CHAPTER XV

TEXTILES IN NORTH EASTERN REGION
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Sector wise details

Handlooms

North Eastern Region has the highest concentration of Handlooms in the country. Out of 25.4 lakh units engaged in handloom activities, 14.6 lakh units (household and non-house hold) are concentrated in five States only, i.e. Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura as per the Handloom Census 1995-96. Over 53% of looms in the country and more than 50% of weavers belong to North Eastern States. The share of these five States of North Eastern Region in the domestic looms is 82%. However, only 13.4% of the commercial looms of the country are in those States and the contribution of those States in total production of handloom fabrics is merely 20%.

The Weavers’ Service Centre, Guwahati, set up as a Regional Design Centre in pursuance of the recommendations of the Conference of the State Ministers (Handlooms) of North Eastern States held on September 21-22, 2000, functions as the Nodal Centre for development of designs and dissemination of designs to the weavers in the region. The Centre

Shawls traditionally produced in North-Eastern Region.
has created a website, which includes a Museum of North-Eastern designs. The web site has been linked with the National Centre for Textiles Design, for the benefit of the user agencies. It will also help link all those connected with the handloom industry.

A special dispensation is proposed to be made for the North Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh under the Integrated Handloom Development Scheme to be implemented during the 11th plan. In respect of these states, the grant portion of some of the components of the scheme is proposed to be shared between Centre, State Governments and the implementing agencies in the ratio of 90:5:5 respectively excepting under the marketing incentive, which is in the ratio 50:50.

Under the Integrated Handloom Cluster Development Scheme, out of 20 handloom clusters of about 5000 looms selected in the first phase in the year 2005-06, 2 clusters namely; Bijoynagar in Assam, Imphal in Manipur are being developed in the North Eastern Region. Out of 100 clusters selected for development in second phase 17 clusters in seven States of the North Eastern region have been selected for development. Of 150 clusters, selected for development in the third phase, 19 clusters would be taken-up in North-Eastern Region.

**HANDICRAFTS**

The North-Eastern Region has premonminantly tribal traditions, and nowhere is this reflected more than in the region’s unique and varied handicrafts. As per the Census conducted by NCAER in 1995-96, NER, including Sikkim, has 8.87 lakh handicrafts artisans, which accounts for 18.63% of the total artisan population in the country. The important crafts of this region are cane and Bamboo, Mat weaving, Basketry, wood work, Brass craft, Artistic textiles/ Hand-block printing, Tribal jewellery, Stone work, terracotta, and Jute handicrafts.

**SERCICULTURE**

Sericulture is the most important cottage industry in North East. The famous non-mulberry silks like Tasar, Eri, and Muga are produced traditionally in this region. Muga is the pride of the Assamese ladies. Oak tassar was introduced in Assam only in 1972. To promote Sericulture in North East, an amount of Rs.37.45 crores has been allocated under plan as central share for implementation of various schemes in Sericulture sub-sector.

For product development, diversification and marketing of non-mulberry silk, a Vanya (non mulberry) silk production-cum-training centre has been established in Assam.

**JUTE SECTOR**

Under the Jute Technology Mission (JTM) 5 (five) Schemes are being implemented in Mini Mission - III and 9 (nine) Schemes are being implemented in Mini Mission - IV. The fund earmarked for North Eastern States (NE) are in table15.1

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2007-08</th>
<th>2008-09</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General States</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>72.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Eastern States</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>37.50</strong></td>
<td><strong>80.00</strong></td>
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Under all the schemes in Mini Mission - III & IV efforts are being made for implementation of the projects in North Eastern (NE) States. Especially, following schemes have been targeted for the North East.
Scheme for Development of market yards

Under this scheme, it is proposed to construct 10 marketing yards with modern facilities in major jute growing districts in the Country. One Market yard has been sanctioned for development in Assam. One more has been planned for the NE states.

Scheme for Construction of Departmental Purchase Centres (DPCs) of Jute Corporation of India (JCI)

Three DPCs have been planned under this scheme for construction in Assam.

Scheme for Construction of Retting Tanks

Under the scheme, it is proposed to construct Retting Tanks to facilitate retting at least one in each jute producing districts of India, in phased manner. All the Jute growing districts of Assam and Tripura would be covered.

Scheme for Demonstration of Retting Technology and Training to Jute Growers

The training programmes are conducted through Jute Corporation of India’s DPCs in all the jute growing districts of India.

Scheme for Acquisition of Modern Machinery

Some of the schemes refer to upgradation, modernization, training & development in/ of the existing organized sector jute mills. Against an investment of Rs.143.75 lakhs, Rs.28.75lakhs have been disbursed for 2 jute mills in NE States.

Scheme for Promotion of Jute Diversification

The programmes for promotion of jute diversification in the North East Region covering Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura aim at setting up of enterprises for handicrafts, spinning, weaving, wet processing, hand made paper, etc., in general and entrepreneurship development in diversified jute sector, in particular. These programmes will be carried out by setting up of operating units namely, “Jute Diversification Support Centre (JDSC)” and “Jute Diversification Support Extension Centre (JDSEC)”.

The above objective are met through activities such as conducting trade specific training programmes, organising awareness generation programme, creating scope for large scale consumption of jute in non-traditional field and developing skills among weavers, entrepreneurs and craft persons.

While implementing the scheme, preference is given to the remote areas and clusters of jute diversified products manufacturers and in 8 North Eastern States including Sikkim, which are environmentally sensitive and where plastic has been banned. More and more Women Self Help Groups from backward tribal communities will be brought under the Jute Diversification Activity for income generation. Activity will be linked to the existing schemes implemented by State Governments, e.g., PMR Y, SJR Y, etc. Linkages will be established with handicrafts and handloom development programmes of Governments in North East. JDSCs / JDSECs shall be run in the North East Region and Sikkim through collaboration with beneficiary organisations, weavers societies, reputed NGDs, co-operatives/associations, ORDA, District Industries Centres, etc. which have similar or parallel activities. Lastly, efforts will be made for blending of jute with other natural fibres to make
the same more consumer friendly and marketable.

Under the Scheme for Promotion of Jute Diversification, NCJD has opened 3 Jute Service Centres and 1 Jute Service Extension Centres out of 26 Centres opened through out the Country. Similarly 4 Jute Raw Material Banks have been opened in NE States out of 24 units opened through out the Country.

**Scheme for helping NGOs and Women Self Help Groups**

The scheme for helping NGOs and Women Self Help Groups (WSHG) for development of jute-diversified products will also be extended to cover the states of northeastern region. The objective of the scheme is to create domestic demand for Jute Diversified Products through mass awareness and also to expand the production base for various JDPs with the involvement of NGDs and WSHGs especially in rural areas with a view to improve the economic status of the rural women.

Under the Scheme for helping the NGDs and WSHG for developing jute diversified products, NCJD has selected 4 units in NE Region out of the 22 units selected allover the Country.

**Scheme for Jute Parks**

A scheme for setting up of Jute Park with an aim to attract entrepreneurs / units investing in new small jute mills / spinning mills / weaving units and generate employment / upgrade technology to optimize exports based on value addition is being introduced. The scheme also aims at providing entrepreneurs with support facilities similar to those available in Export Processing Zones. One such Jute Park will be taken up during the 2008-09 in one of the States in northeastern region.

The Scheme for Setting up of Jute Parks for the Diversified Sector envisages setting up of 4 Jute Parks in NE States out of 10(ten) approved Parks, and that too with a higher level of subsidy over general states. Two proposals for setting up of Jute Parks in Assam are under active consideration.