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**FOURTH REPORT**

**COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN  
(2005-2006)**

**(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

**WORKING CONDITION OF WOMEN IN HANDLOOM SECTOR**

**MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**

**FOURTH REPORT**

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**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**

**NEW DELHI**

**December, 2005/ Agrahanaya/ Pausa, 1927 (Saka)**

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**MINISTRY OF TEXTILES**

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2005*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2005*

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December, 2005.

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN**  
**(2005-2006)**

**CHAIRPERSON**      **Smt. Krishna Tirath**

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Joachim Baxla
3. Smt. M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
4. Shri C.K. Chandrappan
5. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
6. Smt. Manorama Madhawraj
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19. Smt. Tejashwini See Ramesh
20. Smt. Jayaben Thakkar

**RAJYA SABHA**

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25. Smt. Hema Malini
26. Smt. S.G. Indira
27. \* Smt. Brinda Karat
28. Smt. Kum Kum Rai
29. Smt. Maya Singh
30. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

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**\*Nominated vice Smt. Chandra Kala Pandey, MP, w.e.f 10<sup>th</sup> September, 2005.**

## **INTRODUCTION**

**I, the Chairperson of Committee on Empowerment of Women, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present the Fourth Report (Fourteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee, on the subject 'Working Condition of Women in Handloom Sector'.**

2. The Report is based on the material received from the Ministry of Textiles and impressions gained by the Committee during their study visit to some of the States.

3. The Committee on Empowerment of Women took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Textiles and Development Commissioner (Handlooms) on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2005, in connection with examination of the subject.

4. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on Empowerment of Women (2005-2006) at their sitting held on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2005. The Minutes of the sitting form Part II of the Report.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Officials of the Ministry of Textiles and Development Commissioner (Handlooms) for placing before them the detailed written notes on the subject and furnishing desired information in connection with the examination of the subject.

6. For facility of reference, the Observations and Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

**NEW DELHI;**

**December, 2005**

Agrahayana/Pausa, 1927 (Saka)

**(KRISHNA TIRATH)**

**CHAIRPERSON**

COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

**WORKING CONDITION OF WOMEN IN HANDLOOM SECTOR**

## REPORT

### INTRODUCTORY

Indian Handlooms constitute a very important segment in textile industry. They reflect diverse traditions and heritage of different parts of the country and are a major source of employment to millions. This sector plays a very important role in the country's economy. It is one of the largest economic activities providing direct employment to about 65 lakhs persons engaged in weaving and allied activities. The Committee have been informed that as a result of Government intervention through financial assistance and implementation of various welfare and development schemes, this sector has been able to withstand competition from power loom and mill sectors. This industry has not only survived but also grown over the decades due to inherent strength like flexibility of production in small quantities, openness to innovation, low level of capital investment and immense possibility of designing fabrics. The 1995-96 Power loom and Handloom Census has revealed that out of 65 lakhs working in weaving and allied activities, 32.27 lakhs were women weavers. The Committee were informed that 6,03,247 women were working as full time weavers as compared to 9,98,286 male full time weavers. There were 2, 23, 915 male and 15,00,640 female part time weavers which clearly showed that more of the women i.e. about 71 per cent of the women weavers were employed in part time working in handloom sector. As regards persons engaged in allied activities such as pre-loom preparatory work, it was informed that out of the 17, 26,976 persons engaged in allied activities, 11,19,397 women i.e. 65% were women.

2. The Committee have been informed that since Handlooms are essentially a household activity, the workers namely weavers are self-employed. The men are engaged in weaving while the women contribute to pre-loom work like the warp winding by hand, winding of the pirn, preparation of the shuttles and winding of headdles (tilli). In some parts of the country, women also contribute to pre loom dyeing. In addition, women also take up these pre-loom processes on piece rate basis from other weavers in the neighbourhood. There are, however, variation from State to State. In some States, larger share of women weavers are full time weavers, this includes 65 per cent of women weavers in Andhra Pradesh, Tripura and West Bengal, 77 per cent in Tamil Nadu, 79% in Karnataka and 95% in Kerala. In States like Assam, Nagaland and Manipur, most of the women are weavers themselves although it may be an adjunct activity to agriculture. In such cases, the women undertake such ancillary activities in addition to their household chores and may even undertake agricultural labour on some days, or to supplement household income from weaving. In other cases, the women may take these pre-loom processes as a community activities on the basis of mutual assistance between households as in North-East States.

### **Schemes for Handloom Weavers**

3. The Committee have been informed that the Government of India have introduced a number of Schemes for the development of handloom sector and welfare of the weavers. During the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan, the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has been implementing the following schemes in the country.



- 1) Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana
- 2) Marketing Promotion Programme
- 3) Handloom Export Scheme
- 4) Mill Gate Price Scheme
- 5) Scheme for reimbursement of one time rebate @ 10% given by the handloom agencies on the sale of handloom cloth.
- 6) Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme.
- 7) Weavers Welfare Scheme comprising:
  - Health Package Scheme
  - Thrift Fund Scheme
  - New Insurance Scheme
- 8) Bunkar Bima Yojana
- 9) Integrated Handloom Training Project.
- 10) Design Development and Training Programme.
- 11) Implementation of Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985.

4. The Committee desired to know the specific Schemes which are applicable to women weavers in handloom sector, the Ministry in their reply have stated that handloom sector schemes are related to weavers in general. There is no scheme which is specifically applicable to women weavers. Since the schemes and programmes being implemented by Government of India are not gender specific, the benefits of these schemes percolate down to women weavers also.

5. On being asked as to whether the Ministry is contemplating to launch any new incentive schemes to encourage part time women weavers to shift to full time weaving activities, the Ministry in their reply have stated that no such scheme is being contemplated at present. After all the weaving is on the facet of handloom production, there are other activities in the production process in which women folk are involved.

6. In this regard, the Secretary, Ministry of Textiles during evidence stated:

“I must admit that in handloom sector, a large number of women are there. I do admit that we should take steps to give special focus on their training and upgradation of their skills and also to improve their living conditions.-----We should be more sensitive to this cause from this year onwards”.

7. The Committee enquired as to why no gender specific scheme has been launched so far, the Ministry have clarified that the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development which is the nodal department for women and child development, is implementing gender specific scheme for women. The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has been created for the overall development and promotion of the Handloom Sector and welfare of handloom weavers in general as such. Therefore, no gender specific scheme has been implemented. Since women constitute a large percentage of handloom weavers, a large percentage of the funds being provided for handloom weavers, automatically flows to women weavers.

8. On being asked as to whether any survey/study had been carried out to identify the problems being faced by women weavers, the Ministry have stated that no such survey/study has been carried out so far by the Ministry or any independent organization. As regard the reasons for not carrying out any survey, even though there is a large number of women weavers in this Sector, the Ministry have stated that schemes and programmes in the handloom sector are not gender specific and also that in the handloom sector most of the weavers are women. The schemes and programmes are modified from time to time in accordance with the requirements, recommendations and feedback received from State Governments at various forums.

9. In this regard, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles during evidence stated:

“no survey has been carried out but if the Committee so recommends, we will certainly do it.”

### **Implementing Agencies**

10. The Committee have been informed that the following implementing agencies are involved in the implementation of various schemes meant for development and growth of Handloom Sector:-

1. National Level Handloom Organisations.
2. State Handloom Development Corporations.
3. Apex Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies/Federations.
4. Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies.
5. Weavers Service Centers.
6. NGOs/Self Help Groups (SHG).

11. On being asked the nature of involvement of NGOs/SHGs in implementation of the schemes, the Ministry have stated that NGOs and SHGs are an eligible agencies for implementation of Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY) and Integrated Handloom Training Project (IHTP). Weavers outside the cooperative fold are also eligible to be covered under the Workshed Cum Housing Scheme and Bunkar Bima Yojana if they organise themselves into satisfactory groups subject to specific approval of the concerned State Governments and the Development Commissioner for Handlooms.

