

**SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENTS/EVENTS DURING APRIL 2020**  
**(from 1<sup>ST</sup> April to 30<sup>th</sup> April 2020)**

**I. Science & Technology**

Research on development of eco-friendly technologies for utilization of coir pith, development of new machinery, production of diversified coir products including handicrafts are being carried out. Production of PITHPLUS for composting of coir pith and Biochem for quality improvement of coir fibre for extension to entrepreneurs, extraction of nanocellulose, bio oils, sodium lignosulphonate from coir pith, development of coir cushioning material as per RDSO standards for railways are the subjects of the in-house projects implement at CCRI. Testing and certification of coir and coir products as per the request from the trade is under taken at CCRI.

- **Virtual Meeting with IIT Chennai on the progress of Centre of “Centre of Excellence for Coir and other Natural Fibers towards Sustainable Infrastructure and Product Development”**

A meeting has been conducted via Video Conference with Coir Board S&T team with IIT professors on 27.04.2020 to review the progress of establishment of Centre of Excellence for Coir and other Natural Fibers towards Sustainable Infrastructure and Product Development.

- **Technical Review Committee meeting with Dr. M G R University**

Due to announcement of National lockdown in connection with the outbreak of covid-19 pandemic, the Technical Review Committee meeting of the Collaborative Project with Dr. M G R University viz. “Development of Process & Machinery for Spinning of Fine Quality Yarn of Uniform Thickness and Reduced Hairiness” has been conducted via video conference on 29.04.2020. In addition to the members of the Technical Review Committee, Secretary, Coir Board and the Officers from Dr. M G R University were attended the meeting. It has been decided that after the lock down period, the Technical Review Committee may visit the University and a full-fledged Trials of the DTP for 8 Hours will be conducted jointly by CCRI and ARI Teams with demonstration of machines.

**II. SKILL UPGRADATION & MAHILA COIR YOJANA**

Various activities for the development of the coir industry are being done through the Regional and Sub Regional offices of the Board all over India. The following special achievements/events have been reported during the period under report.

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic, the regular as well as field training programmes conducted by the Board through its Training Centres and Regional/Sub Regional Offices were stopped during the third week of March, 2020 itself. Besides, all other public programmes which require social involvement like Workshop, Seminar, Entrepreneurship Development Programmes, Exposure Tour etc. have also been stopped to contain spread of the pandemic. Since the lockdown announced by the Central/State Governments has been continued during April, 2020, the Board could not be able to commence its training and other programmes during the reporting period also. However, the Board has initiated action for conducting online training programmes through its Training Centres and Field Offices. The Field Offices of the Board have also been directed to collect data pertaining to the working of coir industries in the country so as to conduct the programmes like workshops, seminars etc. through online.

Consequent to the announcement of Lockdown by the Central/State Governments, the production as well as marketing activities in Coir Sector has been stopped since 24<sup>th</sup> March, 2020. On announcing some relaxations in the lockdown by the Centre/State Governments some of the coir industries in Green and Orange Zones have resumed production w.e.f. 20.04.2020. State-wise status of coir industries started production as on 28.04.2020 is as follows:

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Total No. Of coir units in Green and Orange Zones</b>	<b>Total No. Of coir units started functioning</b>
1	Kerala	9532	3664
2	Tamil Nadu	230	2
3	Karnataka	410	0
4	Andhra Pradesh	27	11
5	Odisha	672	336
6	West Bengal	33	0
7	Maharashtra	20	8
8	NER	0	0
9	Telengana	2	0
10	Lakshadweep	7	7
11	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10933</b>	<b>4028</b>

The Board through its Field Offices is in constant touch with the State Government authorities, Coir Associations, Heads of Coir Co-op. Societies, NGOs having coir activities, coir entrepreneurs etc. for solving the problems being faced by the coir industry during the lockdown period and providing support for commencing production activities. It is observed that the scarcity of raw material and shortage of working capital are the main problems being faced by

the coir industry for commencing the production. Also, due to the stoppage of production during the lockdown, the entrepreneurs could not repay the loans availed for establishing the units. In order to sort out these problems, the industry put forth the following suggestions before the Board for consideration and necessary action:

- Banks may be requested to grant moratorium from 3 months to 6 months for loan repayment.
- Allow additional working capital with minimum rate of interest, @ 5% p.a
- GST on coir products may be waived off for 6 months.
- Provide monetary help to the entrepreneurs for disbursing wages to the workers.
- Marketing support

### **III. DOMESTIC MARKETING**

#### **Participation in Domestic Exhibitions**

To popularize Coir and Coir Products and boosting up the sales through the Board's showrooms, the Board is participating in important exhibitions all over the country. Due to national lockdown, Board has not participated in any exhibitions during the month of April 2020.

