices for their product; give boost to jute industry thereby creating job opportunities for artisans and manufactures; and availability of authentic and high quality jute products to consumers, etc. The Committee, therefore, desire that the measures already initiated for promotion of jute products especially those bearing Jute Mark Logo be intensified in the larger interest of jute farmers, artisans and manufacturers and consumers and also to achieve the objective of branding and positioning of Indian Jute globally in domestic and international markets. This will also help tackling the menace of plastic bags and replacing such bags with eco friendly jute bags.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to intensify the measures initiated for promotion of jute products bearing Jute Mark Logo to achieve the objective of branding and positioning Indian Jute in domestic and international markets has been noted for compliance.

NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

C. Market Development & Promotion Scheme (MDPS)

ii) Fairs/Exhibitions

(Recommendation Para No. 22)

The Committee note that for facilitating participation of Jute Artisans, WSHGs, MSMEs and Mills in Exhibitions and Fairs for direct sales and promotion of JDPs in domestic and international markets, during 2021-2022 and 2022-23, 66 Fairs/Exhibitions (24 in 10 States/UT in 2021-22 and 42 in 2022-23 in 16 States/UT) were organized and 1,300 Units/Beneficiaries (564 in 2021-22 and 736 in 2022-23) were supported. Considering the fact that the approved Schemes under National Jute Development Programme (NJDP) are being implemented by NJB on Pan India basis, the Committee desire that the promotional activities being organized by NJB for facilitating participation of Jute Artisans, WSHGs, MSMEs and Mills be organized Pan India for Development and Promotion of jute sector.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to organize promotional activities facilitating participation of jute artisans/ WSHGs/ MSMEs and Mills for development and promotion of jute sector has been noted for compliance.

NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

(D)Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills /MSME JDP Unit

(Recommendation Para No. 23)

The Committee note that the objective of the Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills/MSME JDP unit is to provide support to the jute workers girl children and family for providing higher education to the girl children and improvement in the education standard. Under the Scheme, scholarship is provided to Secondary Exam pass outs @ Rs 5000 and to the Higher Secondary pass outs @ Rs 10,000. The target for five years viz. during 2021-22 to

2025-26 is to provide scholarship to 22500 girl children [10th Pass out Girl Children: 15000 (3000 children each during 2021-22 to 2025-26) and 12th pass out Girl Children: 7500 (1500 children each during 2021-22 to 2025-26)] at a total financial outlay of Rs 15.00 crore (7.5 crore each to 10th and 12th pass outs during 5 years period).

The Committee further note that during 2021-22 and 2022-23, 8172 (4404 in 2021-22 and 3768 in 2022-23) girl children (90%) were benefitted against the target of 9000 intended beneficiaries. As stated by the Ministry, the reason for less number of girl children participation under the scholarship scheme is attributable to less number of girl children passed in Secondary/Higher Secondary Examinations as compared to 2021-22. The Committee also note that the beneficiaries covered during 2022-23 belonged to 42 Jute Mills and 6MSME JDP Units in three States viz. West Bengal, Assam and Kerala despite the fact that there are 108 Jute Mills in 08 States. As informed by the Ministry, the applications from remaining 5 States were not received due to non-response from the jute mills.

The Committee feel that the primary reason for not achieving the target is lack of awareness amongst the intended beneficiaries and non-availability of their data base. The Committee, thereupon, impress upon the Ministry/NJB to intensify the awareness campaigns at the grass root level through direct contact with jute mill workers/authorities and also coordinate with District Administration/education authorities so as to maintain data base of intended beneficiaries, which in turn, would also help in fixing/revising target during the remaining period of the Scheme.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to intensify the awareness campaigns at the grass root level through direct contact with jute mill workers / authorities and District Administration /education authorities so as to maintain data base of intended beneficiaries for fixing / revising target has been noted for compliance.

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 25 of Chapter I.