12. As regards to role entrusted to Government at Centre, State and District level for implementing the various schemes, the Ministry have stated that the projects under various schemes being implemented by the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms are formulated by the agencies implementing the schemes viz. the Handloom Development Corporations, Apex Cooperative Societies and Primary Handloom Cooperative Societies or any other agency specially set up by the Government for this purpose; or as may be approved by the Development Commissioner for Handlooms under the overall supervision and control of the State Governments. The proposals are forwarded by the State Governments and funds are released to the implementing agencies through the State Governments. The State Government is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the projects, submission of physical and financial progress report and utilisation certificates. The role of the Central Government primarily is formulation of the Central Sector/Centrally Sponsored Schemes for development and promotion of handloom sector

and welfare of handloom weavers, implementation of the schemes through the State Governments and any other agencies specifically approved in the scheme.

13. With regard to the existing coordination mechanism among Centre, State and District level authorities, the Ministry of Textiles have replied that the implementing agencies submit their projects through their regional field officers to their respective Director Handlooms. The State Government, with the approval of State Level Project Committee/State Level Monitoring Committee forwards the projects to the Government of India for sanction of assistance. The projects found viable and in conformity with the guidelines are sanctioned and assistance is passed on to the implementing agencies through the respective State Government/field offices. The coordination between the State and the Centre thereby helps in selection of viable proposals for sanction of financial assistance.

### **Credit Facilities/Financial Assistance**

14. The Committee have been informed that under following schemes credit facilities/Assistance are provided to weavers:-

1. Swarozgar Credit Card Scheme
2. Mill Gate Price Scheme
3. Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana

National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) provides refinance facilities through State Cooperative Banks (SCB), District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCB) and commercial Banks at concessional rate of interest effective from 13.2.2004 to meet the working

capital requirements of the handloom weavers, including women weavers of the Weavers Cooperative Societies (WCS) and State Handloom Development Corporation (SHDC) for production, procurement and marketing activities as well as the purchase and sale of yarn

15. The Committee desired to be apprised of the factors affecting the institutional flow of credit to weavers sector, the Ministry have stated that NABARD has reported that the factors affecting the institutional flow of credit to weavers sector inter-alia are poor financial health and inefficient management of several weavers cooperative societies, outdated marketing structure and inability of Weavers' Societies to compete with the organised sector. NABARD has further stated that these factors render the credit proposals from weavers society unviable. When asked to indicate the steps taken by the Government to improve the flow of credit to Weavers' Sectors, specially to women concentrated weavers societies, the Ministry have stated that the following steps have been taken by the Government to improve the flow of credit in this Sector:-

- i) Swarojgar Credit Card (SCC) Scheme has been introduced by the Government for adequate & timely availability of the Credit to the weavers & others.
- ii) Deen Dayal HathKargha Protsahan Yojana(DDHPY) inter-alia provides financial assistance for revival of the State Handloom Organisations in order to make them effectively functional and avail credit facilities etc.
- iii) Prime Minister Office has been requested to consider setting up a corpus of Rs. 100 crore to meet the differential cost of effective rate

of lending under NABARD re-finance through SCBs/DCCBS and NABARD re-finance i.e. the rate at which the NABARD receives funds from RBI. The Corpus may be made operational by NABARD.

iv) PMO has also been requested to consider to make the credit available to the Handloom Sector under Differential Rate of Interest @ 4% with enhanced upper ceiling of Rs. 15,000 per weaver/artisan.

**i) Swarozgar Credit Card Scheme**

16. This scheme came into operation w.e.f. 26.9.03 and is being implemented by the Banking Sector, Ministry of Finance through RBI/NABARD and aims at providing adequate and timely credit i.e. working capital/or block capital or both to small artisans, handloom weavers, fisherman, self employed person, rickshaw owners, other micro-entrepreneurs etc. from the banking system in a flexible, hassle free and cost effective manner.

17. This scheme provides for a maximum limit of Rs. 25000/- to be given as term loan, working capital loan or a combination of both to each borrower depending on his requirement for investment, production and consumption @ 9% per annum repayable in 5 years in suitable instalments. As per information furnished by NABARD, 1,50,615 Credit Cards have been issued during the year 2004-05. However, NABARD has informed that their reporting system does not provide borrower-category-wise details.

**ii) Mill Gate Price Scheme.**

18. The objective of this scheme is to make available all type of yarn at Mill Gate Price to the eligible handloom weavers so as to facilitate regular supply of basic raw materials to the handloom sector. National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) Ltd. Lucknow, is the only Public Sector Undertaking implementing the Mill Gate Price Scheme and the transportation cost involved in the supply of raw material is being reimbursed by Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms to NHDC. NHDC has been supplying yarn to the State Handloom Corporation/Apex bodies/Cooperative Societies and other individual agencies, as per the recommendation of Director of Handlooms & Textiles of the respective States. This scheme is not gender specific. NHDC does not have data regarding the facilities availed by women under the scheme.

**iii) Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY)**

19. The Ministry have stated that the objectives of this scheme are as under:-

- a) to provide necessary support in an integrated and comprehensive manner to upgrade skills and knowledge of weavers alongwith basic inputs for product development and its diversification, in order to have an easy access, to both indigenous and markets abroad.
- b) To strengthen the Handloom Organisations so as to enable them to effectively provide inputs to the weavers, and provide necessary support to find suitable markets for their products.



- c) To ensure availability of infrastructure and common facilities which would enable development of better product and its diversification.
- d) To make the weaver aware of the demands of the market and to provide assistance for publicity for marketing of handloom goods.
- e) To improve the mobility of the finished handloom products from the State of J&K and North Eastern States including Sikkim.
- f) To provide suitable marketing incentives to attract buyers towards handloom goods.

20. The scheme has been able to provide such facilities which would enable the weavers both within the cooperative fold, as well as those outside, to take up production as per the demands of the market. The scheme inter-alia, caters to the requirements of the weavers towards working capital, basic inputs, creating awareness and also create awareness about the need to support quality fabric production. The Committee have been informed that a provision exists in this scheme for an enhanced ratio of Central assistance of 90% of project cost for those cooperative societies in which 100% of members are women.

21. As regards the criteria/procedure of selecting the other implementing agencies in DDHPY and number of Cooperative Societies and other organisations having 100% beneficiaries as women covered under DDHPY till now the Ministry have stated that as per the guidelines of

the scheme, the following agencies are eligible for any one or combination of the components covered under the scheme on need basis and as per the eligibility:-

1. National Level Handloom Organisations.
2. State Handloom Development Corporations.
3. Apex Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies/Federations.
4. Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies.
5. Self Help Groups/NGOs recognised by State Handloom Corporation and fulfilling the criteria for assistance from CAPART.
6. Weavers Service Centers.

22. While selecting and recommending the proposal of the above implementing agency for grant of assistance under the scheme, the State Government is required to ensure that the components which may require repeated assistance e.g. training, design development, etc. have not been claimed under any other scheme during the last one year for the same set of beneficiaries. The State Government shall also ensure that assistance for the same purpose and for the same set of beneficiaries is not claimed again for activities involving asset creation e.g. purchase of looms, common facility centers etc. The State Government shall also be responsible for effective implementation of the project. Under the DDHPY 33 projects have been sanctioned to organizations that have 100% women as its beneficiaries.

23. The Committee wanted to know the allocation made, expenditure incurred for the implementation of this scheme, the procedure for releasing the funds, the Ministry have furnished the details which are as under:-

Year	Funds allocated	Expenditure Incurred
2000-01	1695.85	1695.85
2001-02	6569.33	6569.33
2002-03	8429.67	8429.67
2003-04	6757.00	6683.80
2004-05	8689.00	8326.48

24. The Committee further desired to know the total number of projects sanctioned under DDHPY Scheme till now and the reasons for low utilization of funds against the allocated amount during the year 2003-2004 and 2004-2005, the Ministry have stated that 3034 projects have been sanctioned under the Basic Input component of DDHPY upto 2004-05 since inception of the scheme. Non receipt of viable proposals from the North-eastern states was the main reason for low utilization of funds during 2003-04 and 2004-05.

25. Asked as to whether NGOs/Self Helps Groups are involved in the implementation of this scheme and whether NGOs/Self Help Groups are granted any grant in this regard, the Ministry have stated that NGOs/SHGs are eligible implementing agencies under this scheme. However, the projects are sanctioned by the Government of India on the basis of viable proposals forwarded by the State Governments with its recommendations.

On the basis of viable proposals received from the State Government, assistance have been extended to 25 NGOs so far under the scheme.

