The Handloom Textiles constitute a timeless facet of the rich cultural Heritage of India. As an economic activity, the handloom sector occupies a place second only to agriculture in providing livelihood to the people. The element of art and craft present in Indian handlooms makes it a potential sector for the upper segments of market domestic as well as global. However, the sector is beset with manifold problems such as obsolete technologies, unorganized production system, low productivity, inadequate working capital, conventional product range, weak marketing link, overall stagnation of production and sales and, above all, competition from powerloom and mill sector. As a result of effective Government intervention through financial assistance and implementation of various developmental and welfare schemes, the handloom sector, to some extent, has been able to tide over these disadvantages. Therefore, the production of handloom fabrics has gone upto 4,238 million sq.mtrs. upto December 2004 (Provisional) from 500 million sq. meters in the early fifties. The sector accounts for 13.12% of the total cloth produced in the country (excluding
Handloom forms a precious part of the generational legacy and exemplifies the richness and diversity of our country and the artistry of the weavers. Tradition of weaving by hand is a part of the country’s cultural ethos. Handloom is unparalleled in its flexibility and versatility, permitting experimentation and encouraging innovation. Innovative weavers with their skillful blending of myths, faiths, symbols and imagery provide their fabric an appealing dynamism. The strength of Handloom lies in introducing innovative design, which cannot be replicated by the Powerloom Sector.

The Office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms has been implementing, since its inception in the year 1976, various schemes for the promotion and development of the handloom sector and providing assistance to the handloom weavers in a variety of ways. Some of the major programmes relate to:

a) Sustenance of Employment
b) Modernisation and Upgradation of Technology
c) Input Support
d) Marketing Support
e) Publicity
f) Infrastructural Support
g) Welfare Measures
h) Composite Growth Oriented Package
i) Development of Exportable Products
j) Research & Development.

The various schemes implemented by the Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms address the needs of weavers who constitute the disadvantaged social strata and occupational groups, which are at the bottom of the economic hierarchy. Concerted efforts are being made through the schemes and programmes to enhance production, productivity, and efficiency of the handloom sector and enhance the income and socio-economic status of the weavers by upgrading their skills and providing infrastructural support and essential inputs.

**ONGOING SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES**

**DEEN DAYAL HATHKARGHA PROTSAHAN YOJANA (DDHPY)**

Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana (DDHPY) has been launched to provide assistance to the handloom weavers in an integrated and comprehensive manner. The scheme was launched on 01.04.2000 and will continue till 31.03.2007.

This Centrally sponsored plan scheme entails approx. Rs. 257 crore of Central assistance during the 10th Plan period. The scheme aims at taking care of a wide gamut of activities – basic inputs, like looms and accessories; working capital loans; product development; infrastructure support; institutional support; supply of equipments; and marketing support both
at micro and macro levels to the handloom organizations. The handloom organizations can also get assistance under other components of the DDHPY like design input, publicity, marketing incentive and transport subsidy for North Eastern Region, Sikkim and J&K.

Prior to the introduction of the DDHPY most of the schemes were aimed at benefiting the weavers under the cooperative fold only. The DDHPY envisages covering weavers under both in cooperative and non-cooperative fold. The national and state level organizations, primary societies, self-help groups etc. are eligible to get benefit of the scheme. There is a focused emphasis on purchase and modification of looms, design support to facilitate product diversification, enhance productivity and marketability of handloom products. The handloom agencies could get assistance for installing CAD/CAM system and avail of services of designs and fabric as per requirement of both the domestic and international market.

It has been noticed that a number of apex handloom organizations at State level need to be strengthened and therefore, a component has been provided for restructuring of those organizations through bankable projects to be cleared by the Union Ministry of Textiles.

In order to improve the quality of finished products, financial assistance is available to the handloom agencies for infrastructure like setting up of a processing house having bleaching, dyeing, finishing and other facilities, effluent treatment plant and common facility centres.

The sharing of grant portion of this Centrally Sponsored Scheme, between the Central and the States is in the ratio of 50:50 except in the case of North Eastern States, Sikkim, J&K, Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh where the funding pattern is in the ratio of 90:10. Agencies where 100% members are from SC/ST/Minorities/Women, the funding pattern is in the ratio of 75:25. The assistance for marketing incentives under the scheme, however, is in the ratio of 50:50 between Central and State Government in respect of all the States.

During 2000-01, a sum of Rs.1695.84 lakh was released as grant under the scheme to 12 States (Rs.763.79 lakh towards basic inputs covering 197 projects and Rs.932.05 lakh as marketing incentive). From 2001-02, the committed liabilities towards the projects sanctioned under the erstwhile Project Package Scheme (PPS), Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme (IHVD), Margin Money for Destitute Weavers (MMDW) and Handloom Development Centre/Quality Dyeing Unit (HDC/QDU) scheme are also met out of the budget provision under the DDHPY head.