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

(D) Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills /MSME JDP Unit

(Recommendation Para No. 24)

The Committee note that the Scholarship Scheme is being implemented by NJB since 2014-15 and, on an average, 3600 girl children were benefitted for which Rs. 2.60 crore was incurred annually. The Committee also note that the Scholarship amount was fixed in 2014-15 and there has been no increase during the last eight years. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Scholarship amount be suitably increased keeping in view the inflation as well as the interest of beneficiaries.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to increase the scholarship amount keeping in a view the inflation and interest of the beneficiaries has been sincerely noted for compliance.

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

(D) Scholarship Scheme for Girl Children of Workers of Jute Mills /MSME JDP Unit

(Recommendation Para No. 25)

The Committee appreciate that a proposal to provide scholarship to the girl children on passing out graduation level examinations is also under active consideration of Ministry of Textiles. The Committee desire that the same be expedited so that the endeavour is drawn to its logical conclusion and the targetted persons are actually benefitted.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to expedite the proposal to provide scholarship to the girl children on passing out graduation

level examinations to its logical conclusions has been noted for compliance.

VII AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

(Recommendation Para No. 28)

The Committee note that the National Jute Board (NJB) organizes workshops, seminars and awareness campaigns for promotion of innovative Jute Products, Jute Mark India Logo, etc. with active participation of representatives of Jute Industry (Jute Mills & MSME JDP Units), Indian Jute Mills Association (IJMA) and Jute Products Development & Export Promotion Council (JPDEPC). The Jute Corporation of India (JCI) also, on their part, organizes awareness camps under Project I-CARE through which Advance Agronomic practice are disseminated to the farmers and Jute advisories are also issued from time to time through ICAR CRIJAF.

The Committee are of the considered view that conducting awareness/ publicity campaigns on “Stop Use Plastic, Use Eco-friendly Jute Bag”, associating environmental groups/NGOs in publicity campaign, Display & promotion through Jute Retail Outlets and Jute Fairs/ Exhibitions with active participation of jute artisans/ entrepreneurs are the steps in right direction and need to be continued in the right earnest. Further, as assured by the representative of the Ministry during oral evidence, the Committee desire that the State/District administration also need to be associated while organizing awareness campaigns so as to have better coordination. The Committee also desire that the participation of local MPs, MLAs and other public representatives be ensured so that their feedback and suggestions could be gainfully utilized.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon’ble Committee to associate State /District Administration while organizing awareness campaigns along

with ensuring participation of local MPs, MLAs and other public representatives has been noted for compliance.

VIII. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL

(Recommendation Para No. 29)

The Committee note that Office of the Jute Commissioner often receives complaints/ grievances of the jute mills workers or Workers' Association regarding various issues like payment of Gratuity, Provident Fund, other retirement benefits. The Committee were apprised that Jute Corporation of India (JCI) has a designated Grievance Officer for redressal of all grievances raised through CPGRAMS portal or received directly from individual complainants and whenever any complaint is received through the portal or otherwise, its reply is sent within the stipulated time. The Committee appreciate that out of 30 complaints/grievances received by the Office of the Jute Commissioner during the last three years (from 01st January, 2021 to 22nd November, 2023), 29 complaints/grievances have been disposed of and one is under process. The Committee desire that the pending single grievance be disposed of on priority and awareness campaign about existence of grievance redressal mechanism be launched for the benefit of workers. The Committee further note that Office of the Jute Commissioner have issued instructions to all the mills to submit monthly returns on fulfilment of statutory dues of the labour. The Committee impress upon the Ministry/JCI to ensure that the instructions issued by them are strictly enforced so as to ensure that contribution on account of EPF and ESI of the workers are timely submitted so that they do not face any inconvenience on this aspect. The Committee also desire the Ministry/JCI to maintain close coordination with EPFO, ESIC and Labour Commissioner of State Governments in the larger interest of jute mill workers.

(Reply of Government)

The Office of the Jute Commissioner has a designated Grievance Officer for redressal of all grievance received through CPGRAMS. The

one complaint referred in the report has been addressed. O/o Jute Commissioner checks the portal regularly and resolves the grievances within given timeline. The O/o Jute Commissioner maintains close coordination with the appropriate authorities like Labour Commissioner, Govt. of West Bengal, Employer provident Fund Organization (EPFO), Jute Mills, etc. for resolution of the grievances.