26. The Committee asked the Ministry to furnish the details of amount allocated, released and utilized by the 25 NGOs under DDHPY Scheme. The Ministry have stated that Rs. 202.50 lakh was sanctioned towards 25 projects of NGOs consisting of Rs. 126.875 lakh as Central share, Rs. 69.375 lakh as state share and Rs. 6.25 lakh as beneficiary's contribution. Out of Central share of Rs. 126.875 lakh, Rs. 63.25 lakh was released as 1st instalment. The projects have been sanctioned during the previous year only (October, 2004) and are to be implemented through M/s. Kerala State Handloom Development Corporation (Hanveev). As reported by the State Government, the construction of Common Facility Central/Dyeing Unit is nearing completion. The task of Design Development is entrusted to the National Institute of Design (NID) who have started preparation of designs on the basis of field study. 50% of loom erection is completed and the erection of balance looms is in progress. The Indian Institute of Management, Kozhikode is building up brand name. The project is scheduled to be inaugurated during the month of May, 2005. Hence no utilization certificate has been furnished yet.

27. Asked how many women weavers have been benefited under the Deendayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana Indicating the specific benefits given to women weavers, the Ministry in a note have stated that Rs. 81.42 lakh has been released so far towards margin money, purchase of new looms, accessories, publicity, design etc. to 33 handloom organizations specially to cover 1025 women weavers.

28. The Committee desired the Ministry to state about the improvement in the infrastructure facility for product diversification and quality up-gradation that has been made as a result of implementation of the scheme since its introduction, the Ministry have stated that with the implementation of this scheme, a wide gamut of activities such as product development, infrastructure support, institutional support, supply of equipments and marketing support has lead to overall development of the handloom weavers in an integrated and coordinated manner. The scheme could also enable the weavers both within the cooperative fold as well as those outside to take up production as per the demands of the market.

29. The Committee also desired to know as to how the implementation of this scheme is monitored at the Centre/State/District level, the Ministry in reply have stated that as per the guidelines of the scheme, the State Governments are responsible for making necessary administrative arrangement for overseeing each project and for effective monitoring of its functioning and performance. It is with this in view that State Level Project Committee (SLPC) has been constituted in each State which is involved right from the formulation of project to monitoring its implementation thereafter. The Committee also include the Zonal Director, Weavers Service Centre, as a representative, which is a technical wing of this office. Besides, field visits are also conducted by the Officers of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms to assess the progress as well as impress upon the need for speedy implementation of the projects.

30. The Committee have been informed that the committed liabilities towards the projects sanctioned under the erstwhile Project Package

Scheme, Integrated Handloom Village Scheme, Margin Money for Destitute Weavers and Handloom Development Centre are also met out of the budget provision under the DDHPY Head from 2001-02. The Committee desired to know the total amount sanctioned for the DDHPY scheme and the total amount out of this was utilised for committed liabilities towards erstwhile projects, the Ministry have stated that an amount of Rs. 31705.13 lakh has been released so far since the inception of the scheme, out of which Rs. 29775.61 lakh has been towards the components covered under the DDHPY and Rs. 1929.52 lakh towards committed liabilities of erstwhile projects. In reply to a query, the Ministry have stated that in the case of erstwhile schemes no special dispensation was made in respect of women weavers.

31. The Committee have been informed that the Projects under the DDHPY Scheme are sanctioned by the Government of India only when the State Government certifies that adequate budget provision is available with the State to match its requisite share under the project. The Committee, in this regard, desired to know if any State Government having quite a large of women weavers does not make any budget provision for the projects under the aforesaid scheme, then whether the Central Government extend its support to the women weaves under this Scheme. The Ministry have replied that as per the guidelines of the scheme, it is necessary for the State Governments to make adequate budget provision in the State to match its requisite share under the project. No project can be sanctioned by the Government of India to any handloom organisation, including those covered fully by women weavers.

### **Training Programmes for skill upgradation**

32. The Committee have been informed that the **Design Development and Training Programme (DDTP)** is a Scheme providing for upgradation of skill of weavers through a variety of training programmes, workshops and exhibitions and for development of design inputs to be disseminated to weavers, collection of traditional designs and the provision of linkages between various agencies in the handloom sector for coordinating the designs, technological and skill based factor for developing products to meet market demand and improve productivity of the handloom weavers. The Scheme comprises the components like Strengthening of Weavers Service Centers and Indian Institute of Handloom Technology (IIHT) and Grant to IIHTs, Decentralized Training Programme for Weavers, National Centre for Textile Design and Research and Development.

33. On being asked to furnish the details of women weavers who were given training under various scheme during each of the last three years, the Ministry have furnished the scheme-wise details of training given to women weavers during the said period which are as under:-

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of Scheme</b>	<b>2002-03</b>	<b>2003-04</b>	<b>2004-05</b>	<b>Total</b>
1.	Design Exhibition-cum-Workshops	13055	13674	12543	39272
2.	Short Term Training Programme	215	251	318	784
3.	Decentralised Training Programmes/IHTP	1777	1981	2907	6665
				<b>Total</b>	<b>46721</b>

34. Asked to furnish reasons for low number of women weavers trained under short term training courses, the Ministry of Textiles in their post evidence reply have stated that the Short Term Training Course is fee based course conducted by Weavers Service Center for updating technical know-how of the crafts men engaged in handloom industry. Asked to state the steps taken to popularise the Short term training courses among women weavers, the Ministry in their post evidence reply have stated that short term training programmes are popularized during the Design exhibition cum Dyeing Workshop and also during the visits by the officials of the WSCs to the handloom areas.

35. As regards the number of women who have been imparted training in IIHTs, the Ministry have stated that the number of girl students who have completed the three years Diploma course in Handloom Technology and Post Diploma in Textile Chemistry in last three years is as under:-

Year	No. of girls students passed
2002-03	31
2003-04	30
2004-05	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

36. Replying to a query, the Ministry of Textiles have stated that there are no reservations for the women candidates as regards to number of seats in these IIHTs are concerned.

37. As regards to the comparative percentage of women weavers vis-à-vis male weavers who have been given training during the last three



years under DDTP, the Ministry of Textiles have furnished the following details

Year	%age of male	%age of female
2002-03	76.88	23.12
2003-04	63.72	36.28
2004-05	70.04	29.96

38. Another scheme for imparting training to weavers is **Integrated Handloom Training Project (IHTP)** introduced in December 2003 which envisages imparting of comprehensive training to handloom weaver/workers and artisans in technical, managerial and marketing skills to enable them to produce and market high value and diversified quality products in keeping with current trends in domestic and international market, and providing the workers with equipment.

39. Asked to furnish details of the training imparted to weavers with special reference to women weavers during each of the last three years and the expenditure incurred on such training programme, the Ministry have stated that the training Scheme is not gender specific. The trainees are imparted training on their specific requirement like designing, weaving, dyeing, managerial etc. No specific budget allocation has been made for the training of women and the training is given to all the beneficiaries proposed by the agencies irrespective of the gender.

40. The Committee desired to know why no specific provisions of training have been made for women weavers, the Ministry in their reply have stated that Integrated Handloom Training Project has been

introduced in December, 2003 to honour the announcement of the then Hon'ble Prime Minister on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2002 for skill upgradation of 90,000 handloom weavers irrespective of the gender of the weaver. This scheme provides equal opportunity to the male and female weavers to come forward for training.

41. The representative of Ministry of Textiles during evidence stated that under IHTP, 9590 weavers were imparted training during the year 2003-04 out of which about 2000 were women weavers. The witness further added that the training is being imparted through the Weaver Service Centers.

42. Asked to furnish the reasons for such a low coverage of women weavers under IHTP and also the steps taken to augment the coverage of women weavers under the aforesaid scheme, the Ministry in their post evidence reply have stated that the Women are generally involved in pre-loom activities i.e. winding, warping sizing, dyeing etc. and also in weaving activity. Women weavers are mainly in the northeastern region where the weaving is a household activity and production is done for their own consumption. Further, it also depends upon the proposals submitted by the implementing agency. To augment the coverage of more number of women weavers, WSCs & State Governments are being suitably informed.

43. The Committee desired to know the details of financial assistance released to the NGOs for the implementation of the Integrated Handloom Training Project, the Ministry in their reply have stated that as per the guidelines of the IHTP Scheme, NGO's while implementing the said programme are required to submit duly audited original bills/vouchers to Weavers Service Centre (WSC) concerned after implementation of the

programme. Since the funds are routed through WSC concerned and are not in the form of a grant-in-aid, therefore, NGOs are not required to file the utilization certificate of the funds released to them.

