

Statement

Details of Main Recommendations of Expert High Powered Committee on Handloom Sector

1. All major handloom concentrated States may set up a separate Departments of Handlooms. State Handloom Corporations and Apex Societies should be revitalised by providing suitable rehabilitation package.
2. A National Handloom Credit Fund with a Corpus of atleast of Rs. 500 crores may be set up for providing credit to the weavers outside the cooperative fold.
3. NABARD may consider waiving the provisions with regard to the guarantee cover in respect of limits sanctioned. Loss Guarantee Scheme may be introduced to protect the interest of the Banks. The Credit for trading in yarn may also be refinanced at 9½% interest rate.
4. All State Governments may exempt Hank Yarn and Handloom products from any tax, including Sales tax, Entry tax and Octroi.
5. Wide spread availability of testing facilities, particularly in the handloom concentrate areas may be ensured and a scheme may be introduced to make the Handloom Corporations/Apex Societies achieved and other BIS-14000/ISO-9000 standards.
6. A National Handloom Centre may be set up to maintain handloom collection of contemporary excellence, to document the information of handlooms and to undertake research on handlooms.
7. Marketing complexes including handloom haats and permanent exhibition sites at Village, sub-division, district and town level in large numbers may be set up by the Central/ State Governments or their agencies.
8. A comprehensive project package for development of exportable products should be developed.
9. A Calamity Relief Scheme may be introduced to provide support for purchase of handlooms and other accessories, subsidy on purchase of Hank Yarn under Hank Yarn Subsidy Scheme, enhanced availability of credit, ensured buy-back of production and to provide immediate relief under various ongoing Schemes of the State Governments.
10. Welfare Schemes may include all handloom workers and not just weavers. Coverage of Handloom workers under the Welfare Schemes of the Handlooms should be substantially stepped up both in cooperative and outside the cooperative fold.

11. Special thrust under ongoing Schemes handlooms sector may be given for overall development of North-Eastern States, by providing additional financial input, where required.

UK Investment

1189. SHRIMATI JAYWANTI NAVINCHANDRA MEHTA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "£ 3 billion UK Investment are in pipeline" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated January 12, 1997; and

(b) if so, the areas identified for this investment and the measures being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) During the years 1991-96, the Government of India has approved investment proposals from UK firms to the tune of Rs. 52.4 billion.

(b) During the meeting of the Indo-British Partnership Initiative held in January, 1997, potential areas of cooperation identified 'by the both sides are : infrastructure, financial services, education and training, mining, tourism and manufacturing. Government of India has instituted simple, transparent, automatic and rational system for attracting foreign direct investment into India including from UK.

Production of Rubber

1190. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government provide training to farmers for the production of best quality of natural rubber;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of small and marginal rubber growers in the country particularly in the State of Kerala;

(d) whether any financial or other assistance is being given to them to improve the quality of their produce;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether any institutions or industries for purification of rubber sheets produced by farmers are functioning in the country;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) the steps taken to ensure production of best quality of natural rubber in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) Yes, Sir.