The Jute Corporation of India has grievance redressal mechanism with a dedicated grievance officer. All grievances received through CPGRAMS/DARPG portal or directly from individual complainants are acted upon where necessary and reply is sent within stipulated time. No grievances are pending at the Corporation.

(Ministry of Textiles O.M. No. J-3/2/2020-Jute Section dated 21st May, 2024)

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 34 of Chapter I.

CHAPTER-III

OBSERVATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

VI .NATIONAL JUTE POLICY

(Recommendation Para No. 27)

The Committee note that the National Jute Policy for development and promotion of Jute Sector was declared in 2005. The Committee were apprised that New Jute Policy has been included in the draft National Textile Policy, which is under consideration of Ministry. The Committee feel that the exercise being undertaken by the Ministry would not only help in policy formulation and planning but also pave the way for development of the Textiles Industry. Considering the fact that the jute sector occupies an important place in the national economy and provides direct and indirect employment and source of livelihood to millions of people including a large number of women and rural population, the Committee exhort the Ministry to expedite formulation of National Textile Policy and complete the exercise within a definite timeline.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to expedite formulation of National Textile Policy within a definite timeline, it is pertinent to mention that DPIIT being a nodal Department is finalizing a comprehensive Industrial Policy to establish a broad framework for all sectors including the Textile Sector.

CHAPTER-IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

IV. THE JUTE AND JUTE TEXTILE INDUSTRY

(Recommendation Para No. 1)

The Committee note that as on November 2023, there are 108 composite jute mills, out of which, the State of West Bengal has 79 jute mills, Andhra Pradesh 14 mills, Uttar Pradesh 3 mills, Bihar 4 mills, Odisha 3 mills, Assam 2 mills, Chhattisgarh 2 mills and Tripura 1 mill. Further, ownership-wise, 6 mills are under the Government of India, 1 mill each is owned by the Government of Tripura and Odisha respectively, 1 mill in Assam is in the cooperative sector and the rest 99 mills are privately owned. The Committee were apprised that 5 new jute mills were established in last 3 years while 5 jute mills declared closure during that period. The Committee were also apprised that two jute mills are proposed to be set up in Telangana by an industrial house, whereas, the Ministry of Textiles has no proposal to set-up new jute mill or upgrade the existing mills. The reasons for closure of mills in jute sector *inter alia* include problems in management, labour troubles and financial difficulties. The Ministry have also stated that usually, the jobless workers of the closed jute mills are engaged in nearby working jute mills as jute mills are facing shortage of skilled workers. While appreciating that two new jute mills are being set up in Telangana by an industrial house, the Committee, while considering that, 99 out of 108 mills are privately owned, desire the Ministry to have a comprehensive policy with regard to reviving the closed mills or setting up new mills by the Government. The Committee also call upon the Ministry to develop suitable mechanism, in consultation with the stakeholders *viz.* mill owners, workers etc., to address the factors leading to closure of mills. The Committee also desire the Ministry to devise suitable Scheme in consultation with the Ministry of Skill Development

and Entrepreneurship to minimize the shortage of skilled workers in jute industry.

(Reply of Government)

As on date, there are 111 composite jute mills out of which the state of West Bengal has 82 jute mills with Andhra Pradesh having 14 mills, Uttar Pradesh 3 mills, Bihar 4 mills, Odisha 3 mills, Assam 2 mills, Chhattisgarh 2 mills and Tripura 1 Jute Mill. Ownership-wise 6 mills are under the Government of India, 1 mill each is owned by the Government of Tripura and Odisha respectively, 1 mills in Assam is in the cooperative sector and the rest 102 are privately owned. In last 3 years 3 jute mills have declared closure while 12 new jute mills have come up. The reasons for closure of Mills *inter-alia* include problems primarily due to labour trouble. The jobless workers of the closed jute mills are usually engaged in nearby working jute mills as jute mills are facing shortage of skilled workers. The private mills sometimes restart under a new management or owner after the mill is sold or given on lease. The mills which restart after closure are given Government orders for packaging foodgrains on behalf of different State Procurement Agencies (SPAs). To address the recommendation of the Committee, the Stakeholders viz. mill owners, workers, etc. may be consulted for Skill Development of jute workers

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 7 of Chapter I.