### **Marketing Programmes**

44. The Committee have been informed that for marketing the products of the weavers, there is **Marketing Promotion Programme (MPP)**. MPP is an integrated Scheme inclusive of components for Publicity and Awareness, setting up of Marketing Complexes and organisation of Exhibitions and Fairs through various agencies to promote the marketing of handlooms in the country and to improve level of awareness among handloom weavers and the general public in the interest of overall development of the handloom sector.

45. The Committee desired to know whether any special incentives/facilities have been provided to women weavers to link them to the market so as to enable them to respond to the changing market situation and demands and also the details of exhibitions, if any organised particularly for the benefit for the women weavers. In response, the Ministry have stated that exhibitions are conducted for handloom weavers which include both men and women to link them to the market so as to enable them to respond to the changing marketing situation and demands. Total 94 exhibitions were conducted during last 4 years. However, no special exhibition has been conducted exclusively for women weavers.

46. The Committee desired to know whether these 94 exhibitions conducted during the last 4 years are adequate for the whole country, the Ministry in their reply have stated that by and large the number of

exhibitions conducted is considered adequate in the context of the objectives of these exhibitions.

### **Welfare and Social Security Measures**

47. The Ministry have informed that for the welfare of the weavers, the Ministry of Textiles have been implementing following schemes:-

- i) Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme
- ii) Bunkar Bima Yojana
- iii) Health Package Scheme
- iv) New Insurance Scheme

#### **i) Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme**

48. Workshed-cum-Housing scheme was introduced in 1985-86 with the objective of providing a dwelling unit and suitable work place for weavers so as to improve their productivity, quality of life and earnings. The Central assistance under the scheme is provided for the construction of Rural/Urban Worksheds/Workshed-cum-Houses. During the financial year 2004-05 workshed/.workshed-cum-houses were sanctioned to 12008 weavers including women beneficiaries. According to Ministry of Textiles, funds under the scheme are sanctioned on the basis of viable proposals submitted by the State Governments.

#### **ii) Bunkar Bima Yojana**

49. The Ministry of Textiles have stated that the Government of India introduced a Special Contributory Insurance Scheme called “**Bunkar Bima Yojana**” during December, 2003 in pursuance of the announcement made by the then Prime Minister in his Independence Day Address to the Nation on August 15, 2002. This Scheme is a combination of the Janshree Bima

Yojana and ADD-on Group Insurance Scheme implemented in collaboration with the Life Insurance Corporation of India. The objective of the scheme is to provide enhanced insurance coverage to the handloom weavers in case of natural as well as accidental death.

50. The Committee desired to know the number of women weavers covered under the Bunkar Bima Yojana since inception. The Ministry of Textiles have replied that total 201152 weavers including women weavers have been covered in 2004-05. On being asked to furnish the reasons for non acceptance of Bunkar Bima Yojana by all the weavers, the Ministry of Textiles have stated that approximately 2.35 lakh weavers have been covered under the scheme. The Government of India has also been requesting the State Governments to popularize the scheme among weavers. During the year Rs. 21.43 lakh was released to various State Governments for carrying out publicity campaign under the scheme.

**iii) Health Package Scheme**

51. The Committee have been informed that Health Package Scheme was introduced in 1992-93. Under the scheme financial assistance is provided to weavers for the treatment of diseases like asthma, TB, inflammation of the respiratory system, cost of testing of eyes and spectacles, supply of drinking water, maternity benefits to women weavers, payment of additional compensation for adopting permanent family planning measures and infrastructure for primary health care on a reimbursement basis.

52. The Committee desired to know whether any specific hospitals are set up in the localities nearing the clusters of women weavers for giving

them medical aid, the Ministry have stated that there is no provision under the scheme for setting up specific hospital for handloom weavers. However, there is a provision for infrastructure for primary health center under the scheme under which a sum of Rs. 1.00 lakh is provided for the infrastructure of primary health center in a village or area having the population of 150 households. As regards the beneficiaries under the scheme the Ministry have stated that total 847294 number of weavers have been benefited since inception upto 2004-05.

53. The Secretary during oral evidence stated that

“So far, we have been covering under the health scheme around 20000 people. This year, we have got funds from the Government of India for covering two lakh people. We are increasing it by ten times.”

54. The Committee asked about the details of primary health centers created under health package scheme so far. The Ministry of Textiles have stated that during the year no proposals were received for setting up primary health centers.

55. As regards the number of women weavers who have been covered during the last five years under the component of maternity benefits the following information has been furnished by the Ministry:-

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of women weavers covered</b>
2000-01	1956
2001-02	252
2002-03	4219
2003-04	1439
2004-05	10278

iv) **New Insurance Scheme**

56. The Ministry of Textiles in a note furnished to the Committee have stated that in the year 1997-98 New Insurance Scheme for handloom weavers was introduced. This scheme provides coverage against various types of risks such as loss of life, permanent total/partial disability due to accident, loss of dwelling units and raw material due to natural calamities reimbursement of expenses for treatment towards injury etc., maternity benefits and hospitalization at a premium of Rs. 120 per annum with contributions of Rs. 20 by the weaver Rs. 40 by State Government and Rs. 60 per annum by the Government.

57. The witness during oral evidence stated that they had discussed with officials of Insurance Company and very soon they are going to announce that not only weavers but their wives and two children would also be covered. It is expected that coverage of about Rs. 15,000 would be provided for four persons of the weavers' family. Under this, half of the coverage i.e. Rs. 7500 is provided for OPD and Rs. 7500 for Hospitalisation. Entire family would be covered under this scheme. They would announce the scheme this year and have made budget provisions also for the scheme.

58. Secretary, Ministry of Textiles during evidence elaborated further:-

“Similarly, under the insurance scheme also, we were covering only about two lakh weavers out of total 65 lakh weavers. This year, we went to the Finance Ministry and got funds for covering 20 lakh weaver. It is going to be broad-based from the current year onwards because the Government wants to give a thrust to the handloom sector as well. We will get about Rs. 40 crore for these two schemes alone in the current year, in addition to our normal budget of Rs. 150 crore. With this, our coverage would be more. We could even advertise in the papers that the schemes are there. However, some

contribution from the weaver, around Rs. 40 to Rs. 50, is necessary for participating in this scheme besides contribution from the State Government because we want to involve State Government in this process.”

59. Asked as to why the Government could not cover the entire weavers population of 66 lakhs weavers through this scheme the Secretary, Ministry of Textiles during evidence stated:-

“So far, we have been covering at the rate 20000. There are two things. One is, I must admit, that these statistics of handloom weavers based on 1995-96 Census may not be correct. What has happened is over the years handloom weavers have migrated into other occupations because of better opportunities being available and the children of handloom weavers are not in the field of weaving. I have visited some of the handloom areas. They find it better to go to other areas. Therefore, the figure of 65 lakhs is not very reliable. If I find that there is a demand for this kind of insurance, we are confident that we can convince the Finance Ministry and get additional funds.”

60. The Committee desired to know the details of the specific provisions of various social security schemes which are applicable to the women weavers, the Ministry of Textiles have replied that no special provision is there for women weavers under these schemes. However, under Health package component of the weavers welfare scheme, a provision has been made for women weavers for availing maternity benefits.

61. In reply to a query regarding adequacy of existing provisions of various social security schemes to protect/safeguard the interest of women weavers, the Ministry of Textiles stated that the existing provisions of various welfare schemes are adequate to protect the interest of all weavers including women weavers.



## **Demarcation of Powerloom and Handloom Sectors**

62. The Ministry of Textiles in their note have stated that with a view to protecting the interests of the handloom weavers in the country from the encroachment of the powerloom and mill sector or their livelihood, the Government of India in its Textile Policy of 1985 promulgated the **Handloom (Reservation of Articles of Production) Act, 1985** dated 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1985. Under the Act, protection to the handloom sector was extended by way of reserving certain textiles articles, which were traditionally being produced on handlooms for lower and middle class. At present 11 textile articles or class of articles reserved for exclusive production on handloom, which were notified, vide SO No. 557 (E) dated 26<sup>th</sup> July 1996 and this order is still in operation.

