

Title: Regarding Formation of a Separate Ministry for Handlooms and Welfare of Handloom Workers

***DR. SANJEEV KUMAR SINGARI (KURNOOL):** Thank you, hon. Chairperson, Sir. Please allow me to speak in Telugu.

Handlooms signify our culture and heritage. Britishers in their early days of ruling India had targeted handloom sector. Later on we remained their slaves for 200 years. At that point of time Mahatma Gandhi used charka during independence movement and expressed support for handlooms in our country. Sir in my parliamentary constituency Kurnool there are 2 lakh handloom weavers in Emmiganuru Adoni and Kodumuru. As spinning Mills were shutdown and prices of raw materials have gone up, many handloom weavers lost their livelihood. They became bankrupt and are committing suicides. Taking note of hardships of weavers, our Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy is providing financial assistance of Rs 24000 per annum under 'Netanna Nestam' (weaver's friend) scheme. In this manne Rs 200 crores are being spent for the welfare of weavers in the state of Andhra Pradesh, whereas Union Government is providing only Rs 350 crores for the welfare of weavers in 28 states and 8 union territories. On one hand one State is providing Rs 200 crores whereas Union Government is providing only Rs 350 crores for the whole country.

This clearly indicates that the Union Government is neglecting the welfare of handloom workers. Sir we do not have separate handloom ministry. The situation is like tying a tiger and a goat in one room, in such a scenario, how long goat survives we don't know.

Therefore I request Union Government to form a separate Ministry for handlooms. I also make following suggestions for the welfare of handloom workers. I request the Union Government to set up Textile Park in Kurnool for handloom workers. Through value addition you may kindly provide international market facility for handloom production. The way Indian government made Yoga popular throughout the world, in similar manner I request the Government to popularize handloom products which are eco friendly and protect environment. I also request the Union Government to take steps to make handloom products popular.

Thank you, sir.