

taxes on goods and services and to bring transparency in the taxation system. Accordingly, it is applicable to the Textile sectors also, including handlooms. Turnover of most of the weavers does not exceed ₹ 20 lakh and hence they do not require registration under GST. Handloom weavers are paying GST on the hank yarn but unregistered weavers are not eligible to claim the Input Tax Credit at the time of fabric sale. This reduces profit margin of the weavers.

Ministry of Textile has taken up the matter with Department of Revenue that yarn in hank form utilized by handloom sector may be exempted from GST. It has been requested that like Khadi fabric, Handloom fabric sold through outlets of National and State level Government Handloom Corporations and State level APEX Handloom Societies may also be exempted from GST.

Quality of cotton in the country

†1116. DR. ASHOK BAJPAI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large quantity of cotton is imported every year due to less and substandard quality of cotton in the country;
- (b) if so, the country-wise details of imported cotton during last two years; and
- (c) whether efforts are being made by Government to increase the produce of cotton and improve its quality as per international standards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI AJAY TAMTA): (a) No, Sir. India does not import large quantity of cotton. However, some domestic spinning mills in India are importing Extra-Long Staple (ELS)/Short Staple variety of cotton to meet their specific requirements as production of these varieties is less in India. The total quantity imported during the year 2016-17 and 2017-18 is 30.93 and 15.79 lakh bales respectively as against 364.57 and 382.44 lakh bales of consumptions which is 8.33 and 4.12 per cent of total consumption.

(b) Details showing country-wise import of cotton in India during last two years is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(c) Yes, Sir. Government of India has consistently been promoting several measures like technology mission on cotton, High Density Planting System, instrument based quality evaluation etc. for improving the quality, productivity and production of

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

cotton in the country. With the enhanced research efforts, the basic fibre parameters and quality of ginning and pressing have shown tremendous improvements and India has become the largest cotton producer and 2nd largest consumer and exporter of cotton in the World.

The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) under Ministry of Textiles is encouraging the cotton farmers under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) for adoption of the modern farm techniques and harvesting through hand-held kapas plucker machines. CCI had distributed 512 hand operated Kapas Plucker Machines to the cotton farmers which help them for higher financial return of kapas produce due to reduced dependence on labour, reduction in cost of production and to improve the quality of cotton by reducing trash and contamination at farm level.

Govt. of India is also creating awareness among the farmers to cultivate Desi/ELS cotton through FLDs under National Food Security Mission.

Statement

Country-wise import of cotton in India

Country	Qty in Bales of 170 kgs. each	
	2016-17	2017-18
USA	1418835	873809
Australia	528410	177801
Mali	214733	40435
Burkina Faso	154080	10945
Egypt	101917	153375
Cote d'Ivoire	86344	27565
Benin	83637	13188
Tanzania	53728	40602
Other Countries	452235	241883
TOTAL	3093919	1579603

Source: Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCIS), Kolkata.