

CHAPTER I : MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

Indian Council of Agricultural Research

1.1 Unfruitful expenditure

Due to lack of effective system for documentation and follow up of the research findings in National Institute of Research on Jute and Allied Fibre Technology, Kolkata, the technology and machine developed for manufacture of ratine yarn after incurring an expenditure of Rs. 21.08 lakh remained unpatented and was not commercialised even after more than five years of development.

National Institute of Research on Jute and Allied Fibre Technology (NIRJAFT), Kolkata, a unit of Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) undertook a project titled “Development of jute based ratine yarn, a fancy yarn, for making heavier type of upholstery and furnishing fabrics” in April 1996 at a cost of Rs. 10.86 lakh for a period of four years. The project was successfully completed in March 2000 after developing the ratine yarn. On the recommendations of the Research Advisory Committee (RAC), NIRJAFT undertook another project titled “Development of 10-spindle Jute based ratine yarn machine” in April 2000 for a period of one year. The objective of the second project was to design, develop and fabricate a machine for manufacturing jute based ratine yarn in large scale and also commercialise it. The project was declared complete in September 2001 after developing a 10-spindle machine with an expenditure of Rs. 10.22 lakh. As per the completion report of the project, the standardisation of process variables for preparation of jute based fancy yarn on the developed machine was required to be taken up. In the meantime, NIRJAFT in January 2002 initiated the process for filing of patent on the technology developed and undertook the work of its standardisation.

Audit examination disclosed that the patenting and standardization had not been done even as of October 2006. The process of patenting and standardization did not progress after November 2002 after the death of the concerned project investigator. The attempts of NIRJAFT towards patenting and standardisation of the technology developed for commercialisation did not succeed as it failed to trace the documents maintained by the deceased project investigator. Thus, the technology developed at a cost of Rs. 21.08 lakh could not be patented and commercialised.

This lapse indicates absence of an effective institutional mechanism for documentation and follow-up of the research projects in NIRJAFT. These

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ICAR accepted (September 2006) that the patenting process was initiated by the deceased project investigator but further correspondence in this regard was not traceable. ICAR further stated that an effective system exists at the institute for follow-up of the research findings through technology transfer division. Reply of ICAR is not tenable as the technology developed in September 2001 was not followed up for patenting and commercialisation as of 2006 simply because the project investigator passed away.

Thus due to defective system of documentation and follow-up of the research findings, the technology and the machines developed for manufacturing ratine yarn at the total cost of Rs. 21.08 lakh on the project remained unpatented and could not be commercialised even after five years.