### **IV. EXPORT MARKET PROMOTION**

Promotion of exports of coir and coir products and carrying on propaganda and publicity for that purpose is an important function assigned to the Coir Board. The Export Market Promotion Programmes implemented by Coir Board is to promote the export of coir products to markets abroad which are borne under the ongoing scheme Coir VikasYojana. Coir Industry is an export oriented industry and export helps the industry to adjust the imbalance between the production and demand in the domestic market. Exports help to attain sustainable development with a healthy growth rate.

### **V. COIR UDYAMI YOJANA (CUY)**

Coir UdyamiYojana is a credit linked subsidy Scheme. The Scheme provides for financial assistance to the tune of 40% of the investment in Building and Plant & Machinery for setting up of coir production units. The remaining amount towards investment is funded through term loan (55%) from Banks and 5% through beneficiary contribution. Assistance under the Scheme is made available to individuals, Companies, Self Help Groups, Non-Governmental Organizations, Institutions registered under Societies Registration Act 1860, Production Co-operative Societies, Joint Liability Groups and Charitable Trust. The maximum admissible cost under the Scheme is Rs.10 lakhs plus working capital, which shall not exceed 25% of the project cost.

## **PRIME MINISTER'S EMPLOYMENT GENERATION PROGRAMME (PMEGP)**

Prime Minister's Employment Generation Programme is a credit linked subsidy scheme for setting up of new micro enterprises. The Scheme provides subsidy at the rate of 25% of the project cost in rural areas and 15% in urban areas to the General Categories and 35% in rural areas and 25% in urban areas to the Special Categories, which includes SC/ST/OBC/ Minorities/Women/Physically Handicapped/Ex-servicemen, NER, Hill and Border areas. Coir projects with maximum cost up to Rs.25.00 lakhs in Manufacturing Sector and Rs.10.00 lakhs in Business/Service Sector are eligible for assistance under the Scheme. The Scheme is opened to individuals, Self Help Groups, Institutions registered under Societies Registration Act 1860, Production Co-operative Societies and Charitable Trust.

### **VI. SFURTI CELL**

- **Review meeting of SFURTI coir clusters taken by Secretary, Coir Board – 14.04.2020**

A meeting to review the present activities of all completed and slow progressing coir clusters taken by Secretary, Coir Board on 14.04.2020 through Video Conferencing in two different sessions viz. 1<sup>st</sup> session for 19 completed clusters and 2<sup>nd</sup> session for remaining 21 coir clusters where activities are progressing. The meeting primarily focussed to ascertain the impact of lockdown on the business of coir clusters and the domestic and exports turnover on post lockdown. Secretary, Coir Board stated that all completed clusters should complete all pending activities, if any, by 10.05.2020 and get ready for inauguration. Moreover, 100% SPV share to be remitted immediately. As regard to the remaining coir clusters where activities are progressing, all civil/machinery procurement works have to be started by 12.05.2020 by finalizing tenders. All the pending works are to be completed and get ready for inauguration by 31.10.2020.

- **Review meeting of SFURTI coir clusters taken by JS (ARI), MoMSME – 16.04.2020**

A review meeting of all approved SFURTI coir clusters was held through Video Conferencing on 16.04.2020 under the Chairmanship of JS(ARI), MoMSME cum Chairman, Coir Board.

- **Meeting with JS(ARI), MoMSME cum Chairman, Coir Board for setting up of LBI Centres in all SFURTI coir clusters under ASPIRE scheme – 22.04.2020**

A meeting has convened by JS (ARI), MoMSME cum Chairman, Coir Board on 22.04.2020 through Video Conferencing for setting up of LBI Centres in the CFCs of all approved SFURTI coir clusters under ASPIRE scheme. JS(ARI), stated that there are state owned coir

Federations & Corporations and they could be considered for setting up of LBIs with 100% subsidy.

- **Deployment of Solar Power in all completed and progressing SFURTI coir clusters**

The Ministry of MSME has directed the Board to install Solar Power in the CFCs of all completed and progressing SFURTI coir clusters, as part of MNRE scheme entrusted with Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd. (SECI), where some subsidy could be availed under CAPEX/RESCO modes. Based on this, all the respective TAs were enquired about the feasibility and cost effectiveness in setting up of solar panel systems in the CFCs of all SFURTI coir clusters coming under their purview.