63. The Committee desired to be apprised as to what extent the provision containing the Reservation of Articles for Production Act have protected the interests of the weavers with special reference to women weavers. The Ministry in their note have stated that the Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 was enacted with a view to protect the interest of the handloom weavers in the country including women weavers from the encroachment made on their livelihood by powerlooms and mill sector. The implementation of the Handlooms(Reservation of Articles for Production) Act 1985 has resulted in the protection of handloom weavers including women weavers all over the country.

64. The Committee raised a query as to what steps have been taken to see that there is a proper demarcation so that powerloom does not

encroach on the handloom sector, the representative of Ministry of Textiles during evidence stated:-

“We have a scheme whereby we fund all the State Governments for creating inspecting staff, to conduct surprise raids on powerloom units. In case there is encroachment on the 11 items reserved for the handloom sector, we take action on them. Almost 1,39,000 units have been inspected and 180 cases have been filed. About 70-80 have resulted in conviction”

65. The witness added:-

“I may also bring to your notice that sometimes it is very difficult to find out, off hand, whether it was made of handloom or powerloom. It needs a microscope to make out. While we are trying our best to do this, in Andhra Pradesh for instance, a lot of court cases have been filed against our staff, stating that they are creating trouble for powerlooms. So, there is certain amount of opposition also. But from our side, over one lakh units have been inspected and we are very alert. We are also funding the States under the Reservation Act, Scheme I have got the figure also. The total number of cases or violation is 188, the total number ended up in conviction is 146. The total number of cases of violation pending in lower courts today is 19 and with the State Government machinery is 23. We have been very actively going and inspecting the units so that they do not encroach on the handloom products.”

66. It was pointed out that in some areas items reserved for handloom were produced by the powerloom which was a very clear violation and ultimately handloom weavers were suffered the representative of the Ministry during evidence stated:-

“We have always advised the State Governments also, whenever we meet the Commissioners or the Directors, at some meetings or otherwise. The rights of the handloom weavers must be protected. It is the responsibility of the State Governments also. Sometimes, there may be some officer who is the Head of the Department of Textiles, who will be handling these two sectors, at the Central Government level, it has been our effort always to convince them to see that the rights of the handloom weavers are protected. Even the staff which is there in the existing units in all the States, is on deputation because we do not have that much staff to

put in all the States of the country, but we fund their salaries etc. So, we will again take up your concern with the State Governments so that they are more vigilant.”

### **Awareness of Schemes**

67. As regard the generation of awareness among women weavers about the social security schemes available to them, the Ministry of Textiles have stated that the guidelines of the schemes have been circulated to all State Directors' In-charge of handlooms for making the weavers including women weavers aware of the schemes implemented by the Government of India. During the year 2004-2005, a publicity campaign was made to generate awareness of various handloom sector schemes among the weavers including the women weavers in different parts of the country.

68. In reply to a query, the Ministry have stated that during the year 2004-05, sensitization programmes on various handloom sector schemes were conducted through National Handloom Development Corporation Ltd., in Assam, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal for making the weavers aware of the different handloom sector scheme. Efforts are being made to cover other states also during the current financial year.

69. The Ministry of Textiles have further stated that a letter regarding Bunkar Bima Yojana was addressed to all the State Governments for carrying out adequate publicity campaign such as bringing out advertisements in local newspaper, radio press etc. in local language about the handloom sector schemes being implemented by the Government of India. The guidelines of the IHTP schemes were circulated to all State Directors in-Charge of Handlooms immediately after formulation of the said

schemes. The provisions of the scheme inter-alia contain beneficiaries, component of financial assistance, guidelines to implement the scheme.

### **Budgetary Provisions**

70. The Ministry have furnished the details of funds allocated and utilised for implementation of various schemes in handloom sector during the last three years which are as under:-

(Rs. In Crores)

Sl. No.	Year	Budget Estimates(BE)	Revised Estimates(RE)	Actual Expenditure
1.	2002-2003	140.00	133.40	130.83
2.	2003-2004	156.77	136.97	130.28
3.	2004-2005	154.56	157.89	154.09

71. The Ministry have also furnished the budget estimates, revised estimates and actual expenditure of various schemes operated by Development Commissioner(Handlooms) as per the details given below:-

(Rs. In Crores)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	Budget 2002-2003			Budget 2003-04			Budget 2004-05		
		B.E.	R.E.	Expdt.	B.E.	R.E.	Expdt.	B.E.	R.E.	Expdt.
1.	Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana	85.60	86.14	84.66	68.27	68.27	67.34	47.67	87.59	83.96
2.	Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme	10.50	10.50	10.50	17.00	17.98	17.97	20.00	15.00	15.00
3.	Weavers Welfare Scheme	5.65	5.30	5.30	9.13	7.55	5.76	10.00	8.09	8.09
4.	Bunkar Bima Yojana	--	--	--	0	2.40	1.50	5.50	1.95	1.95
5.	Design Development & Training Programme	13.00	8.60	7.85	37.57	12.69	11.98	18.41	4.10	4.00
6.	Marketing Promotion Programme	9.00	9.41	9.26	8.50	8.20	7.91	12.50	9.10	9.09
7.	Implementation of Handloom	2.00	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20	1.20			

	(Reservatio n of Articles for Production) Act 1985									
8.	Handloom Export Scheme	5.25	3.25	3.06	6.10	5.85	4.42	6.50	4.15	4.15
9.	Mill Gate Price Scheme	9.00	9.00	9.00	9.00	12.500	12.00	9.00	11.50	11.50
10.	Integrated Handloom Training Project	--	--	--	---	---	--	24.35	16.06	16.06
11.	WSC(J&K)	--	---	--	--	0.33	0.20	0.63	0.35	0.29
	Total	140.00	133.40	130.83	156.77	136.97	130.28	154.56	157.89	154.09

### **Monitoring Mechanism of Schemes**

72. The Ministry of Textiles in a note furnished to the Committee have stated that the monitoring of implementation of the schemes is to be done by the Director of Handlooms of the concerned State Governments and its field level offices. Government of India is monitoring the schemes through periodical returns, physical and financial progress reports of the State Governments in respect of the sanctioned projects, utilisation certificates and through review by senior officers of the Ministry during their field visits. The concerned State Director in charge of Handlooms is involved in the monitoring of the scheme in as much as he has to countersign the physical & financial report and Utilization Certificates in respect of funds released to the implementing agencies. The State Directorate also monitors the progress through its field functionaries. The State Level Project Committee/the State Level Monitoring Committee are also instruments of monitoring. In reply to a query regarding adequacy of monitoring mechanism, the Ministry of Textiles have stated that so far the monitoring system has been satisfactory. On being asked to furnish the

cases of irregularities which came to their notice as a result of such monitoring, the Ministry of Textiles stated that the existing monitoring mechanism is adequate.

73. In reply to a query with regard to any need to strengthen the existing monitoring mechanism, the Ministry in their reply stated that the existing monitoring mechanism is adequate as it is done by the State Level Committee headed by the Officers of the State Level Secretary and consisting of representatives from the Central Government and the officers involved in the field level activities. It is also followed up with monitoring by the Officers from the Central Government during their visits to the States from time to time. However, it was stated that should any specific recommendation be made, action would be initiated to augment and strengthen the monitoring mechanism further.

74. On being asked the existing monitoring mechanism of various schemes at Central level the representative of the Ministry during evidence stated

“This is basically a state subject”.

75. The Committee then enquired as to how the Ministry at Central level would monitor the implementation of these schemes. The representative of the Ministry during evidence had stated that the Development Commissioner (Handloom) could make a request to State Governments in this regard.

76. In this regard, Secretary, Ministry of Textiles during evidence elaborated

“these schemes are implemented through State Governments. State Governments have got their machinery.”

77. On being asked to state the existing mechanism at Central level the representative of the Ministry stated:-

“We are monitoring the physical and financial aspect.”

78. The Witness added

“our machinery is virtually zero in the field. When we release the first instalment then they give us utilisation certificate. If there is problem at the State level, the machinery will be more proactive and they are also accountable to the people. We expect that the State Governments will be responsible enough and responsive enough.”

### **Grievance Redressal Mechanism**

79. As regard the existing mechanism for the redressal of grievance at Centre/State/District level to redress the grievance/complaints of women weavers, the Ministry have stated that the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has designated and notified a senior officer as Public Grievance Redressal Officer. The Ministry further informed the Committee that no complaint has been received from any women weaver during the last three years period.