In 2001-2002, Rs.6569.33 lakh was released as grant from the DDHPY consisting of release of Rs.5,935.05 lakh under the basic input and marketing incentive components of the DDHPY; Rs.479.98 lakh under the Project Package Scheme (PPS); Rs.89.57 lakh under
Integrated Handloom Village Development Scheme (IHVD); Rs.1.78 lakh under Handloom Development Centre/Quality Dyeing Unit (HDC/QDU) Scheme; Rs. 1.00 lakh under the Margin Money for Destitute Weavers’ (MMDW); and Rs.61.95 lakh for Census.

During 2002-03, Rs. 8,429.67 lakh was released consisting Rs. 8,120.01 lakh under the basic input and marketing incentive components of the DDHPY, Rs. 283.16 lakh under PPS and Rs. 26.50 lakh under IHVD.

During 2003-04, Rs. 6,683.80 lakh was released out of which Rs. 6,363.90 lakh was released under the basic input and marketing incentive components of DDHPY and Rs. 311.40 lakh was released under PPS and Rs. 8.50 lakh under IHVD.

During 2004-05, there is a budget provision of Rs. 3,397 lakh for disbursement of grant under DDHPY for the States other than those in North Eastern Region. Of this provision a sum of Rs. 3,339.06 lakh has been released upto 11.03.05 consisting of Rs. 3,039.13 lakh under the Basic Input and Marketing Incentive component of the DDHPY and Rs. 287.43 lakh under PPS and Rs.12.50 lakh under IHVD. Of the budget provision of Rs.1,300 lakh for the States falling under NER, Rs. 843.55 lakh has been released as on 11.03.2005 consisting of Rs. 642.59 lakh under Basic Input component of the DDHPY and Rs. 200.96 lakh under PPS.

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TEXTILE DESIGN (NCTD)

National Centre for Textile Design was set-up in January 2001 in Handloom Pavilion, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi to promote traditional & contemporary designs to enable the textile industry, particularly the Handloom sector, to be responsive to the rapidly changing market demand.

Objectives of the Scheme

(a) To link weavers to the market and provide him with adequate tools to respond to the rapidly changing market situation and demands.

(b) To link all people belonging to the textile industry with the developments in other fields.

(c) To give weavers, workers and designers greater exposure and access to national and international markets thereby giving them a better livelihood and avenues for more sustainable development.

These objectives are achieved through

(a) On-line Activities

(b) Off-line Activities

On-line activities are through website: www.designdiary.nic.in The site has several components. The business service components are International & Indian Trends and Forecast, Design Pool, Cyber Yellow Pages. The components of the website of general interest are Handcrafted Textiles of India, Panel of
Textile Designers and linkages with other textile sites.

**Off-line activities** include holding of Special Exhibitions on sustained basis for increased product visibility and to increase awareness regarding handloom among the public.

“Tantavi”, a Sanskrit word which means “of the loom”, was identified as the name of the exhibition and is a registered trademark of NCTD.

**Structures fabrics (1st Series)**

In the first Series, the exhibition ‘Tantavi-2001’ based on 212 exclusive handloom fabrics on the theme “Structures” was organized in six metropolitan cities i.e. Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Chennai from December 2001 to March 2002. The exhibition received popular response, and brought direct and intense interaction between the Government and the Private Sector involved with the handlooms. The exhibition also created awareness among the designers, manufactures and exporters in the textile sector of the richness of the handlooms. In view of the success of “Tantavi”, the fabrics were also exhibited in prestigious events at Sydney, Djakarta and Milan.

To provide an opportunity to the weavers and exporters to experience and benefit from this exclusive and exquisite range of handlooms, Tantavi-2001 was also organized in six textile centres – Varanasi, Bhagalpur, Karur, Bagalkot, Ahmedabad and Panipat from October 2002 to March 2003.

**Patterned fabrics (2nd Series)**

The 2nd Series of exhibition “Tantavi-2003” was based on patterned fabrics. The Tantavi-2003 exhibition displayed 193 exclusive handloom fabrics on the theme “Patterns” developed by 24 Weavers Service Centre under the office of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms. The fabrics are in different textures and pattern using natural fibers cotton, wool, silk, jute, linen etc. These fabrics are eco-friendly and have an edge over power loom/mill fabrics. Such fabrics can be used in either grey form or after surface embellishment depending upon their end use. The exhibition highlighted the varieties of patterns, use of extra waft, extra warp, multi-treadle, dobby or jacquard machines.
Along with 193 yardages of the fabrics, the home furnishings and apparels designed from these fabrics by HHEC, AIHFMCS & NIFT were displayed to demonstrate the multifarious use of the fabrics.


