

Jute Bags

2535. SHRI. HARIN PATHAK:
DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA:
SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Union Government are aware that HDPE/PP bags are more suitable for packing of Cement and Fertilizers comparing with Jute bags;
- (b) whether the Government have made any study about the packaging of cement, fertilizers in jute bags and HDPE/PP bags;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether some State Governments propose to exempt Cement, Fertilizers and other industries from packing in Jute bags;
- (e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard;
- (f) whether these two commodities are prone to pilferage at a large scale leading to malpractice in transportation by traders affecting the consumers in general; and
- (g) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA) : (a) to (g) The Government is aware about divergent views of Cement industry, Fertilizer (Urea) sector and Jute Sector regarding comparative suitability of HDPE/PP bags & jute bags for packing of Cement & Fertilizers (Urea). While Cement and Fertilizer Industries have claimed that HDPE/PP bags are more suitable because these are technical superior, cheaper than jute bags and enjoy large scale consumer preference, on the contrary jute sector has claimed that Jute Packaging is equally good for packing of these commodities if proper varieties of jute bags covered by ISI specifications are used.

There have been two studies- one by NCBM and the other by the Deptt. of Science and Technology. NCBM study finds jute bags suitable for cement although it indicates that seepage is marginally higher than HDPE bags. Study by the Science & Technology Department finds more seepage in case of jute bags. IJIRA had also conducted a study which bears out points made in NCBM study. No such study has been carried out as yet in respect of packaging of Fertilizer (Urea) in jute & synthetic bags as technically both these bags are equally suitable for packing urea and main reservation against use of jute bags for packing this item is due to higher cost of jute bags.

Some State Governments like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu etc. have urged upon the Central Government to exempt Cement, fertilizers (Urea) and other industries from the preview of the reservation in jute packaging to protect the interests of HDPE/PP Woven Sacks manufacturing industry in their States. However, Government of West Bengal have urged that jute packaging reservation order should be strictly enforced to safeguard the interests of millions of jute growers.

The proneness of these commodities to pilferage at a large scale can neither be confirmed nor denied. However, packaging medium used for these commodities has no bearing on their proneness to pilferage and this can occur if these commodities are packed in either jute or synthetic bags.

The Standing Advisory Committee constituted under the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 have recently considered in detail the various pros & cons of the evidence and views expressed by different organisations and representation of various Ministries/Depts. in its meetings held on 30.4.98, 15.5.98 and 2.6.98 for putting its recommendations to the Government.

[Translation]

Agro Based Industries

2536. SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state the details of proposals received by the Government from each State regarding setting up of agro-based industries with foreign investment during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT) : During the last three years from April, 1995 to March, 1998 total number of 635 proposals in the Agro Based Industries have been approved by the Government. Sector-wise break up of these proposals is given in the Statement enclosed. These approvals are for Paper & Pulp including Paper Products, Sugar, Fermentation Industries, Food Products, Vegetable Oils & Vanaspati, Horticulture, Agriculture, Floriculture, Tea/Coffee and Coir.

The Details of such proposals viz. Name of the Indian company, name and country of the Foreign Collaborator, equity investment in value, item of manufacture/activity are published by Indian Investment Centre as a supplement to the monthly newsletter and copies of these are supplied to the Parliament Library.