

and individual weavers as on 31st March, 2011. Under the Financial package, provisions have been made for fresh cheap credit to handloom cooperative societies and individual handloom weavers covered by waiver for interest subsidy of 3% for a period of 3 years for fresh loan with credit guarantee. This financial package will benefit approximately 15000 handloom weavers' cooperative societies and 3 lakh individual handloom weavers all over the country. The Government has also announced a Comprehensive package of Rs. 2362 crore to provide cheap credit and subsidized yarn for handloom weavers and their cooperative societies. This comprehensive package will benefit 10 lakh handloom weavers and several thousand handloom cooperative societies all over the country.

(c) The financial package and the comprehensive package are only for handloom weavers and their cooperative societies and it does not cover powerloom and mill sector.

Closure of garment units due to non-availability of cotton

2450. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANAPATHI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to increase and non-availability of cotton, several garment units in the country are facing imminent closure;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government to make available plenty of cotton for garment units at cheaper rates; and

(c) whether it is also true that Government is considering to restrict the export of cotton?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) No, Sir. Cotton Production is projected to increase from 325 lac bales in 2010-11 to 356 lac bales in 2011-12. Thus there is no shortfall of cotton with country as cotton balance sheet shows closing balance of 78.5 lac bales. Yarn production has been projected at 3200 million kgs. The Yarn consumption by hosiery, power loom and handloom weavers have shown declining trends. There is a closing balance of 159 million kgs. in yarn balance sheet. Thus there is neither shortfall of cotton or cotton yarn in the country.

(b) Cotton prices have declined from Rs.62400/candy in April, 2011 to Rs. 34500/candy in December, 2011. Indian cotton at USD 86 cents/lb is the cheapest available cotton in world. Thus no steps by Government are necessary to make cotton available at cheapest rates.

(c) Cotton production has increased from 325 lac bales in 2010-11 to 356 lac bales in 2011-12 while domestic consumption is projected to decline from 240 lac bales to 210 lac bales. Cotton exports in 2011-12 have been sluggish and till end November, 2011 only 7.5 lac bales have been exported against 39 lac bales in 2010 at the same time. Currently there is neither domestic

demand nor international demand. Domestic Mills are operating with 15 days inventories. With arrivals likely to increase from 1 lac bales/day to 3 lac bales/day and no domestic/international demand a sharp price moderation has taken place. The slowdown in domestic consumption, coupled with reduced international demand in Indian cotton has resulted in a significant glut of cotton in the country bringing down prices.

Loss of employment in textile sector

2451. SHRI T.K. RANGARAJAN: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that handloom and textiles sectors which provide employment to lakhs of workers are facing a serious situation resulting in loss of employment to large number of workers;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to alleviate the crisis; and

(c) the outcome of the measures if any taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) To assess the impact of economic slowdown on employment, Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour and Employment conducted a quick survey during January - March, 2011 (Tenth in the series). The survey covered important sectors including textiles and handlooms.

According to the said report, 733 textile units including apparel were surveyed and noticed that the employment has declined by 1.21 lakh during the period March, 2011 over December, 2010. Similarly, of those 96 units surveyed in handloom/power loom sector and it is observed that employment has declined by 0.18 lakh during the said period.

(b) To strengthen the textile industry and to increase the employment in the sector, Government of India has been implementing various schemes such as (i) Technology upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS); (ii) Scheme for Integrated Textile Parks (SITP), and (iii) Integrated Skill Development Scheme (ISDS).

Government of India is also implementing specific schemes for the development of Handloom Sector. For the development of handloom sector and welfare of Handloom weavers, five Schemes are under implementation during 11th Plan, which are (i) Integrated Handlooms Development Scheme, (ii) Handloom Weavers' Comprehensive Welfare Scheme (iii) Marketing and Export Promotion Scheme (iv) Mill Gate Price Scheme and (v) Diversified Handloom Development Scheme.

Recently, Government has also announced "Revival, Reform and Restructuring Package for Handloom Sector". The proposal includes reform of the financial, legal and institutional framework for the handloom weaver cooperative societies, one-time waiver of overdue loans