To give an opportunity to weavers of major export textile centres to acquaint themselves, Tantavi-2003 was also organized at Cannanore, Coimbatore, Bhubaneshwar, Jaipur and Meerut from September 2004 to December 2004.

**Other Exhibitions** :- Other than Tantavi, NCTD also participated in following exhibitions,

Coloured Structures & Pattern Fabrics (3rd Series)

NCTD plans to hold the 3rd Series exhibitions in 2005 based on the coloured, structured and pattern fabrics, of which 150 samples had already been selected by the Implementation Committee and given to different Weavers Service Centres for pilot production.

INPUT SUPPORT

Handloom sector is largely dependent on the organized mill sector for supply of its principal raw-material namely yarn. This sector uses the bulk of its yarn in the form of hanks. The Central Government ensures regular supply of yarn to the handloom sector by enforcing the order (Hank Yarn Packing Notification) by making it obligatory on the spinning mills to pack a prescribed percentage of the yarn produced by them in hank form.

MILL GATE PRICE SCHEME

The Scheme was introduced in 1992-93 with an objective of providing all type of yarn to the handloom weavers’ organizations at the price available at Mill Gate.

National Handloom Development Corporation (NHDC), a Government of India undertaking, is the only agency authorized to implement the scheme. The scheme benefits the following organizations and their member weavers.

a) All Handloom Organizations of National/State/Regional level.
b) Handloom Development Centres;
c) Handloom producers/exporters/manufacturers registered with the Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC) or any other Export Promotion Council under the Ministry of Textiles, or with the State Directors of Industries, as the case may be;
d) All approved export houses/trading houses/star trading houses for production of handloom items;
e) Members of recognized/approved handloom associations;
f) NGOs fulfilling CAPART norms;
g) Any other agency, with the approval of the Development Commissioner for Handlooms;
h) All types of yarn required for production of handloom items are covered under the scheme.

The Government of India is bearing the entire expenditure under the Scheme. The yarn is being arranged by NHDC from the mills as per the requirement of the user agencies and transported to the godown of the agency.

The reimbursement rates to the user agencies are at Table 5.1.

In addition, the NHDC has to pay depot operation charges @ 1% of the value of yarn, wherever the yarn is supplied to weavers through yarn depots. Further there is a provision for supply of yarn to the weavers in the remote areas through mobile van for 20 days in a month. The actual expenditure involved for operating
the mobile van is reimbursed subject to a maximum of Rs.1,500/- per day per van by the NHDC.

The expenditure involved above and also the overhead expenditure involved by the NHDC on this yarn transaction is being reimbursed by the Government at a flat rate which is given at Table 5.2.

**Table 5.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Yarn</th>
<th>In plain areas</th>
<th>Hill/Remote areas</th>
<th>North-East area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other than Silk/Jute Yarn</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.75%</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silk Yarn</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>1.25%</td>
<td>1.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jute/Jute Blended Yarn</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
<td>8.00%</td>
<td>8.50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Rates are at per centage cost of material.*

Under the scheme, supplies of yarn have increased from 49.42 lakh kg. in 1993-94 to 162.32 lakh kg. (Provisional) in 2004-2005 (upto January, 2005).

**PRODUCTION AND EMPLOYMENT**

During 2004-05 (Upto December 2004), a total production of 4,238 million sq. mtrs. (provisional) of Handloom cloth was achieved. The Working group on Textile & Jute Industry for 10th Plan has estimated the employment in the Handloom Sector at 120 lakh people.

**SCHEME FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF CENVAT ON HANK YARN**

Consequent to the introduction of excise duty on cotton and cellulosic spun yarn packed in plain reel hank form, Government of India has formulated the Scheme “Reimbursement of CENVAT on Hank Yarn” so that the handloom weavers should not be adversely affected. The Scheme came into effect from 01.03.2002, the date from which the excise duty was imposed. Under the Scheme, Government of India reimburses the excise duty paid by the handloom organizations, while purchasing the cotton and cellulosic spun yarn packed in plain reel hank form plus 0.50% of the cost of yarn net of excise

**Table 5.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yarn other than Silk and Jute</th>
<th>3.5% of value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silk Yarn</td>
<td>2% of value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jute Yarn</td>
<td>10% of value</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the last 5 years and in the current year (Upto December 2004), Rs. 4,966.57 lakh had been released to NHDC under this scheme.

The year wise details of releases are at Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>AMOUNT (Rs. in lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999 – 2000</td>
<td>414.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 – 2001</td>
<td>1,090.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 – 2002</td>
<td>661.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 – 2003</td>
<td>800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003-04</td>
<td>1,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 – 2005</td>
<td>800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(upto 31.12.04)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
duty as administrative charges. In 2003-04 yarn of the value of Rs. 15,004.55 lakh was supplied to handloom organizations at prices net of CENVAT and an amount of Rs. 2,491.88 lakh was reimbursed to implementing agencies against amount of duty paid and administrative charges. During 2004-05 a provision of Rs. 5,000 lakh has been earmarked for this scheme of which a sum of Rs. 489.61 lakh has been released upto 31.12.2004.

