

Skill Development Scheme. The Government have also recently announced a special package for the apparel sector with a slew of measures for labour reform and tax concessions for employment generation and enhancing exports.

Revision of mandatory jute packaging limit

1496. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) has recommended a downward revision of mandatory jute packaging limits of sugar and food items; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that the prevailing limits are not being followed even today, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) and (b) The Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), in its report on "price Policy for Raw Jute for 2016-17 season" has recommended that the compulsory packaging for jute sacking in foodgrains under the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory use in Packing Commodities) Act, 1987, (JPM Act) should be reduced to the level of 75% and sugar sector should be fully exempted from such mandatory reservation. However, the norms prescribed under the JPM Act provide for compulsory packing of a minimum of 90% of foodgrains and a minimum of 20% of sugar in jute sacking, which are being followed, at present.

Cotton production in the country

1497. SHRI RIPUN BORA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production of cotton in the country is far less than targeted during the last three consecutive years;

(b) if so, the reasons behind it and the production for the aforesaid period, State-wise; and

(c) the action plan of Government to sustain productivity and the support extended to cotton farmers during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The area under cotton cultivation during the current cotton season 2015-16 has decreased by around 7% from the previous year due to switching over to other

crops in Northern and Central zone. The cotton crop in Punjab has been affected by white fly attack and in Gujarat was affected by pink boll-worm etc. State-wise production during the last three consecutive years are as under:

(Production in lakh bales of 170 kgs each)

States	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
Andhra Pradesh	73.50	69.56	28.41
Telangana	-	-	38.00
Gujarat	88.50	101.50	105.00
Haryana	25.00	23.02	23.00
Karnataka	12.55	18.75	23.11
Madhya Pradesh	22.00	17.30	17.50
Maharashtra	76.55	88.34	70.00
Odisha	4.00	2.99	4.00
Punjab	20.00	19.68	16.00
Rajasthan	14.00	12.87	15.27
Tamil Nadu	5.00	4.08	6.86
Others	1.10	0.93	0.90
ALL INDIA	342.20	359.02	348.05

(c) The action plan of Government to sustain productivity and the support extended to cotton farmers during the last three years are as under:

- (i) Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers Welfare is implementing Cotton Development Programme with a focus on cropping system approach under National Food Security Mission (NFSM) in 15 major cotton growing states viz: Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal since 2014-15. Under the scheme, thrust is given for transfer of latest technology to cotton growers through Front Line Demonstration (FLD) on Integrated Crop Management (ICM), Desi Cotton, Extra Long Staple

Cotton, High Density Planting System. The scheme is being implemented through State Department of Agriculture (SDA), Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), State Agriculture Universities (SAUs), Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) etc. Besides, States can support cotton development programme under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY). ICAR extend various technology including Insecticide Resistance Management (IRM) and monitoring and surveillance of insecticide pest diseases on cotton.

- (ii) With a view to promote Cotton farming, during cotton season 2015-16, Ministry of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmer Welfare has fixed minimum support price for medium staple length cotton at ₹ 3800/- per quintal and for long staple at ₹ 4100/- per quintal.
- (iii) Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) Limited has been entrusted with procurement of cotton from farmers at Minimum Support Price (MSP) to protect the interest of farmers by giving MSP to their produce to avoid distress sale.

Promotion of silk industry

1498. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of people engaged in the silk industry at present, State-wise;
- (b) the production, consumption, import and export of silk during each of the last three years and the current year;
- (c) whether Government proposes to promote sericulture along with the promotion of local silk weaving techniques of Bhagalpur, Banaras etc., if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the plan of Government to restrict import of raw silk and silk yarn to promote the domestic silk industry in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) Around 8.25 million people are engaged presently under sericulture sector in the country. The State-wise details are given in the Statement (*See below*).

(b) Raw silk production, consumption, import and export of silk in the country during each of the last three years and the current year are given below: