

Promotion of organic cotton farming in India

3012. SHRI V. VIJAYASAI REDDY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that many international fashion brands are showing keen interest in India for organic cotton;

(b) if so, in what manner the Ministry and APEDA is helping organic cotton farmers and functioning as linkage for supply of cotton to these brands from organic cotton farmers in India;

(c) whether the input costs in organic cotton farming is far less when compared to conventional and Bt.cotton production; and

(d) if so, what efforts the Ministry is making to push organic cotton from 5.5 lakh acres to 7 lakh acres by 2025?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) There is no such report/information in this regard.

(b) National Accreditation Body (NAB) under Ministry of Commerce and Industry manages and runs a National Program for Organic Production (NPOP). On behalf of the NAB, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) is functioning as Secretariat for carrying out accreditation activities as well as implementation of NPOP. APEDA has taken up the matter of traceability system on voluntary basis for organic textiles for six months w.e.f. 01/03/2020. The Ministry of Textiles has authorized to initiate the process on voluntary basis for six months. A notification has already been issued by APEDA in this regard to all concerned for ensuring traceability of certified organic textile across the value chain to ensure end-to-end traceability and chain of custody of organic fiber.

(c) and (d) The average cost of production of organic cotton farming is less than conventional and Bt. cotton production, which is mainly due to less cost towards desi cotton seed and use of organic fertilizer. Ministry of Agriculture has been promoting organic farming through dedicated schemes namely Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) and Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) since 2015-16. The MOVCDNER scheme aims at development of certified organic production in a value chain mode to link growers with consumers

and to support the development of entire value chain starting from inputs, seeds, certification, to the creation of facilities for collection, aggregation, processing marketing and brand building initiative. The main focus is on export of produce. Under the scheme the farmers are given assistance of ₹ 25000/ha/3 years for both on-farm and off-farm organic inputs, and seeds/planting material. ₹ 495 crores have been allocated to 100 Farmers Producer Companies (FPCs) covering 2500 Farmers Interest Groups (FIGs), 50,000 ha area and 50,000 farmers for the 3 year period from 2018-19 to 2020-21.

In the PKVY scheme, assistance of ₹ 50,000 per hectare/3 years is provided, out of which ₹ 31,000 (62%) is given to the farmers directly through DBT, ₹ 1185 crore have been allocated for a period from 2018-19 to 2020-21 to target an area of around 4.10 lakh ha. Further, Ministry of Agriculture has been focusing on creating awareness and educating the farmers about organic farming practices in the areas where clusters are formed. Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Indian Institute of Farming Systems Research, Modipuram under the research scheme on All India Network Program on Organic Farming (AI-NPOF) has developed 51 cropping systems and conducted workshops in Rajasthan.

Gratuity schemes for handloom weavers under ESI Act

3013. SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

SHRIMATI SAMPATIYA UIKEY:

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has formulated any scheme for bringing ESI and maternity benefits and payment of gratuity schemes for handloom weavers and handicrafts persons under the ESI Act, 1948, the Maternity Benefits Act, 1961 and the Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI): (a) to (c) Provisions of Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948, Maternity Benefits Act, 1961 and