

**Title: Need to safeguard the interests of handloom workers in the country particularly in Andhra Pradesh-Laid.**

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (TENALI) : The Handloom workers in the country in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular are in great distress. This is mainly due to the stiff competition posed by the mill sector in textile.

To save the situation, Government of Andhra Pradesh have recently released Rs. 26 crores to clear the stock in the handloom societies. In addition, pensions have been announced for the handloom workers. Pucca houses with a separate shed are being constructed. To further rescue the handloom sector, the Government of India has to come forward with a package – (i) by strictly adhering to the reservation of 22 varieties of textiles earmarked earlier for the handloom sector; (ii) by having dual Textile Policy for handloom and mill sectors separately by subsidising the yanky yarn and the colours in the handloom sector; (iii) by providing Centrally sponsored pension scheme to all the handloom workers beyond 60 years of age; (iv) by granting pucca houses with a separate loom shed with a minimum loss of Rs.30,000 just like IAY scheme; (v) to have a special insurance scheme of Rs. One lakh for each handloom worker with minimum premium; (vi) to provide institutional finance at 4 per cent rate of interest under DIR scheme for pursuing their profession and also for consumption purpose and (vii) reviving the 'Janata Cloth Scheme'.

I urge upon the Government to provide all the above concessions at the earliest and save the handloom sector in Andhra Pradesh.