In the Budget 2004-05, all the textile goods, except polyester filament yarns, synthetic and artificial fibre and Twisted, folded or cabled polyester filament yarns Spun Yarn, grey or processed fabrics, garments, made-ups, textile articles etc have been exempted from the excise duty subject to non-availment of CENVAT credit.

CREDIT

The working capital requirements of the Weavers’ Cooperative Societies (WCS) and State Handloom Development Corporations (SHDC) for production, procurement, marketing, purchase and sale of yarn National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) provides are refinanced by through State Cooperative Banks (SCB), District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCB) and Commercial Banks at concessional rates of interest. The National Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Finance and Development Corporation, National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, National Minorities Finance and Development Corporation also provide working capital loans to the Weavers identified communities.

NABARD has since reviewed the rates of interest and it has decided to further reduce the rates of interest. The revised rates of interest as applicable from 13.02.2004 are at Table 5.4.

**WEAVERS’ SERVICE CENTRE (WSC)**

At present, 25 Weavers’ Service Centres are functioning under the Office of the Development Commissioner for Handloom, and play a vital role in conducting research and development and in imparting training to weavers to upgrade their skill and productivity. They have been instrumental in evolving new designs and reviving traditional designs. The WSCs primarily render extension services, which involve transfer of design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Present rate of Interest per Annum</th>
<th>Revised rate of interest per Annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Financing of Working capital requirements of Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies (PHWCS)</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
<td>6.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Financing of Working capital requirements of State Handloom Development Corporations (SHDCs)</td>
<td>6.50%</td>
<td>6.25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
inputs, skills and technology evolved to the weavers at their cottages.

The 25th Weavers’ Service Centre was set up at Nowshera, Srinagar (J&K) under the PM’s Economic Package for State of J&K.

INDIAN INSTITUTES OF HANDLOOM TECHNOLOGY (IIHT)

The Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology provides qualified and trained manpower to the Handloom Sector and undertakes experimental and research programmes on all aspects of the handloom industry. There are four IIHTs at Varanasi, Salem, Guwahati and Jodhpur in the Central Sector and two IIHTs at Venkatagri (AP) & Gadag (Karnataka) in the State Sector.

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAMME

To have a holistic and integrated approach to design development and skill upgradation in the Handloom Sector, a comprehensive “Design Development and Training Programme” has been formulated during 10th Plan by merging various schemes including “Decentralised Training of Weavers Scheme” and “Design Exhibition-cum-Dyeing Workshop” of the 9th Plan.

DESIGN EXHIBITION-CUM-DYEING WORKSHOP

The WSCs have been organizing Design Exhibition-cum-Dyeing Workshops since 1995-96 to create awareness in the weavers’ clusters about the services available in WSCs and to impart training in dyeing techniques and design development. Design Exhibitions-cum-Dyeing Workshop are organized in the handloom clusters by WSC to promote and propagate modern dyeing techniques besides making available designs at the doorsteps of the weavers.

During 2002-03 & 2003-04, 240 & 234 Design Exhibition-cum-Dyeing Workshops were conducted respectively. During 2004-05, 250 Design Exhibition-cum-Dyeing Workshops have been sanctioned, and 175 Design Exhibition-cum-Dyeing Workshops have been conducted till 28.02.2005.

INTEGRATED HANDLOOM TRAINING PROJECT (IHTP)

In pursuance of the then Prime Minister’s announcement on Independence Day 2002, an “Integrated Handloom Training Project (IHTP) has been introduced for comprehensive skill upgradation of weavers and workers working in the Handloom Sector. The Scheme after approval has been circulated to the States on 19.12.2003 for implementation. A sum of Rs.295.75 lakh was released to Zonal Directors of WSCs for devolution to the implementing agency for imparting training to 4,000 weavers. Against this, 187 Programmes were approved by State Level Training Committee (SLTC)/Director, Weavers’ Service Centres. Till now 178 programmes covering 3560 weavers have completed and 8 programmes
covering 160 weavers are under progress and one programme is yet to start. Further during 2004-05, sanction of Rs. 1,601.46 lakh has been made in favour of WSCs for covering 16,520 weavers.

**WORKSHED-CUM-HOUSING SCHEME**

The Government of India introduced a Centrally Sponsored Scheme called “Workshed-cum-Housing Scheme” for handloom weavers from the beginning of 7th Plan i.e. 1985-86. The scheme is being implemented primarily for providing suitable work place and dwelling units for providing better working environment to the weavers. The respective State Handloom Development Corporations, primary Societies or any other specialised agency set up by the concerned State Government for execution of such projects, are implemently the scheme.