80. In this context, the representative of the Ministry stated during oral evidence:-

“All our schemes are implemented through the State Governments. They would be receiving the complaints and they would be taking the corrective steps.”

The Secretary of the Ministry elaborated

“In every district, there is a State Government officer. We will certainly talk to them to find out whether there are any grievances. But they are more close to State Governments. There would be nothing to find out about the compliance.”

81. The Committee during evidence further desired to know the details of the complaints of women weavers received by the State Governments, the Ministry in their post evidence reply have furnished the details of complaints in respect of 27 States wherein they have stated that in Kerala 11 women weavers have made complaints during last one year, out of which 9 were disposed of. In Tamil Nadu, 61 complaints were received, all of which were settled during last one year and in Nagaland 84 complaints were received out of which approximately 20% were disposed of during the year. However, no complaint was received in other states. Most of the complaints received in these three States are of the nature like delay in financial assistance from the Ministry, payment of savings and security scheme amount, payment of old age pension, misappropriation and mismanagement, training schemes etc.

82. As regard the existing mechanism to make aware the women weavers about the grievances redressal mechanism available in the Ministry, the Ministry of Textiles have replied that one Additional Development Commissioner has been appointed as Public Grievance Redressal Officer. This information has been put on the Website "Citizen Charter for Handlooms" Ministry of Textiles ([www.handlooms.nic.in](http://www.handlooms.nic.in)). Besides the Directorate of Handlooms in each State, which monitors and regulates the activities in the handloom sector have its own regional/field offices where the grievances and complaints of the handloom weavers, including women weavers, can be lodged.



**STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

Sl. No.	Para No.	Recommendations/Observations	Ministry/Department
1.	83.	<p>Handloom sector which plays an important role in the country's economy is one of the largest economic activities providing direct employment to about 65 lakh weavers engaged in weaving and allied activities. The 1995-96 Powerloom and Handloom Census has revealed that out of the 65 lakh weavers working in weaving and allied activities, 32.27 lakh were women. Handloom is a household activity in which men are engaged in weaving while women contribute to preloom work like warp winding by hand, winding of the pirn, preparation of the shuttles and winding of headdles (tilli). In some States like Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala, the women weavers are full time weavers in the range of between 65% to 79%. While in other States, women undertake ancillary activities in addition to their household chores to supplement household income from weaving.</p>	Ministry of Textiles
<u>2.</u>	<u>84.</u>	<p>The Committee have been informed that the Government have introduced a number of schemes for the development of handloom sector and welfare of the handloom weavers in the country. At present, 11 such schemes are being implemented by the Development Commissioner for Handloom. The Committee find that no gender specific schemes are being operated by the Ministry in spite of the fact that out of the 65 lakh weavers, there are 32.27 lakh women weavers as revealed by the Census conducted during 1995-96. In this regard, the Ministry of Textiles have informed the Committee that they are not implementing any gender specific schemes as the Department of Women and Child Development, being the nodal Department for women and child development, are implementing specific schemes for women. They have further informed the Committee that though the schemes and programmes implemented by the Government are not gender specific, however, the benefits of such schemes percolate down to women weavers also. The Committee are not satisfied with the reasons given by the Ministry in this regard. The Committee are of</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

		<p>the view that women weavers, who have to discharge the dual responsibility of looking after their household as well as earning livelihood, face many problems arising out of the drudgery of job, less productivity and poor marketing and also various health problems caused by the nature of their job. The Secretary, during evidence, admitted that there is a need to give “special focus on the training and upgradation of their skills and also to improve their living conditions. We should be more sensitive to the cause from this year onwards”. The Committee are of the opinion that women weavers have special needs which have to be addressed, taking into consideration the problems faced by them on day to day basis and this cannot be done in the absence of any gender specific schemes. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to formulate specific schemes exclusively for women weavers and also incorporate specific provisions for the benefit of women weavers in the existing schemes to cater to their needs.</p>	
<u>3.</u>	<u>85.</u>	<p>The Committee are surprised to know that National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC) does not have any data regarding the facilities availed by women weavers under the schemes. The Committee are of the view that such data/record would be of great help for the Ministry/NHDC in formulating specific policies/schemes for women weavers. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to take appropriate steps for maintaining separate data/record regarding the women weavers availing various benefits under the schemes being implemented by the Government.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>4.</u>	<u>86.</u>	<p>The Committee are not happy to be informed that the Ministry have not carried out any survey to find out the basic problems being faced by the handloom weavers till date. The apathy of the Ministry towards this vital issue is nothing but regretful. The Committee are of the view that unless the Ministry are aware of the problems of the weavers, specially women weavers, they cannot take appropriate measures for the improvement of their conditions. The Committee also note that the Ministry have no hesitation in carrying out such a survey, as informed by the Secretary during evidence. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Ministry to get a study/survey carried out to</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

		<p>identify the problems being faced by the weavers so that Government could take appropriate measures in this regard. The Committee would like to be apprised of the outcome of such survey and action taken by the Ministry.</p>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>87.</b>	<p>The Committee find that the schemes formulated by the Government for development and growth of handloom sector are being implemented by various agencies viz (i) National Level Handloom Organisations; (ii) State Handloom Development Corporations; (iii) Apex Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies/Federations; (iv) Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies (v) Weavers Service Centres. The Committee note that the involvement of NGOs and SHGs is restricted only to Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY) and Integrated Handloom Training Project (IHTP) Schemes as they are the eligible agencies for implementation of these two schemes. The Committee have not been informed as to why NGOs and SHGs are not involved in the implementation of other schemes of the Government. The Committee are of the opinion that handloom weavers, specially women weavers, belong to that strata of society which may not be aware of various benefits/facilities extended by the Government and provisions contained in various schemes and also how to avail the benefits of schemes meant for them. The Committee feel that NGOs/SHGs being grassroot functionaries can play a vital role in bridging the gap between the Government and women weavers. The Committee, therefore, desire the Government to explore the possibility of involving NGOs/SHGs in the implementation of all the schemes including Bunkar Bima Yojana, Mill Gate Price Scheme, Handloom Export Scheme, Marketing Promotion Programme and other weavers' welfare schemes so that they could educate the women weavers about various provisions of these schemes and the benefits meant for them. NGOs and SHGs would be of great help in organizing these women weavers into groups for availing the benefits of various schemes formulated by the Government in handloom sector. The Committee further desire that NGOs and SHGs with good credentials and strong financial integrity may only be selected for this purpose.</p>	<b><u>Ministry of Textiles</u></b>

6.	88.	<p>The Committee note that National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) provides refinance facilities through State Cooperative Banks, District Central Cooperative Banks and Commercial Banks at concessional rate of interest to meet the working capital requirements of the handloom weavers including women weavers of the Weavers' Cooperative Societies and State Handloom Development Corporations for production, procurement and marketing facilities as well as the purchase and sale of yarns. The Committee find that a number of schemes have been introduced by the Government to provide credit/financial facilities and raw materials like yarn to handloom weavers. Under Swarajgar Credit Card Scheme, Government provide adequate and timely credit to small artisans, handloom weavers from the banking system in a flexible, hassle-free and cost effective manner and 1,50,615 such credit cards were issued during the year 2004-05. Under Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY), Government extend financial facilities to the weavers. This is the only Scheme which contains special provisions for women weavers. Under this Scheme a provision exists for an enhanced ratio of Central assistance of 90% project cost for those Cooperative Societies in which 100% members are women. Under Mill Gate Price Scheme, the Government makes available all types of yarn at mill gate price to eligible handloom weavers so as to facilitate regular supply of basic raw materials to the handloom sector. However, this Scheme is not gender specific. Besides these Schemes introduced by the Govt, PMO has also been requested by the Ministry to consider (i) setting up of a corpus of Rs. 100 crore to meet the differential cost effective lending under NABARD refinance through State Cooperative Banks/District Central Cooperative Banks; (ii) to make the credit available to handloom sector under differential rate of interest at the rate of 4% with enhanced upper ceiling of Rs. 15,000 per weaver/artisan. The Committee are of the view that these steps/measures taken by the Ministry would go a long way to mitigate the financial hardships of the weavers, specially women weavers and State Handloom Corporations. The Committee, however, desire</p>	<p><u>Ministry of Textiles</u></p>
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		the Government to take appropriate steps and chalk out a time-bound programme so that credit cards be distributed to all the weavers under Swarojgar Credit Card Yojana (SCCY) and maximum number of weavers, particularly women weavers could derive the benefits of SCCY. The Committee further urge the Ministry to pursue the matter with the PMO for expediting decision on these proposals so as to improve financial health and management of the Weavers' Cooperative Societies as well as weavers.	
<u>7.</u>	<u>89.</u>	The Committee find that there is no provision for providing credit facilities to women weavers at concessional rates under various schemes meant for weavers launched by the Ministry. The Committee are of the view that by providing credit facilities to women weavers at concessional rates Government would help them improve their working conditions. As such, the Committee desire the Ministry to work out some ways and means to provide credit to women weavers at concessional rates under consultation with the Ministry of Finance/banking institutions.	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>8.</u>	<u>90.</u>	The Committee note that under DDHPY only 33 handloom organisations having 100% women beneficiaries covering 1025 women weavers, have been able to avail the benefits. The Committee, while expressing their concern over the low coverage of women weavers under this scheme, feel that this scheme, like other schemes of the Ministry, has not been implemented in the right perspective due to inadequate publicity and lack of awareness of the benefits of this scheme among the targeted beneficiaries i.e. women weavers. The Committee, therefore desire that the objectives and components of not only DDHPY but also of all other schemes of Government meant for weavers should be given a wide publicity both through electronic and print media in all the States where there is concentration of weavers, specially women weavers so that they may become aware of these schemes and benefits of these schemes could reach all those areas where women weavers are concentrated.	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>9.</u>	<u>91.</u>	The Committee are not happy to be informed that the committed liabilities towards the	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

