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Title: Need to address the problems of jute farmers and jute industry in West Bengal and other parts of the country.

DR. RATNA DE (HOOGHLY): As we all are aware, West Bengal contributes about 70% to the total Jute production. Jute is called Golden fibre and it is the second most important fibre yielding crop next to cotton. Nearly 40 lakh farming families and 2.5 lakh persons are directly involved in this trade. In West Bengal alone, nearly 23 lakh farming families are closely engaged in Jute cultivation. In such a state of affairs, there is an urgent need for the Government to announce measures to address the problems of Jute farmers. There is a competition between Jute and allied fibre sector on one side and synthetics on the other. There has been hike in different agricultural inputs which have considerably increased the cost of jute production. At the national level, textile industry contributes around 4% to the GDP and provided 18% employment in the industrial sector. Its share of export is also a whopping 16%. Under such circumstances, I strongly urge the Government to take innovative initiatives to rejuvenate the textile industry in West Bengal. I would also request the Government to make efforts to assess the plight of weavers of textile sector and address them accordingly. Efforts should be made to revive the closed jute mills in West Bengal and in other parts of the country.