The present funding pattern of the Central assistance and the weavers’ contribution as also the loan tie up arrangement may be perused at Table 5.5.

During the 9th Plan, Rs. 6,286.54 lakh was released for construction of 63,853 units of Rural/Urban Worksheds/Workshed-cum-Houses under the scheme.

There is an outlay of Rs.70 crore in the 10th Plan. For 2004-05 there is a budget provision of Rs. 1,700 lakh, of which Rs. 700 lakh has been earmarked for North Eastern States. During the 2004-05 (upto 31.01.2005), Rs. 1,207.35 lakh has been released to various State Governments for construction of 5,570 new units out of which a sum of Rs. 494.25 lakh has been released to the NER.

**WEAVERS’ WELFARE SCHEME**

The Government of India is implementing Weavers Welfare Schemes, Health Package, Thrift Fund and New Insurance for handloom weavers.

A provision of Rs.800 lakh has been made during 2004-05 for “Weavers’ Welfare Scheme”, of which Rs.200 lakh has been earmarked for North Eastern States. During the 2004-05 a sum of Rs. 390.11 lakh has been released to various State Governments upto 31.01.2005, of which Rs. 208.52 lakh has been released to NER.

The schemes which are under implementation during 2004-05 are at Table 5.6 on page 56.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Component</th>
<th>Unit Cost in Rs.</th>
<th>Maximum Subsidy</th>
<th>Loan from HUDCO/FIs</th>
<th>Weavers Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural Workshed</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Workshed</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Workshed-cum-Houses</td>
<td>35,000</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Workshed-cum-Houses</td>
<td>45,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>20,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.5
### Table 5.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>(Sum assured)</th>
<th>Premium / Contribution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Janshree Bima Yojana</strong></td>
<td>Natural death</td>
<td>Rs.20,000/-</td>
<td>LICs contribution Rs.100/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Death due to accident</td>
<td>Rs.50,000/-</td>
<td>Weavers contribution Rs.40/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent total disability</td>
<td>Rs.50,000/-</td>
<td>GOI contribution Rs.60/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>due to accident</td>
<td></td>
<td>Total premium Rs.200/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of 2 eyes or 2 limbs</td>
<td>Rs.50,000/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>or 1 eye and 1 limb in accident.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Loss of 1 eye or 1 limb in an accident.</td>
<td>Rs.25,000/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Add-on Group Insurance Scheme</strong></td>
<td>For natural as well as accidental death.</td>
<td>Rs.30,000/-</td>
<td>Weavers contribution Rs.90/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bunkar Bima Yojana</strong></td>
<td>Natural death</td>
<td>Rs.50,000/-</td>
<td>GOI contribution Rs.90/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Janshree Bima Yojana + Add-on Group Insurance Scheme)</td>
<td>Accidental death</td>
<td>Rs.80,000/-</td>
<td>Total premium Rs.180/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(i) **Health Package Scheme for Handloom Weavers**

The Health Package Scheme was introduced in March 1993. Under the Scheme, the weavers are provided financial assistance for the treatment of diseases like asthma, tuberculosis and inflammation of respiratory system, cost of testing of eyes and provision spectacles, supply of drinking water, maternity benefits to women weavers, payment of additional compensation for permanent measures of family planning and infrastructure for the primary health care.

During the 9th Plan, Rs.1,464.09 lakh was released under the scheme for covering 2,53,835 weavers. During 2004-05 an amount of Rs.369.26 lakh has been released (upto 31.01.2005) to the various State Governments for coverage of 72,198 weavers.

(ii) **Thrift Fund Scheme for Handloom Weavers**

The Thrift Fund Scheme for Handloom Weavers was introduced in the 7th Five Year as one of the special welfare measures from the Government of India. The Scheme envisages creation of a fund like provident fund to meet expenses towards children’s education, marriages, religious ceremonies. As per the present funding pattern, 8% of the wages are contributed by the weavers, 4% each by the Central and State Governments.
During 9th Plan period a sum of Rs.1,711.21 lakh was released for coverage of 8,00,076 weavers under the scheme. During 2003-04 Rs. 321.88 lakh was released to various State Governments for covering 77,818 weavers under the scheme. During 2004-05 (upto 31.01.2005) Rs.17.98 lakh has been released for covering of 4,242 weavers.

(iii) New Insurance Scheme for handloom weavers:

The New Insurance Scheme was introduced in 1997-98 for providing coverage against loss or damage to dwelling due to flood, fire earthquake etc. damage to contents of the dwelling like looms, raw material etc.; medical coverage and Peopleal Accidental Insurance against accidental death at premium of Rs.120/- per annum, with a contribution of Rs.20/- by the weaver, Rs.40/- by the State Government and Rs.60/- by the Government of India.