		<p>projects sanctioned under erstwhile schemes viz Project Package Scheme, Integrated Handloom Village Scheme, Margin Money for Destitute Weavers and Handloom Development Centres were met out of the budget provisions under DDHPY heads from 2001-02, even though no special dispensation was made in respect of women weavers in the erstwhile schemes. The Committee would like the Ministry to utilise funds allocated under DDHPY for improving infrastructure facilities for product diversification and quality upgradation rather than on the liabilities of erstwhile Schemes, otherwise the very purpose of special provisions for women weavers under the scheme would be defeated.</p>	
<u>10.</u>	<u>92.</u>	<p>The Committee find that the projects under DDHPY Schemes are sanctioned by the government only when the State Government certifies the availability of adequate budget provision with the State to match its requisite share under the project. According to the existing guidelines of the scheme, it is necessary for the State Government to make adequate budget provisions in the State to match its requisite share under the project. The Committee are of the view since the Central Government is responsible for the formulation of Centrally Sponsored Schemes for development and promotion of handloom sector and welfare of the weavers, it is also the responsibility of the Ministry to provide necessary support to the needy weavers. In this regard, the Committee desire the Ministry to persuade the concerned State Governments to make adequate provisions for these schemes in their budget so that the poor weavers specially women weavers are not deprived of the benefits available to them under the Schemes. The Committee also desire the Ministry to take appropriate steps in consultation with the Ministry of Finance and Planning Commission to allocate sufficient funds for these schemes from Central plan allocation.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>11.</u>	<u>93.</u>	<p>The Committee are not happy to be informed that only 46,721 women have been imparted training under different schemes/workshops/programmes viz Design</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

	<p><b>Exhibition-cum-Workshops, Short Term Training Programme, Decentralised Training Programme/IHTP from 2002-03 to 2004-05 specially under short term programme where the number of the women weavers has not reached to even four figures. The Committee are not satisfied with the reason given by the Ministry that this short term training programme is a fee based course conducted by weavers' service centres. The Committee also take note that only 101 girl students have completed training in Indian Institute of Handloom Technology from 2002-03 to 2004-05 and there is no reservation of seats for girl candidates in this Institute. The Committee further find that percentage of women weavers as compared to male weavers who have been given training during the last 3 years under Design Development and Training Programme (DDTP) is very discouraging and it has come down to 29.96 % during 2004-05 from 36.28 % in the previous year. In another scheme i.e. Integrated Handloom Training Project (IHTP) which was introduced in December 2003, the Committee note that only 2000 women weavers have been imparted training, which is not a satisfactory figure. The Committee do not agree with the views expressed by the Ministry that the number of trainees depends upon the proposals submitted by the implementing agencies. The Committee also find that schemes for training of weavers are not gender specific and no special budget has been allocated for training of women weavers under different programmes. The Committee are of the view that the women weavers are not in a position to face competitive environment and improve their productivity till they acquire requisite skill and proper training. Keeping in view the limited skills and inadequate knowledge of women weavers, the need for training for them assumes more importance. Even the Secretary of the Ministry during evidence admitted that there are a large number of women weavers and special efforts are required to give focus to their condition, to their training and upgrading their skills. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to make sincere efforts for covering more women weavers under their various training programmes. Steps should also be taken to organise training programmes for women weavers at the places where there is a</b></p>	
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		<p>concentration of women weavers to enable them to participate in the training programmes without facing any difficulty. Further, in order to augment the number of women weavers in various training programmes specially in short term training programmes, the Ministry should take appropriate steps for giving some concessions to women in the fee structure and also to persuade the Women Cooperative Societies and State Governments to submit more proposals for imparting training to women weavers so as to enable more and more women weavers to take admission in such courses to update their technical know-how. The Committee desire that the Ministry should allocate some seats for women weavers in various training programmes and also take appropriate steps for allocating separate budget for the training programmes meant for women weavers. The Committee also desire that the training programmes undertaken by various Institutes of the Ministry should be periodically reviewed to monitor their utility and effectiveness for women participants.</p>	
<u>12.</u>	<u>94.</u>	<p>The Committee note that marketing promotion programme of the Ministry is an integrated scheme which includes components for publicity and awareness, setting up of marketing complexes and organisation of exhibitions and fairs through various agencies to promote the marketing of handloom in the country. The Committee find that only 94 such exhibitions have been organized during the last four years under this scheme. However, no exhibitions have been organized exclusively for women weavers so far. The Committee desire that not only more such exhibitions be organised but some of them should be organized exclusively for women weavers as it would definitely help in providing better market facilities to them. Besides, such exhibitions should be organised in suburban and small towns also as people of those areas, who do not go to far off places, may avail the benefits of such exhibitions, thereby improving the sale/marketability of products of handloom sector.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>13.</u>	<u>95.</u>	<p>The Committee are happy to know that the Ministry are in constant touch with insurance company and they are in the process of</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>



		<p>finalisation of insurance scheme to cover not only weavers but also their wives and two children under the insurance cover. The Secretary of the Ministry during evidence informed the Committee that the Ministry would get Rs. 40 crore for two schemes which would cover 20 lakh weavers and contributions from States/weavers would be necessary for participating in these schemes. The Committee hope that the new insurance scheme would be announced at the earliest and the Ministry would ensure that the target fixed for the current year is achieved and funds sanctioned for the purpose are fully and timely utilized. The Committee further desire that the provisions contained in the new scheme be given wide publicity so that benefit of the new scheme could reach the targeted beneficiaries. In this regard, the Committee also desire the Ministry to take suitable measures to persuade the State Governments and motivate the targeted beneficiaries to contribute their share under the scheme.</p>	
<u>14.</u>	<u>96.</u>	<p>The Committee find that in order to provide enhanced insurance coverage to handloom weavers, the Government of India have introduced in 2003 a special contributory insurance scheme called 'Bunkar Bima Yojana' which is a combination of 'Janshree Bima Yojana' and 'Add-on Group Insurance Scheme' and is being implemented in collaboration with the Life Insurance Corporation of India. Under this scheme, insurance cover is provided in cases of natural and accidental deaths. The Committee are informed that in 2004-2005 only 201152 weavers have been covered which according to the Committee is not a satisfactory coverage. They feel that there is a need for further increasing the coverage under this scheme. The Committee also find that the Government have released Rs. 21.43 lakh to the State Governments for carrying out publicity campaign under this scheme. The Committee desire that the Ministry should ensure that these funds are properly and timely utilised by the State Governments in order to create awareness among the beneficiaries especially women about the benefits of the scheme.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

