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Title: Need to address the problems being faced by the Cotton Weavers Cooperative Societies in Hooghly district of West Bengal.

DR. RATNA DE (HOOGHLY): I would like to bring to the notice of the Govt. the plight of the poor cotton weavers of my constituency, i.e., Hooghly district of West Bengal. Thousands of Weavers have been suffering from untold miseries with the withdrawal of schemes like Rebate on Sale, contributory Provident Fund, Interest Subsidy etc. which have pushed the members of the Co-operative Societies on the brink of disaster. Apart from this sub-standard quality of thread manufactured by National Handloom Development Corporation, Kolkata and its rising prices, inadequate facility of lifting of products by Govt. agencies, denial of pension to all the weavers on attaining the age of 60 years due to insufficient funds have only further deteriorated the condition. I would, therefore, urge upon the Govt. to restore schemes that were in existence earlier but withdrawn later and also to ensure to provide quality cotton thread at reasonable prices, improve existing marketing facility, enhancement of pension funds, improvement in the salary structure, implementation of Mahatma Gandhi Weavers Insurance Scheme and Health Scheme as also bringing the members of cotton weavers at par with members of other co-operatives in the country. Considering the seriousness of the problem of the cotton weavers co-operative societies, I would strongly urge upon the Govt. to look into the grievances immediately and announce a package for their survival.