During the 9th Plan period Rs.136.27 lakh was released to United India Insurance Company Ltd. for covering 2,27,117 weavers.

During 2003-2004, Rs.14.83 lakh was released to various State Governments for covering 12,849 weavers. During 2004-05 Rs. 2.87 lakh has been released (upto 31.01.2005) to the various State Governments for coverage of 4,784 weavers.

BUNKAR BIMA YOJANA

The then Prime Minister in his Independence Day Address to the Nation on 15.02.2002 announced a special contributory Insurance Scheme for one million weavers and artisans combining the Janshree Bima Yojana with Group Insurance Scheme. Out of one million weavers and artisans to be covered under the scheme, eight lakh weavers will be covered under the handloom sector. Accordingly, a scheme called “Bunkar Bima Yojana”, which is a combination of Janshree Bima Yojana and add-on Group Insurance was introduced in December 2003 for implementation in collaboration with the LIC. With the introduction of Bunkar Bima Yojana, the earlier Group Insurance Scheme stands discontinued.

The funding pattern and benefits under the scheme are as under:

Additional Benefits

Under the Janshree Bima Yojana scholarship will also be available to the children parents who will be covered under it. A scholarship of Rs.300/- per quarter per child will be paid to students studying in standard IX to XII for a maximum period of four years or till they complete XII standard, whichever event occurs earlier. The benefit is restricted to two children of the member covered.

During 2003-04, Rs.150 lakh was released to the LIC in March 2004 towards Central Government Share of premium. Out of Rs.150 lakh, Rs.21.39 lakh was utilized by the LIC towards Central Government Share of premium for covering 33,177 weavers during March 2004. The balance amount of Rs.128.61 lakh available with the LIC has been utilized during the current
financial year 2004-05. Further, an amount of Rs.150 lakh has been released to the LIC during 2004-05 (upto 31.01.2005) and 1,67,472 weavers have been covered from April 2004-January 2005.

HANDLOOM EXPORT SCHEME

The importance of the handloom sector in the national economy is well recognized. On account of having the advantage of flexibility of production in small batches, uniqueness, constant scope for innovation, eco friendliness, adaptability and, above all, the element of rich artistry, this sector has the potential to contribute towards export earnings in a big way. Therefore, export of handloom products has been identified as a “Thrust Area” for the overall development of the sector. The Government is exploring the possibility of making optimal use of the resources to enhance production capabilities of exportable handloom products.

To give impetus to the export of handloom fabrics, made-ups and other handloom items, a scheme for Development of Exportable Products and their Marketing (DEPM), was introduced in 1996-97 (October 1996), and it operated till 31.03.2002. During the 10th Five Year the scheme is continuing as “Handloom Export Scheme”, and it covers development of exportable products, publicity of the products and the international marketing thereof.

The financial assistance under the scheme is extended to the eligible National and State Level Handloom Corporations, Apex Cooperative Societies and Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies. Private Handloom Exporters are also assisted under the Scheme only through Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC).

The Handloom Export Promotion Council, registered under the Companies Act, 1956, was constituted in 1965 by the Government of India as the nodal agency for export promotion efforts related to the cotton handloom textiles.

The Handloom Export Promotion Council provides a wide range of services:

- Dissemination of trade information & intelligence;
- Publicity abroad for Indian handloom products;
- Organisation of business missions/buyer seller meets and participation in International trade events;
- Consultancy and guidance services for handloom exporters;
- Liaison with the Government of India on all procedural and policy matters relevant to the handloom export trade;
- Dealing with trade complaints pertaining to handloom exports;
- Liaison with the commercial agencies abroad for augmentation of handloom exports;
- Facilitating product diversification and adaptation to meet modern market requirements;
Providing impetus to modernisation of handlooms for the export market; and

Provision of design inputs to promote export of handloom products.

The Indian cotton handloom fabrics and made-ups occupy a place of eminence in the markets of USA, UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Belgium, the Netherlands, Japan and Australia. The main items exported belong to the segment of home furnishing, which constitutes about 90% of our total handloom exports.

Major activities of Handloom Export Promotion Council include implementation of Handloom Export Scheme. The details of export of cotton handloom fabrics and made-ups are at Table 5.7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rupees in crores</th>
<th>Million US $</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998-99</td>
<td>1,918.34</td>
<td>456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999-00</td>
<td>1,980.05</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-01</td>
<td>2,127.45</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001-02</td>
<td>2,064.94</td>
<td>433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002-03</td>
<td>2,633.27</td>
<td>544</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From the inception of scheme till 31.12.2004, 132 export projects covering 22,223 weavers, were sanctioned. Under the scheme financial assistance was also provided for participation in 63 International trade events was provided to Handloom Export Promotion Council (HEPC), Association of Corporations and Apex Societies of Handlooms (ACASH) and Handicrafts and Handlooms Exports Corporation of India Ltd., (HHEC). A sum of Rs.15.32 crore was released for 132 export projects and Rs.16.71 crore for participation in 63 International trade events.

