

nery items and accessories upto 31.12.90 for the purpose of accelerating process of modernisation and diversification in the jute sector.

(iii) Complete waiver of excise duty w.e.f. 20-3-90 under the Union Budget for 1990-91 on a number of diversified jute products such as Jute Blankets, Jute Felt, Jute Mats and Mattings, Jute Carpets and Bleached, Dyed and Printed Jute Fabrics containing more than 50 per cent by weight of Jute Fibre.

(iv) Exemption from excise duty on Jute yarn and Jute Fabrics used captively for manufacture of such products as mentioned at number (iii) above.

(v) Excise duty waiver on Jute Yarn for production of jute based hand-looms and Handicrafts.

(vi) Excise exemption on Jute Fabrics used by Handicrafts sector subject to certain prescribed conditions.

2. In recognition of importance of jute industry and in the interest of the production of Raw Jute and Jute Packaging Materials and of persons engaged in production thereof, Government have already taken a number of other measures, including;

(a) Implementation of the Special Agricultural Jute Development Programme in all the jute growing States through the Ministry of Agriculture.

(b) Implementation of the Jute Modernisation Fund Scheme under the auspices of the All India Financial Institutions.

(c) Support to Jute Corporation of India and other State level procurement Organisations to build up warehousing and other infrastructural facilities for the jute growing farmers.

(d) Assistance to jute R & D Institutions for product Development and Diversification.

(e) Implementation of the Internal and External Market Assistance Schemes through the Jute Manufacturers Development Council (JMDC).

(f) Enactment of Jute Packaging Material (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987 for giving necessary protection to the jute industry against competition from the HDPE Bags units in the domestic market

Receding of Glaciers in the Himalayas

970. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPA-YEE: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report which appeared in the Hindi daily 'Jansata' of 24 March, 1990 to the effect that glaciers in the Himalayas are receding;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and whether Government propose to investigate the problem in depth; and

(c) what are the likely consequences of the process in the near future and in the long run?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI MANUBHAI KOTADIA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Systematic glaciological studies on a few glaciers have been carried out since 1973. The studies have revealed that these glaciers are in a state of recession. The retreat or advancement of glaciers is guided by general climatic fluctuations. The present global climate is generally warming up which is leading to the retreat of glaciers.

(c) The effect of recession of glaciers in the near future is inconsequential as far as changes are concerned. But the pattern of flows in the rivers fed by the snow melt processes may get somewhat affected. For assessment of the long term effects, intensive studies will be required.