

Title: Urged the Union Government to provide more incentives to handloom weavers and announce rebate schemes to help them sell their produce.

*SHRI K. KKALIAPPAN (GOBICHETTIPALAYAM): Hon"ble Speaker Sir, at the outset I would like to thank you and our leader and the General Secretary of our party AIADMK and the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi who have enable me to speak in this august House.

I would like to bring to the notice of this august House the sorry plight of the handloom weavers in Tamil Nadu especially in my constituency Gopichettipalayam.

Bhavani, Sathiamangalam, Nambiyur, Bhavanisagar, Perundurair, Oothukkuli, Puliyangudi, Thottapalayam are the places in my constituency in which there live about one and a half lakhs of weavers and most of them are traditional artisans.

In the recent times, due to the new textile policy of this Government, handloom weavers have been put to great hardship. This has resulted in a decline of this industry. Handloom sector has not got protection and adequate incentive and hence there is recession in that sector. The handloom weavers who have taken up this occupation generations together are at a great loss now. They have become debtors as their livelihood has been greatly affected. Their families are put to great suffering and even go without food. Even the co-op societies that they rely on suffer from financial crunch. Even the yarn is not available to them. Powerloom sector throws an unequal race. Even the categories of textiles that they been set apart by the Supreme Court exclusively for handloom sector are being produced by the powerloom sector which make huge profits. But our traditional weavers who are part of the warp and web of our culture and tradition are left high and dry.

I am afraid that our weavers may be driven to the path of suicidal deaths as it happened in Andhra Pradesh, where farmers committed suicide due to debt traps. More than one and a half lakh weavers and their families are worst affected deprived of their livelihood. I urge upon the Union Government to take adequate steps on humanitarian considerations and more incentives may be given to handloom weavers and rebate schemes may be announced to help them sell their produce.

* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.