<u>15.</u>	<u>97.</u>	<p>The Committee have been informed that under the 'Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme' introduced with the objective of providing dwelling units and suitable work place to weavers so as to improve their productivity, quality of life and earnings, 12008 worksheds-cum-houses were sanctioned to weavers during the year 2004-2005. The Committee emphasise the need to construct, without further delay, these worksheds-cum-houses in or around those places where these weavers are concentrated. The Committee would like to be apprised of the status of construction of such worksheds within a period of three months of the presentation of the Report.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>16.</u>	<u>98.</u>	<p>The Committee have been informed that the Handloom (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act was enacted in 1985 to protect the interests of handloom weavers in the country including women weavers from the encroachment made on their livelihood by powerloom and mill sectors. Under this Act, inspecting staff conduct surprise raids on powerloom units to find out any encroachment on 11 textile articles or class of articles reserved for exclusive production in handloom sector and also to take action against the defaulting unit. The Committee are happy to be informed that 1,39,000 units have been inspected under this Act and 188 cases of violation of this Act have been found and 146 have resulted in conviction. The Committee are of the firm view that there is an urgent need for implementation of this Act more effectively to protect the interest of the handloom weavers including women weavers from the encroachment made on their livelihood by powerloom and mill sectors. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to conduct surprise raids on powerloom units under this Act at regular intervals to find out encroachment, if any, made by them and to take punitive action against the defaulting units.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>
<u>17.</u>	<u>99.</u>	<p>From the figures made available to them, the Committee are constrained to find that there is under-utilization of funds during 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. The Committee also find that there is a fluctuation in Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and actuals during three years i.e. 2002-2003 to 2004-2005. They are</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

		<p>equally concerned to note that against a lower actual expenditure in 2003-2004, the Government have enhanced its projection in budget estimates for 2004-2005, substantially. The Committee have not been informed the reasons therefor. The Committee also find that under Bunkar Bima Yojana the Budget Estimates were Rs. 5.50 crore in the year 2004-2005, while the same were reduced substantially to Rs. 1.95 crore at the Revised Estimates stage. Similarly, under Integrated Handloom Training Project the estimates were brought down to the level of 16.06 crore during the year 2004-2005 from Rs. 24.35 crore in budget estimates. The Committee also find that under the Workshed-cum- Housing scheme, the estimates were brought down to Rs. 15 crore at Revised Estimates stage from Rs. 20 crore at Budget Estimates stage during 2004-2005. The Committee take strong exception to such a casual approach of the Ministry and desire that budgetary exercise should be undertaken keeping in view the actual requirement so that the gap between budgeted estimates, revised estimates and actuals get minimized. The Government should adhere to fiscal prudence, avoid budgetary variations and make budgetary projection and estimates more realistic and accurate in future.</p>	
<u>18.</u>	<u>100.</u>	<p>The Committee have been informed that the monitoring of various schemes is being done by the Directors of Handloom of concerned State Governments and their field level officers. The Committee note that the Central Government monitor these schemes through periodic returns, physical and financial progress reports of the State Governments in respect of the sanctioned projects. Taking note of under-utilisation of funds allocated for a number of schemes, inadequate publicity and public awareness among targeted beneficiaries i.e. weavers specially women weavers which resulted in the poor implementation of the schemes, the Committee feel that the existing monitoring mechanism is not adequate and effective and there is an urgent need for strengthening the existing monitoring mechanism both at the Centre and in the States. The Committee are not happy to be informed by the representative of the Ministry that this is basically a State Subject and the</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

		<p>Ministry monitor the physical and financial aspect. The monitoring mechanism is virtually zero in the field. The Committee are of the view that only through regular monitoring of the implementation of the schemes, the objectives of the schemes i.e. development and welfare of weavers can be achieved. They, therefore, desire that specific guidelines with regard to monitoring of schemes should be issued at regular intervals by the Ministry to the State Governments/Director of Handloom/other implementing agencies responsible for the proper implementation of the schemes. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to take suitable steps in strengthening the existing monitoring mechanism.</p>	
<u>19.</u>	<u>101.</u>	<p>The Committee have been informed that under the existing mechanism for redressal of grievances at Central/State/District level, the Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms has designated and notified a senior officer as Public Grievance Redressal Officer. The Committee are surprised to note that except 156 complaints received in the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Nagaland, no complaint has been received from any women weavers during the last one year. The Committee are inclined to conclude that the existing redressal mechanism is not adequate. The Committee do not agree with the Ministry that no complaints have been made by weavers in other States, keeping in view the fact that the implementing agencies/State Corporations/Banks deal with the weavers in respect of financial transactions, supply of raw materials and other related issues. Though information about the existence of such a Cell is available on the website, the Committee feel that as the weavers are generally illiterate they may not be aware of such a mechanism. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to set up such Grievance-Redressal mechanism at State level also. They are also of the opinion that the complaint boxes be made available at the field level offices so that the weavers could drop their complaints/grievances in these boxes. The Committee would like to be informed about the action taken in this regard within three months after the Report is presented.</p>	<u>Ministry of Textiles</u>

## **MINUTES OF THE SEVENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2004-05)**

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2005 from 1500 hours to 1630 hours in Committee Room 'C', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

### **PRESENT**

### **IN CHAIR**

Smt. Krishna Tirath - **Chairperson**

### **MEMBERS**

### **LOK SABHA**

2. Smt. M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
3. Smt. Sushila Kerketta
4. Smt. Preneet Kaur
5. Smt. Minati Sen

### **RAJYA SABHA**

6. Kumari Nirmala Deshpande
7. Smt. Chandra Kala Pandey
8. Smt. Syeda Anwara Taimur

### **SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri M. Rajagopalan Nair - Additional Secretary
2. Shri R.C. Kakkar - Deputy Secretary
3. Smt. Veena Sharma - Under Secretary
4. Shri V.P. Goel - Assistant Director

### **WITNESSES**

1. **Ministry of Textiles**

1. Shri R. Poornalingam Secretary
2. Shri B.K. Sinha DC (Handlooms and Handicrafts)
3. Shri J.K. Sharma Joint Secretary
4. Shri Inder Dhamija Addl. DC (Handlooms)
5. Shri S.K. Samal Addl. DC (Handlooms)
6. Shri Ajay Kumar Addl. DC (Handicrafts)
7. Dr. Sandeep Srivastava Addl. DC (Handicrafts)

**National Handloom Development Corporation Ltd.**

8. Shri V.K. Goyal Managing Director

2. At the outset, the Hon'ble Chairperson welcomed the representatives of the Ministry of Textiles to the sitting of the Committee and invited their attention to the provisions contained in the Direction 55 of the 'Directions by the Speaker'.

3. The Committee, then took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Textiles on the subject '**Working condition of Women in Handloom and Handicrafts sectors**'.

4. Thereafter, the Hon'ble Chairperson requested the representatives of the Ministry to furnish notes on certain points raised by the Members to which replies were not readily available with them during the discussion.

5. The evidence was concluded.

6. A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

The Committee then adjourned.

**MINUTES OF THE FOURTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2005-2006)**

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2005 from 1530 hours to 1700 hours in Committee Room 'C', Ground Floor, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

*Smt. Krishna Tirath*

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*Chairperson*

**MEMBERS**

**LOK SABHA**

2. Smt. M.S.K. Bhavani Rajenthiran
3. Shri C.K. Chandrappan
4. Smt. Kiran Maheshwari
5. Dr. P.P. Koya
6. Smt. K. Rani
7. Smt. Sangeeta Singh Deo
8. Smt. Karuna Shukla
9. Smt. C.S. Sujatha
10. Smt. Jayaben Thakkar

**RAJYA SABHA**

11. Kum. Nirmala Deshpande
12. Smt. S.G. Indira

**SECRETARIAT**

- |    |                          |                         |
|----|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. | <u>Shri R.C. Ahuja</u>   | <u>Joint Secretary</u>  |
| 2. | <u>Shri R.C. Kakkar</u>  | <u>Deputy Secretary</u> |
| 3. | <u>Smt. Veena Sharma</u> | Under Secretary         |
| 4. | <u>Shri V.P. Goel</u>    | Assistant Director      |

2. At the outset the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee.

3. The Committee first took up for consideration the Draft Report on the subject '**Working Condition of Women in Handloom Sector**' and adopted the same without any changes. The Committee also authorised the Chairperson to finalise the Report after making verbal and other consequential changes arising out of the factual verification and present the same to both Houses of Parliament.

4.	X X	X	X
5.	X X	X	X
6.	X X	X	X
7.	X X	X	X

The Committee then adjourned.