

Industrialists seek govt support...

India itself is a major producer and consumer of jute. According to Indian government statistics, India produced 1.28 million tonnes of jute products in the Fiscal Year 2025/26 and consumed 1.205 million tonnes in its domestic market. The country's organised jute industry directly employs around 370,000 people, while approximately 4 million farming families are involved in jute cultivation.

"As the jute industry is directly linked to local farmers, there is a need to further promote jute cultivation. Being an environmentally friendly and organic product, jute has considerable potential for the future. We must honestly ask whether India's move is simply a trade protection measure intended

to safeguard its own industry and farmers," read the memorandum submitted by the Biratnagar-based entrepreneurs to the federal government.

They argued that while it is natural for India to protect the interests of its industries and jobs, Nepal also has the right to protect its 15,000 jobs, its exports and its domestic industry. About 75,000 farmer families in Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari are involved in jute farming, said Adhikari.

Nepali jute industries are wholly dependent on Indian market as 96 per cent of the total product is exported there. Most of the raw materials also come from India. Nepali raw materials cover less than one-third of the total demand.

Meanwhile, speaking at a programme

on the state of jute industry in Biratnagar a couple of days ago, Jute industry operator Champalal Rathi said India and Bangladesh provided government protection and incentives to their jute industries, so Nepal should also introduce the necessary policy support to maintain the competitiveness of its domestic industry.

Likewise, NJMA President Raj Kumar Golchha said that if the problem prolonged, there wouldn't be any alternative other than shutting down the industries.

The industrialists suggested the government to implement policy to promote the use of jute products in packaging food and other items. Although such policy is announced, it's not strictly implemented.