

the estimated carryover stock is around 18.50 lakh bales. Estimated production of raw jute of 98 lakh bales in 1997-98. Expected demand of raw jute to the tune of 92.50 lakh bales in 1997-98, prices of raw jute started to slide downwards from April, 1997 and dropped sharply in May & June, 1997. The Ministry was aware of the situation and accordingly JCI was directed to commence Price Support

Operations in June, 1997. JCI started Price Support Operation in the early grown areas of West Bengal in July, 1997 as soon as the arrival of raw jute started in trickling from third week of July, 1997. As such there was hardly any delay in procurement by JCI.

(f) the present status of procurement by Jute Corporation of India is given below:—

(In lakh bales of 180 Kgs.)

| Particulars | Production | Procurement upto 11.11.97 | Estimated arrivals upto 11.11.1997 | Procurement as % of arrivals |
|-------------|------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| All India | 98.00 | 5.20 | 30.91 | 17 |
| west Bengal | 60.82 | 3.47 | 21.42 | 16 |

Monitoring of prices of raw Jute in the Country

143. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDE:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the agency responsible for monitoring the price of raw jute in various jute growing belts in the country;

(b) when government was informed about the sharp decline in the prices below M.S.P. level this season;

(c) when Jute Corporation of India intervened to ensure that the prices operate above MSP, specially in West Bengal; and

(d) the reasons for the delay in intervention?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R. L. JALAPPA): (a) The Jute Corporation of India Ltd. is responsible for monitoring the prices of raw jute in various jute growing belts in the Country.

(b) Government was aware of the downward slide in the prices of raw jute right from the beginning of this season.

(c) the JCI started Price Support Operation in the early sown areas of West Bengal from 25.7.1997.

(d) Arrival of raw jute start in trickling from the third week of July, and as such there was hardly any delay in intervention in the market by the JCI.

Annual demand of cotton in the country

144. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(b) what is the quantity of annual demand of cotton in the country, State-wise;

(c) what is the total quantity of cotton produced in Punjab during the last three years; year-wise; and

(d) what steps are being taken by Government with regards to expansion of cotton mills in the country?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R. L. JALAPPA): (a) The Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) estimates the demand of, cotton for the country as a whole. The demand for cotton for 1996-97 as estimated by the CAB was 182.50 lakh bales.