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Business Line

Chennai, 19 December 2013: Exports of jute products from the country is expected to touch Rs 2,800 crore in value in 2013-14 on the back of an increase in demand from the West, said Beela Rajesh, Executive Director, Handloom Export Promotion Council, Ministry of Textiles.

In 2012-13, exports stood at Rs 2,094 crore.

The global jute import market, which went through a lean period from 2011 to mid-2012, is picking up again as top markets Europe and the US restarted buying.

Growing acceptance of jute bags as a personal accessory, and shopping bags made of the fibre for its eco-friendly nature, are brightening its prospects in the West, she said, adding that floor coverings, wall hangings, gunny bags, and gift articles are also being bought.

Data put up by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics says export of floor coverings totalled Rs 142.9 crore during April-September 2013, while jute Hessian bags touched Rs 405 crore and other jute products hit Rs 475.4 crore, signalling strong demand.

“Jute, originally, was not used for purposes beyond covering floors. But with treatment and printing, it looks and feels as good as fabric,” she said speaking at a buyer-seller meet organised by National Jute Board in association with Federation of Indian Export Organisations.

National Jute Board and Jute Product Development and Export Promotion Council, set up in 2011, are funding entrepreneurs interested in jute product manufacturing, and helping manufacturers upgrade facilities.

Traditionally based in West Bengal, the jute business is spreading to Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. At the exposition, manufacturers from the South showcased printed wall hangings that were treated to smoothen the texture of the fibre, something that will find purchase in Western markets, said T. Ayyapan, Market Promotion Officer, NJB.

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