Recommendation (Para No.13)

V. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

C. Jute –ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise) Scheme

Skilling of jute farmers

14. The Committee note that JCI had entered into MoU with National Seeds Corporation (NSC) for distribution of certified jute seeds on commercial basis during 2020-21. The Committee were apprised that the new varieties JRO-2024, JBO-2003H have gained popularity under Jute ICARE and inculcated confidence about better results to increase jute production. While appreciating the steps taken by JCI with regard to ensuring timely availability of certified jute seeds at the doorsteps in all States, the Committee desire that stringent action, in coordination with State Governments, be taken against those providing spurious seeds so that the efforts made by farmers during jute cultivation do not go waste and result in increasing production and income through availability of certified seeds.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to ensure availability of Jute certified seeds to the jute farmers have been noted for compliance. The Jute Corporation of India conducted Awareness Programmes mobilizing participation of Jute Farmers on usage of Jute certified seed, advanced agronomic practices and enhanced retting practices. 361 number of mobile campaigns have been undertaken. Physical demonstration in this regard has also been conducted.

Purchase Centres of JCI has Seed License for seed distribution purpose. JCI will ensure that all outsourced agencies to be registered with JCI for carrying out activities of ICARE Scheme (including Seed Distribution) in future, will have valid Seed License as per Seed Act 1966. Moreover, JCI will coordinate with the Department of Agriculture of all Jute growing states urging them to distribute Certified Seeds to the farmers through different Field Level Demonstrations (FLDs) of the State Governments and to take necessary vigilance on the business of spurious seeds by the private parties.

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 17 of Chapter I.

IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME(NJDP)

(Recommendation Para No. 30)

The Committee note that the National Jute Development Programme (NJDP), an Umbrella Scheme for development and promotion of Jute Industry /Sector, comprising the Schemes/Sub-Schemes for jute agriculture (JUTE-ICARE), modernization (CSAPM), diversification (JRCPC, JRMB, JRO, JDRC, PLI and MDPS) and workers' welfare (Scholarship) is being implemented during 15th Finance Commission period (2021-2022 to 2025-2026) at total financial outlay of Rs. 485.58 crore. During 2021-22 and 2022-23, out of the allocated amount of Rs. 170.95 crore, Rs.86.50 crore (50%) was utilized and approximately Rs. 400 crore (82% of total outlay of Rs. 485.58 crore) is to be utilized during the remaining period of implementation *viz.* during 2023-24 to 2025-26. The Committee while analyzing all the Schemes/Sub-Schemes under NJDP find that the physical and financial progress of NJDP during the first two and half years of its implementation is not encouraging and despite the efforts being made by the Ministry, NJB and JCI, a lot still needs to be done to achieve the objectives of various Schemes. The Committee, therefore, exhort the Ministry to address the underutilization of funds, strengthen coordination, monitoring & implementation mechanism and bring forth robust interventions to considerably improve performance of the Scheme in physical and financial terms. The Committee also take cognizance of the fact that in order to assess the performance of the Schemes being implemented under NJDP, an MoU has been signed between the Ministry and NJB to evaluate the Schemes through a third party agency during the first quarter of 2024-25. The Committee desire that the evaluation exercise be completed in a time bound manner and the recommendations so made be also examined and implemented within the stipulated time frame for development and promotion of Jute Industry/Sector.

(Reply of Government)

The recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to strengthen coordination, monitoring and implementation mechanism for improvement of physical and financial performance of schemes and

evaluation exercises in a time bound manner has been noted for compliance.

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 37 of Chapter I.

