



Ministry of Textiles

Textiles Ministry extends limit for HDPE/PP bags from 1.80 lakh bales to 2.62 lakh to tide over crisis of packaging of foodgrains due to closure of jute mills during lock down

Writes to Governments of all jute growing States to allow movement, sale and supply of jute seeds, fertilizers and other farming aids

Ministry committed to protect interest of jute farmers and workers

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The Ministry of Textiles has given dilution to the maximum permissible limit i.e. 1.80 lakh bales on 26th March, 2020 and further for 0.82 lakh bales on 6th April, 2020, for HDPE/PP bags to tide over the emergent crisis of packaging of foodgrains due to closure of jute mills during lock down and with a view to protect the produce of wheat farmers by providing them alternate packaging bags.

This move has been taken mainly to protect the interest of the wheat farmers as the grains are likely to ready for packing mid-April'20 onwards. However, Government has considered the dilution with the proviso that whenever the production of jute bags in the jute mills resumes after the lock down period is over, priority will be given to the jute bags for packaging of food grains. To help jute farmers during the lock down period, Ministry of Textiles has written to the all jute growing State Governments to allow movement, sale and supply of the jute seeds, fertilizers and other farming aids. Government is committed to protect the interest of the jute farmers and workers through provisions of the Jute Packaging Materials Act (JPM), 1987 and it provides about 100 percent reservation for packaging of foodgrains in jute bags.

The COVID-19 related lockdown has affected the working in the jute mills thereby disrupting the production of jute bags. Since jute millers are not in a position to cater to the requirements of the State Procurement Agencies (SPAs) and the Food Corporation of India (FCI) who are engaged in the Public Distribution System (PDS), Government is, therefore, constrained to proactively intervene and engage in trouble shooting by taking alternate measures.

Government of India is seriously concerned about the farmers and their produce. Rabi Crop is about to be harvested. Huge quantities of packaging bags are required. Food grains are primarily packed in jute sacking bags under JPM Act. Due to COVID-19 lock down, Jute Mills are unable to produce jute bags, hence alternate arrangement is inevitable to avoid distress to wheat farmers.

SG/SB

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