

As prices ruled above support levels largely, purchases by JCI during 1994-95 and 1995-96 seasons were negligible and 'NIL' respectively. During 1996-97 the Corporation was not required to undertake price support operation, despite a fairly good crop, on account of prices remaining above MSP levels as a result of regulated release of stocks by growers and strong buying support from new class of non-traditional market functionaries. Under special arrangement limited funds were made available by the Government for commercial purchase of raw jute mainly on behalf of National Jute Manufacturers Corporation Ltd.

In the context of liberalised trading regime, Govt. have allowed free export and import of raw jute under OGL without any restrictions.

In order to arrest the declining trend in prices of raw jute in the current season, following measures have been taken so far:

(a) Rs. 10.00 crores have been released by the Ministry of Textiles to JCI to start of MSP Operations.

(b) Reserve Bank of India have also authorised JCI on enhanced credit limit of Rs. 10.00 crores valid upto July, 1997.

(c) Government of India have also sanctioned a Bank Guarantee for Rs. 33.00 crores for securing required credit from the Banks.

(d) Further budgetary support will be given to JCI shortly to enhance the activities relating to MSP operations.

(e) Minister of Textiles has already written to the Hon'ble Minister of Food and the Hon'ble Minister of Fertilizers and Chemicals to instruct the FCI and other Fertiliser companies respectively to place the orders for jute bags. It is hope that the demand for jute bags will certainly go up as the bulk purchasers have started placing the orders.

(f) In order to generate adequate buying pressure from jute mills, orders under clause 9A of the Jute (Licensing & Control) Order, 1961 have been issued by the Jute Commissioner on 14.7.1997 directing them to step up purchases of raw jute in such a manner as to ensure building up of stock of raw jute at four weeks' consumption requirement, six weeks' consumption requirement, eight weeks' consumption requirement and ten weeks' consumption requirement, at the end of August '97, September '97, October '97 and November '97 respectively. Strict watch is being kept over observance of this directive.

(g) Compulsory linkage with purchase of raw jute from JCI against B.T. will allocation to jute mills from August '97 onwards is under consideration so as to enable JCI to maximise purchases by simultaneous disposal to mills.

(h) In order to tone up depressed gunny market, foodgrains procuring agencies have, on Jute Commissioner's request, placed sizable order for jute bags for next Kharif packaging for delivery during July '97 to October '97 which is expected to have a stabilising effect on raw jute prices.

(i) Price situation is being monitored closely and such further steps as are considered necessary may be taken at appropriate time.

Funds provided for Development of Handi-crafts

910. SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the funds provided for development of handicrafts sector during the last three years, state-wise; and

(b) the number of artisans/craftmen benefited therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES
(SHRI R.L. JALAPPA): (a) The details of funds provided for development of handicrafts sector in the country during the last three years, statewise, is as per statement attached (*see below*).

(b) The number of artisans/craftsmen benefited from the funds provided by Government to various agencies for development of handicrafts during the last three years is estimated at 15.5 lakhs persons.

Statement

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
1.	Andhra Pradesh	94.00	63.18	36.61
2.	A & N. Islands	1.53	1.50	1.38
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	2.56	3.71	1.34
4.	Assam	39.61	130.74	106.82
5.	Bihar	17.28	26.44	28.43
6.	Delhi	112.27	202.31	69.47
7.	Goa	7.09	5.08	8.64
8.	Gujarat	51.05	80.42	45.65
9.	Haryana	43.35	33.47	62.80
10.	Himachal Pradesh	44.21	99.55	64.32
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	45.61	40.61	21.49
12.	Karnataka	33.40	21.89	71.12
13.	Kerala	38.91	70.02	67.55
14.	Madhya Pradesh	99.83	127.51	70.27
15.	Maharashtra	37.70	40.79	37.86
16.	Manipur	11.26	15.43	9.30
17.	Meghalaya	3.80	6.41	2.73
18.	Mizoram	7.00	1.70	3.01
19.	Nagaland	7.17	11.90	6.18
20.	Orissa	80.27	110.50	85.22
21.	Punjab	15.80	23.75	16.41
22.	Pondicherry	1.93	3.86	3.00
23.	Rajasthan	32.48	50.52	18.19
24.	Sikkim	1.77	2.14	1.17
25.	Tamilnadu	71.72	82.33	84.15
26.	Tripura	21.56	12.94	16.27
27.	Uttar Pradesh	383.62	606.20	297.78
28.	West Bengal	62.47	64.03	83.10
Total		1369.25	1938.93	1320.27

Note: Figures do not include grants released for multi-state activities.