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Title: Need to control price of yarn to save the weavers in handloom industry.

*SHRI P. LINGAM (TENKASI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Textiles sector and specifically the Handloom Sector is seriously affected due to the unprecedented rise in yarn price. I would like to draw the attention of this august House to the plight of handloom weavers all over the country who have been hit hard by the skyrocketing yarn price that has greatly affected the traditional handloom industry in a big way. Mostly, the poorest sections of our society are carrying out this handloom weaving jobs as their livelihood down the centuries. Even the poor agricultural labour take up this during the off-season. In order to give protection to these people, care has usually been taken to give a buffer to handloom sector in particular whenever yarn prices go up. The security extended to them used to be in the form of subsidies to make available yarn at an affordable price. But today, what we see is to the contrary. The unprecedented yarn price rise has hampered the handloom sector in such a way that many of the handloom weavers have to go

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil

without livelihood and even food. Starvation deaths are at these hapless people too. Many of the handloom weaving societies are facing closure now. In Tamil Nadu, out of 18 cooperative spinning mills established to protect the interests of handloom weavers, only 5 are functioning now. There is something wrong with the Textiles Policy in this country which has led to a situation where big trading houses are able to export cotton depriving these spinning mills to carry on with their industrial activity. The cotton procurement by the Cotton Corporation of India benefits big capitalists in the export trade instead of extending the benefit to the needy handloom sector and the poor handloom weavers. Only big mills are protected and small cooperative spinning mills are left to fend for themselves due to which many of them are not able to continue with their functioning extending the benefits of providing yarn at an affordable price to the handloom weavers. The cooperative handloom weaving units that were entirely dependent on this yarn are now totally deprived of this protection shield. In the absence of the availability of cotton and yarn, many of the cooperative handloom societies are waning away. Hence I urge upon the Union Government to extend subsidy to benefit the handloom weavers ensuring the availability of cotton yarn at an affordable price. It is also imperative to protect our traditional handloom industry by way of insulating the handloom weavers from the vagaries of market forces. The Government must also come forward to procure and market the handloom products to give a boost to handloom industry and help save the poor handloom weavers all over the country.