CHAPTER-V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE INTERIM IN NATURE

IV. NATIONAL JUTE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NJDP)

B. Jute –ICARE (Improved Cultivation and Advanced Retting Exercise) Scheme

Skilling of jute farmers

(Recommendation Para No. 12)

The Committee note that one of the important components under Jute ICARE is to provide training to the Registered Jute Farmers, wherein the farmers are made aware and motivated for adopting better agronomic practices for jute cultivation by Central Research Institute for Jute and Allied Fibres (CRIJAF) at various stages of jute production. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that till the 9th phase of I-CARE project, out of estimated 40 lakh farmers, only 4.35 lakh farmers (10%) have been registered and the remaining 35.65 lakh farmers are yet to be registered. The Committee were apprised that in the tenth phase of I-CARE scheme, it has been planned to carry out survey so as to have reliable estimate of total number of jute farmers through an outside agency. The Committee impress upon the Ministry/NJB and JCI to ensure that the survey is undertaken and completed in a time bound manner so that the welfare schemes being implemented/proposed to be implemented for the welfare of jute farmers are truly extended to them. Further, considering the fact that only 10% jute farmers are registered, the Committee recommend that all possible steps be taken on priority for registration of jute farmers so that they get the training benefits being imparted by CRIJAF.

(Reply of Government)

JCI will carry out registration under Jute I-CARE scheme to ascertain actual number of jute farmers in the upcoming phase of the scheme so that the welfare schemes being implemented or proposed to be

implemented for the welfare of jute farmers may be extended to them in true manner.

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 14 of Chapter I.

V. ALLIED FIBRE /FLAX FIBRE

(Recommendation Para No. 26)

The Committee note that Flax fibre has wide use in the textile sector for its higher strength and luster. The Committee were apprised that at present, the domestic production of quality flax fibre suitable for the apparel sector is almost negligible and, in order to meet the domestic demand of flax fibre and/or fabric (linen), the manufacturers of linen fabrics have to import the flax fibre/fabrics from countries like Belgium, France, China, Netherlands, etc. for which expenditure to the tune of Rs. 800 Cr. is annually incurred. In 2020, India exported \$3.54M processed Flax Fibres mainly to Bangladesh, Lithuania, Belgium, Indonesia and China and imported \$47.7M worth Flax mainly from Belgium, France, Lithuania, Belarus and Egypt. The Committee are concerned to note that India does not have significant presence among the flax fibre producing countries. The Committee, however, note that the domestic demand for flax could be met by domestic supply as India has good supply of linseed to produce flax fibre domestically.

The Committee further note that the mandate of National Jute Board Act, 2008 is connected with the development of the cultivation, manufacture and marketing of jute and jute products and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto. The Committee find that an exercise was undertaken in 2022 to analyse the importance of Allied fibre (Sunhemp, Ramie, Sisal ,Flax, Banana Fibre, Pineapple Fibre, Hemp Fibre and Nettle Fibre) for incorporating them in the mandate of National Jute Board Act, 2008, however, the same has not yielded the desired results. The Committee were apprised that there is a need for detailed study for analyzing this sector and intervention in the cultivation of Allied fibre needs to be taken up with the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare as the matter comes under its purview.

Considering the fact that India has potential to meet its domestic demand for flax, the Committee impress upon the Ministry to urgently take steps to undertake exhaustive study and explore incorporation of Allied Fibre with jute in the mandate of National Jute Board Act, 2008 through consultation with the Ministries/stakeholders concerned including the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, etc. in the larger interest of Jute Sector/Industry.

The Committee appreciate that a Project on 'Development of Modern Mini-spinning Machinery for Processing of Jute and Allied Fibres for Small Industries' is being executed by ICAR-National Institute of Natural Fibre Engineering and Technology w.e.f. 27.06.2023 for a period of 3 years for which Rs. 82.50 lakh has been allocated. The Committee wish to be apprised of the progress in this regard.

