

योगदान के लिए एक उपयुक्त श्रद्धांजलि होगी, बल्कि भावी पीढ़ियों को हमारी भूमि की समृद्ध सांस्कृतिक परंपराओं को संजोने और बनाए रखने के लिए प्रेरित करेगी। धन्यवाद।

THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON (MS. KAVITA PATIDAR): Dr. M. Thambidurai; not present. Shri A.D. Singh.

**Demand to protect traditional silk handloom weavers in the country  
particularly in Varanasi and Bhagalpur**

SHRI A.D. SINGH (Bihar): Madam, traditional silk handloom weavers in the country, particularly in eastern UP and Bihar are facing immense difficulties in keeping their heritage alive. In Varanasi, a community of 3 lakh weavers has dwindled to 40,000. In Bhagalpur in Bihar, five years back, there used to be around two lakh weavers, but now only 60,000 weavers are there. The business from the place has also come down from Rs.600 crore in 2015 to Rs.150 crore.

The Varanasi and Bhagalpur silk is a renowned product in the world and many weavers have got the Government's Geographical Indication tag, in view of its quality and distinctiveness. Banarasi and Bhagalpur Silk sarees boast a rich heritage that dates back to centuries. Crafted by skilled artisans using traditional techniques passed down through generations, the sarees embody the cultural essence of the regions.

In view of the rising cost of the yarn and low demand, the handloom silk industry is dying. The traditional weavers in many places who have worked for generations are opting for some other occupation for their livelihood. The older weavers have become construction workers or rickshaw pullers where as the young one are opting for call centres and security services as they don't find weaving profitable. The Ministry's help through the National Handloom Development Programme is not enough to sustain the handloom silk industry. These weavers need incentives, subsidies and continuous work. Traditional skill is our heritage and culture, which needs to be protected. I urge upon the Government to take necessary action. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON (MS. KAVITA PATIDAR): The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Zero Hour matter raised by the hon. Member, Shri A.D. Singh: Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shri A.A. Rahim (Kerala), Dr. V. Sivadasan

(Kerala), Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala), Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra) and Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala).

### **Concern over farming losing to be a source of subsistence**

SHRI NARAIN DASS GUPTA (National Capital Territory of Delhi): Madam, in our country farming, once the cornerstone of the economy and livelihood for millions, is facing a crisis of sustainability and viability. Over recent decades, there has been a significant exodus from agriculture, with millions of farmers leaving the sector annually. This shift is driven by several interlinked factors that threaten the economic, social and environmental fabric of Indian agriculture.

Socially, farmer distress is evident in high rates of indebtedness and suicides. Despite Government interventions like subsidies and loan waivers, these measures have often fallen short of addressing the systemic issues driving farmer hardships. Farmers are now facing the ever-increasing cost of harvesting inputs like hike in cost of good quality of seeds, fertilisers, higher rates of electricity/power etc. In cases of crop damages due to vagaries of nature, compensation given to farmers is negligible in comparison to the input costs incurred on cultivation of crops. To address these complex challenges, comprehensive reforms are essential. This includes strengthening MSPs, ensuring fair market access, promoting sustainable farming practices like organic farming and crop diversification, and investing in rural infrastructure. Technological advancements in precision farming and digital platforms can also empower farmers with real-time information and resource optimization tools.

I urge that Government policies must focus on revitalizing agriculture as a sustainable and lucrative livelihood option. By supporting smallholder farmers, promoting diversified crops, and enhancing market transparency, we can reclaim our agricultural heritage while ensuring food security and economic stability for millions dependent on farming.

I urge the Government to take concrete measures in this regard. Thank you very much, Madam.

THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON (MS. KAVITA PATIDAR): The following hon. Members associated themselves with the Special Mention made by hon. Member, Shri Narain Dass Gupta: Dr. V. Sivadasan (Kerala), Shri Haris Beeran (Kerala), Shri A. A. Rahim (Kerala), Dr. John Brittas (Kerala), Shrimati Jebi Mather Hisham (Kerala) and Dr. Fauzia Khan (Maharashtra).