

INPUT COST SPIKE HITS CORRUGATED BOX MAKERS IN BENGAL

KOLKATA: After the jute sector, which is threatened by Centre mulling exempting wheat from jute packaging, corrugated box makers in West Bengal are facing shutdown of their units due to an "unprecedented" rise in input costs. "There is unprecedented steep escalation in the price of kraft paper by some paper mills in the last few months. The rise does not match with paper mills' input cost. Inability to pass on the cost to our customers is turning our units unviable," Eastern India Corrugated Box Manufacturers' Association (EICBMA) President Milan Kumar Dey said. The corrugated box makers are mostly in the MSME sector and some 35,000 people are directly associated with 750 units located in eastern India. Out of the 750 units, about 500-550 are in West Bengal and if government does not intervene, the impact will be most in the state, Dey said. The body has sought intervention of both state and Union governments to prevent "cartelisation of paper mills". "There is no justification for 20-25 per cent rise in kraft paper based on alleged shortage and marginal increase in cost of waste paper," Dey said. The association has advised all corrugated box manufacturers to protest by not accepting any supply of kraft paper from April 24 to May 1.

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Corrugated box: Corrugated box manufacturers in West Bengal are facing the threat of closure of their units due to an unprecedented increase in input costs, said a Press release issued by the industry body. **SNS**