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Title: Need to set up a yarn bank and weaving training centre in Sualkuchi in Assam.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY (GUWAHATI): The cottage industry based on Mulberry silk, Muga and Riha is economically very viable and it is a very rich trade, giving lots of employment opportunities to the people. It also has got export potential.

Sualkuchi is a village in Assam, known as the Silk Village. 95 per cent people of that area are engaged in this industry. When Mahatma Gandhi visited Assam during the Independence struggle, he called it the Manchester of the East. Presently, this silk industry is in a dying condition. So, rejuvenating the silk industry is important. The Government agencies like the Central Silk Board, National Silk Development Corporation and Weavers' Training Centre should be very active and should be cooperative. It is necessary that urgent help from these agencies is needed to revive it.

In this regard, I would like to state that a few urgent measures should be taken to revive it. Firstly, duty-free yarn should be given to genuine weavers; yarn bank should be established; protection from big business houses and trade mark should be given to Sualkuchi trade. Moreover, easy loan must be given to the weavers who are engaged in this trade.

Another point is that protected market facility must be given to these poor weavers who are engaged in this trade in village areas. ...(*Interruptions*)

Revival and survival of this cottage industry is necessary because it helps the indigenous trade and gives employment to lakhs of people. ...(*Interruptions*) These weavers, who traditionally are engaged in this cottage industry, never go and beg for jobs elsewhere; they are engaged in this trade with their whole family.