(Reply of Government)

In respect of recommendation of the Hon'ble Committee to undertake exhaustive study for analyzing cultivation of Allied fibres with Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare and explore incorporation of Allied fibres with jute in the mandate of National Jute Board has been noted for compliance. It is submitted that at present NJB is dealing with National Jute Development Program (NJDP) for development of jute sector with meager manpower as some posts were got deemed abolished. For implementing the recommendations of Hon'ble Committee, NJB would require substantial augmentation of manpower, especially in the technical area as the organization has limited institutional knowledge and expertise on "other natural fibres". Further, this is becoming a focus area in the country only recently – hence it may take some time to develop sufficient knowledge base and expertise. It is submitted that the mid-term evaluation study of the NJDP is to be commenced during 2024-25 where apart from evaluation of ongoing schemes necessary inputs related to allied fibres will also be gathered. Those inputs will be considered by the experts / technical experts for moving ahead in the area of allied fibre through detailed study for analyzing this sector. Hence, the incorporation of allied fibres with jute may be explored after wider consultation with line Ministries/Departments with appropriate manpower in NJB.

“Development of Modern Mini Spinning Machinery for processing of Jute and Allied Fibres for Small Industries” Project has been assigned to ICAR- National Institute of Natural Fibre Engineering And Technology. The Project has been commissioned on 27/06/2023 and will continue for 3 years.

Comments of the Committee

Please see Para No. 31 of Chapter I.

New Delhi;
31st July, 2025
09 Shravana, 1947 (Saka)

BASAVARAJ BOMMAI
CHAIRPERSON,
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR,
TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF THE THIRTEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON LABOUR, TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT
(2024-25) HELD ON 31 July, 2025

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 31st July, 2025 from 1500 hrs. to 1645 hrs. in Committee Room No.1, Block 'A', Parliament House Annexe-Extension Building, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Basavaraj Bommai- Chairperson

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri G. M. Harish Balayogi
3. Shri Ram Prasad Chaudhary
4. Shri G. Lakshminarayana
5. Shri Asit Kumar Mal
6. Shri Rudra Narayan Pany
7. Shri Kartick Chandra Paul
8. Shri Tanuj Punia
9. Shri Pradeep Purohit
10. Shri Mukesh Rajput
11. Shri Raja Ram Singh
12. Shri Adhikari Soumendu
13. Shri Manoj Tigga
14. Shri Chavan Ravindra Vasantrao

RAJYA SABHA

15. Shri Ritabrata Banerjee
16. Shri Naresh Bansal
17. Shri Govindbhai Laljibhai Dholakia
18. Shri Rajendra Gehlot

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri Lalkithang - Joint Secretary
2. Ms. K.Muanniang Tunlut - Director
3. Ms. Mili Dinesh - Deputy Secretary
4. Shri S. Lalengzau Ngaihte - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee, convened for consideration and adoption of the following Draft Reports on:

(i) Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Fifty- First Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'The Employees State Insurance Corporation-Applicability and Benefits under ESI Scheme, Functioning of ESI Hospitals and Management of Corpus Fund' pertaining to the Ministry of Labour and Employment;

(ii) Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Fifty-Third Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Development and Promotion of Jute Industry pertaining to Ministry of Textiles';

(iii) Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Fifty- Sixth Report (Seventeenth Lok Sabha) on the subject 'Implementation of Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion (SANKALP) Project' pertaining to the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship; and

(iv) Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Third Report (Eighteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Demands for Grants (2024-25)' pertaining to the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship.

3. After some deliberations, the Committee adopted the aforesaid Draft Reports with some modifications and authorised the Chairperson to finalise the Reports and present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

* * * * *

(Vide Para No. 3 of the Introduction)**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON OBSERVATIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE FIFTY-THIRD REPORT (SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA) OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR, TEXTILES AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

	Total	Percentage
I. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government – Rec. Para Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28 and 29.	24	80.00%
II. Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply – Rec. Para No. 27.	01	03.33%
III. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration – Rec. Para No. 1, 13 and 30.	03	10.00%
IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature - Rec. Para Nos. 12 and 26	02	06.67%
		100%