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Title: Regarding problems faced by Jute Industry in West Bengal.

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Madam, the problem I am mentioning not only concerns my Parliamentary Constituency of Dum Dum but also Barrackpur represented by Shri Dinesh Trivedi; Sreerampur represented by Shri Kalyan Banerjee; and Hooghly represented by Dr. Ratna De (Nag).

The jute industry in West Bengal, which employs 2.5 lakh workers, is going through a serious crisis. Though a Tripartite Wage Agreement was signed in the industry by the Government of West Bengal recently, serious labour trouble is erupting in different mills, especially in this month over non-payment of wages. On the morning of 1<sup>st</sup> May, notice of suspension of work was issued in Nafarchand and Kakinara Jute Mills in the Barrackpore Industrial Belt. On the same night, similar notice was issued for suspension of work in Victoria Jute Mill, Telenipara in the Hooghly Industrial Belt. The mill employs 5,000 workers. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> May, labour trouble erupted in Wellington Jute Mill of Rishara and India Jute Mill both in Sreerampur Parliamentary Constituency. The Prabarthak Jute Mill in Kamarhatti area has been closed recently. The Kamarhatti Jute Mill also in my Constituency, has also been closed some time back. Also the Calcutta Jute Mill in North Kolkata is lying closed. All these closed jute mills together employ 50,000 workers. The main reason for their problems is that the mills are not getting adequate orders from the Government of India as per the jute goods packaging material Act. They are not getting orders from the Government of India for jute sacking. They are also not getting orders from the State Governments. There is also a problem regarding the rising price of raw jute.

Unless the Textile Ministry intervenes immediately, the crisis is going to get worse and more employees would be thrown out of employment.

Madam, I would like the Textiles Minister to say something. Even if he is not present, some other Minister can reply. Just as the Home Minister replied to a question on food processing, some other Minister can reply on behalf of the Textile Minister.

HON. SPEAKER: I cannot force them.

...(Interruptions)

PROF. SAUGATA ROY : Madam, it is a serious issue...(Interruptions) Jute mills have been closed in the State. What is the Minister doing?

SHRI DINESH TRIVEDI (BARRACKPUR): It is a very serious issue. Jute mills must be protected...(Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER:

Dr. Ratna De (Nag) is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Prof. Saugata Roy.

SHRIMATI P.K. SHREEMATHI TEACHER (KANNUR): Madam, there is a very unfortunate issue. Shri M.B. Rajesh will raise that issue. A girl committed suicide and other two girls are in a very serious condition.