A provision of Rs.26 crore has been made for implementation of the ‘Handloom Export Scheme’ during the 10th Five Year Plan of which a sum of Rs.5 Crore has been provided in the Annual Plan 2004-05, which includes the provision for North Eastern States for meeting expenses in respect of fresh export projects and for meeting committed liabilities in respect of projects sanctioned in the past. As on 31.12.2004, Rs.277.93 lakh has been released.

MARKETING PROMOTION PROGRAMME

To provide marketing support to handloom agencies and the individual weavers, the Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) assists the State Government in organizing National Handloom Expos/Special Expos, District Level Events, Craft Melas etc. in different parts of the country. For this purpose, financial support is provided to the implementing agency as recommended by the State Government towards infrastructure, publicity etc. These activities are supportive to the handloom agencies, weavers and also the consumers as it provides them an
opportunity to purchase handloom products of various states under one roof. During 2003-04, 05 National Handloom Expos; 22 Special Expos; 148 District Level Events; 05 Craft Melas; and One Master Creation Programme were organized in different parts of the country and 05 Urban Haats were approved. In 2003-04 Rs. 790.91 lakh was released under Marketing Promotion Programme.

During 2004-05, a budgetary provision of Rs.7.50 crore (General Budget) and Rs.2.00 crore (NER) has been made for publicizing the development activities of the handloom sector and to facilitate marketing handloom products through the fairs and exhibitions under the Marketing Promotion Programme.

In 2004-05, 12 National Handloom Expos and 30 special Expos have been sanctioned, and upto 28.02.2005, 27 have been organized. Till 28.02.2005, 167 District Level Events in different parts of the country have also been sanctioned.

The Office of the Development Commissioner (Handlooms) is assisting and also participating in the Craft Melas at Shilpagram (Udaipur); Surajkund (Haryana); Shilparamam (Hyderabad); Taj Mahotsav (Agra); Craft Mela Delhi Heritage at Delhi, Patiala Craft Mela at Patiala and Master Creation Programme at Dilli Haat, New Delhi. The office extends financial assistance and sponsores weavers to demonstrate their craft together and sell their products. Till 11.03.2005, Rs.669.17 lakh have been released to various implementing agencies under the Marketing Promotion Programme.

**IMPLEMENTATION OF HANDLOOMS (RESERVATION OF ARTICLES FOR PRODUCTION) ACT, 1985**

The Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 aims at protecting millions of handloom weavers from the encroachment by the power loom and the organized mill sector. At present eleven categories of textile articles are reserved under the provisions of the Act vide Handloom Reservation Order No. S.O. 557 (E) dated 26.07.1996, as amended vide Order No. S.O. 408 (E) dated 02.06.1999 and S.O. 405 (E) dated 25.04.2000. The physical and financial progress on implementation of the Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985 by various implementing agencies from 1999-2000 to 2004-05 (As on 31.01.2005) are at Table 5.8.

The Central Government has been providing assistance to the States /UTs under the scheme namely “Implementation of the Handlooms (Reservation of Articles for Production) Act, 1985”, to ensure effective implementation of the Act at the State level. The scheme continued as Plan Scheme with 100% Central funding, up to 2003-04 and thereafter under non-plan. The details of the Central Assistance extended by the Central Government during 1999-2000 to 2004-2005 (As on 31.01.2005) is at Table 5.9.
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

The Handloom Industry is the most ancient Cottage Industry of India. Its preservation for posterity will ensure continuation of our cultural Heritage. Research & Development is an essential ingredient for any industry to keep pace with the fast changing developments on account of the increasing global interest in Indian Handlooms. Hence, undertaking Research & Development in the Handloom sector is very essential in order to have a regular system of feedback on economic, social, aesthetic, technical and promotional aspects of handloom sector with the help of expertise of reputed Research Institutes and other

