

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 888
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05.02.2021

PROMOTION OF HANDLOOM PRODUCTS

888. SHRI PATEL HASMUKHBHAI SOMABHAI:
SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI:

Will the Minister of TEXTILES वस्त्र मंत्री
be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of the problems faced by the handloom weavers across the country, State-wise;
- (b) whether the Government is promoting e-marketing and media marketing of handloom products;
- (c) if so, the details thereof along with the industries benefitted, State wise;
- (d) the steps and measures taken by the Government to bring weavers onboard Government e-Marketplace (GeM); and
- (e) the problems faced due to the scrapping of All India Handloom Board?

उत्तर

ANSWER

वस्त्र मंत्री (श्रीमती स्मृति जूबिन इरानी)

MINISTER OF TEXTILES
(SMT. SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d): The following are some of the major problems faced by the handloom weavers across the country, especially due to the COVID-19 pandemic:

1. The Handloom workers were unable to sell their products, as the haats, exhibitions, marketing events etc. could not be held during the period of the pandemic. There were subsequent limitations on participation due to social distancing norms imposed by the respective Govts. This led to build-up of their inventories and erosion of their working capital.

As a result, handloom workers who were dependent on day-to-day earnings, suffered financial hardships.

2. Besides, the sector has other problems like repetitive production of similar products with little change in designs, low productivity, shifting of skilled labour to other sectors etc.

The Government is aware of the problems faced by weavers across the country. In order to come out of the COVID 19 pandemic situation and for the benefit of handloom weavers, the following initiatives have been taken in the recent times:

- i) Due to restrictions imposed on physical marketing events such as exhibitions, melas, etc. due to COVID-19 pandemic, Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) took initiative to virtually connect the Handloom Weavers and exporters from different corners of the country with the International Market.

In the present financial year Handloom Export Promotion Council has organized 07 International Fairs in virtual mode, facilitating marketing and sales of Handloom Products in

the domestic as well as international markets. Out of these, THE INDIAN TEXTILE SOURCING FAIR was organised with more than 200 participants from different regions of the country showcasing their products with unique designs and skills from 7-11 August, 2020. The show attracted considerable attention of the International Buyers.

HEPC also participated in the Bharat Parv Festival organized in virtual mode by Ministry of Tourism. Besides, 53 domestic marketing events have also been sanctioned for different parts of the country for the weavers to market and sell their products.

- ii) A social media campaign #Vocal4handmade was launched on the 6th National Handloom Day by the Government, in partnership with all stakeholders, to promote the handloom legacy of India and to ensure people's support for the weaving community. It has been reported that the social media campaign has resulted in renewed interest of the Indian public in handlooms and several e-commerce players have reported increase in sale of Indian handloom products.
- iii) During August-October 2020, 534 number of Chaupals were organized in various States to educate the weavers to avail benefits of various handloom schemes meant for their welfare and socio-economic development.
- iv) To enhance productivity and marketing capabilities and ensure higher returns on Weavers' through collective efforts and pooling of resources, 109 Handloom Producer companies have been formed in different States.
- v) To promote e-marketing of handloom products, 23 e-commerce entities have been engaged for on-line marketing of handloom products. So far, total sales of Rs. 123.97 crore has been generated from online portal for online marketing of handloom products as on 31.12.2020.
- vi) Design Resource Centres (DRCs) have been set up in Weavers Service Centres (WSCs) Delhi, Mumbai, Varanasi, Ahmedabad, Jaipur, Bhubaneswar and Guwahati through NIFT with the objective to build and create design-oriented excellence in the Handloom Sector and to facilitate weavers, exporters, manufacturers and designers for creating new designs and take benefit of erstwhile created designs.
- vii) To support the handloom and handicraft sectors and to enable wider market for handloom weavers/artisans/producers, steps have been taken to on-board weavers/artisans on Government e-Market place (GeM) to enable them to sell their products directly to various Government Departments and organizations. So far about 1.5 Lakh weavers have been on-boarded on the GeM portal.

(e): The decision to disband All India Handloom Board (AIHB) was taken based on a thorough review of the functioning of the Board. The assessment revealed that weavers from across the Nation did not benefit from the Board. There was no contribution from the Board as regards policy formulation and its implementation.

On the other hand, the Weavers' Service Centres and the State Handloom departments have been working well in good coordination through interactions on policy, implementation of Government schemes, educating weavers about online marketing platforms including efforts to on-board weavers on Government e-marketplace (GeM), and addressing the problems of handloom weavers through Chaupals.

In view of the above, the Government has not faced any problem due to scrapping of All India Handloom Board.
