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Title : Need to provide financial assistance for the revival of handloom sector facing global recession.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Madam Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to some serious issues in the textile sector especially in the handloom sector in the State of Kerala. In the wake of global recession, a large number of units were closed and a large number of units were declared as sick units. As a result of this, thousands of employees have lost their jobs. All the trade unions have met the Prime Minister and the Textiles Minister last time and there was a discussion on this issue. It is really very difficult for the handloom workers to pay back their loans that they have taken. In this connection, the trade unions and all the political parties have put forward a suggestion to introduce a special package scheme to the handloom workers, as it has been done in the agricultural sector, to waive the loans that they have taken.

In 1985, the Textiles Policy has put 22 handloom designs in the reserve category, but now it has been reduced to 11 items. So, I request the Government to retain those 22 items in the reserve category so that some assistance is given to the handloom sector. Then, when they get the export order for textiles, 25 per cent should be earmarked for the handloom sector alone. In the festival season like the Onam festival season in Kerala, a special rebate can be given to the handloom sector and some stimulus for marketing and also to assist the poor people. In addition to that, it is a longstanding demand of the workers and the societies to have a National Handloom Policy, especially the Wage Policy. So I request the Government to consider all these things positively.