

**Demand for early decision on Country's vetoless Membership in the
U.N. Security Council**

DR. CHANDAN MITRA (Nominated): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, the Committee on Reform of the UN Security Council has submitted its report. It has proposed creation of a new category of permanent members of the Security Council who shall not have the power of veto. The Minister of External Affairs had categorically stated in this House on 2nd December, 2004 that such a vetoless permanent member status will not be acceptable to the country. However, in its reaction to the report on the following day, that is, on 3rd December, the Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement that the Government welcomed the new proposal although further discussions were to be held with Germany, Japan and Brazil with whom India was cooperating in the matter of Security Council expansion. It is a very important matter but I find some contradiction in the stand of the Minister on the floor of this House and his Ministry's subsequent statement. I urge upon the Minister to urgently state the Government's decision with regard to India's stand on veto-less membership of the UN Security Council. The country needs to know through Parliament whether we are prepared to accept a veto-less status in the expanded Security Council. Thank you.

Plight of Handloom Weavers in the Country

DR. (SHRIMATI) NAJMA A. HEPTULLA (Rajasthan): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the continuing trend of suicides and starvation deaths of weavers from different parts of the country. Low wages, high levels of indebtedness, unemployment and underemployment and even starvation are the problems which many weavers are facing today in India. There were reports in the newspapers that some of the weavers are even selling their blood and children and their children have also opted for begging in streets. The silk industry in Varanasi is in turmoil. Moreover, dumping of cheap artificial silk by China in the Indian market has spelled doom to the original silk industry eulogized in scriptures and ancient books.

In Anantpur district of Andhra Pradesh, where 70,000 looms were functioning, now there are only 2300 powerlooms spinning out for prices that are a third of what they would cost if made on handlooms. Unable to compete, in the last year, 30 weavers are reported to have committed suicide or died of starvation. The same is the condition in Malegaon and