Table 5.8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Physical Progress</th>
<th>1999-00</th>
<th>2000-01</th>
<th>2001-02</th>
<th>2002-03</th>
<th>2003-04</th>
<th>2004-05 As on 31.01.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Targets of P/L inspections</td>
<td>1,30,532</td>
<td>1,30,532</td>
<td>1,40,700</td>
<td>1,50,000</td>
<td>1,64,250</td>
<td>1,82,280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No. of P/Ls inspected</td>
<td>1,76,523</td>
<td>1,43,969</td>
<td>1,52,925</td>
<td>1,77,636</td>
<td>1,53,086</td>
<td>1,12,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>No. of FIRs lodged</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Convictions lodged</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cases under process</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FINANCIAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Physical Progress</th>
<th>1999-00</th>
<th>2000-01</th>
<th>2001-02</th>
<th>2002-03</th>
<th>2003-04</th>
<th>2004-05 As on 31.01.05</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Budget Grant (Rs. in lakhs)</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>64.00</td>
<td>57.85</td>
<td>69.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Expenditure (Rs. in lakhs)</td>
<td>78.39</td>
<td>56.06</td>
<td>57.44</td>
<td>58.30</td>
<td>56.54</td>
<td>45.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.9

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the State</th>
<th>Amount released (Rs. in lakhs)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>6.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>5.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>16.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>6.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>6.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>27.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Madhya Pradesh</td>
<td>6.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* During the 10th five-year Plan period, the outlay is Rs. 6 crore and for the financial year 2004-05 the outlay is Rs.120 lakh.
professional/voluntary organizations, Non Governmental organization registered under any of the Statutory Acts, Universities, IIHTsWSCs having basic infrastructural facilities to effectively implement the scheme through studies, need based survey, Research & Development etc.

During 2003-04, Rs.43.13 lakh was released to different organizations under this scheme.

In the 10th Five Year Plan the Research & Development programme is one of the component under the comprehensive plan scheme namely Design Development and Training Programme. An amount of Rs.26.15 lakh has been kept for the R&D projects during the current financial year 2004-05 against which an amount of Rs.17.05 lakh has been released to the concerned organizations.

ASSOCIATION OF CORPORATIONS AND APEX SOCIETIES (ACASH)

The Association of Corporations and Apex Societies of Handlooms (ACASH), New Delhi was registered in 1984 under the Societies Registration Act to coordinate and promote marketing in the Handloom Sector. It serves as a nodal agency for supply of handloom goods to be purchased by Central Government Departments/Agencies/Public Sector Undertakings etc. under Single Tender System (STS). During 2004-2005 (upto 31.12.2004), ACASH has received orders worth Rs.1,724.87 lakh and executed orders worth Rs.1,199.14 lakh under Single Tender System. ACASH is also involved in helping the promotion of handloom exports.

HANDLOOM EXPOs/EXHIBITIONS

India Weaves 2004: The ACASH organized National Handloom Expo namely “India Weaves 2004” at Dilli Haat, New Delhi from October 17-31, 2004. 135 handloom agencies from various parts of the country participated. The total sale achieved was Rs.357 lakh.

Handlooms 2004: ACASH organized Handlooms’ 2004 coinciding with India International Trade Fair at Handloom Pavilion, Pragati Maidan from November 14-27, 2004. 42 handloom agencies from various parts of the country participated. The total sale achieved was Rs. 60.10 lakh.

Shawl Show 2004: ACASH also organized “Shawl Show 2004” (an event of Development Commissioner for Handlooms), at Handloom Pavilion, Pragati Maidan, New Delhi from December 17-31, 2004. 50 handloom agencies from various parts of the country participated and achieved a total sale of Rs. 114.00 lakh.

ALL INDIA HANDLOOM FABRICS MARKETING COOPERATIVE SOCIETY LTD.

The All India Handloom Fabrics Marketing Cooperative Society Ltd. (AIHFMCS), Delhi is a National Level Cooperative Society presently governed under the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act, 2002. The main objective of the Society is to provide employment
to the Handloom Weavers through its marketing services by conducting sales both in domestic and export market. To achieve these objectives, the Society has set up 24 Retail Outlets, which are popularly known as "HANDLOOM HOUSE". The Society has Export Houses at Noida, Salem, Karur and Chennai, and showrooms in Singapore and Mauritius for giving an impetus to marketing of Indian handloom products in the foreign markets.

The affairs of the Society are administered by an elected Board of Directors consisting of the Representatives of the State Apex/Regional/Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies.

The Membership of the Society consists of State Level/Regional Level Apex Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies (‘A’ Class), Primary Level Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies (‘B’ class) and Public Trusts, Government and Government owned/controlled organizations engaged in production and sale of handloom products etc. (C’ class). The total number of shares were 1,46,512 in 2003-2004 as against 1,49,737 in 2002-03. The paid up share capital of the Society has decreased to Rs.786.90 lakh in 2003-2004 from Rs. 800.73 lakh of the previous year. The Fabrics Society’ purchases during 2003-2004 amounted to Rs.3,873.38 lakh against Rs. 3,782.52 lakh in 2002-03. The Society’s total export during 2003-04 were Rs. 1,951.26 lakh against Rs. 2,336.78 lakh in the previous year. During 2003-04, the Society has achieve a net profit of Rs. 88.45 lakh as against Rs. 68.70 lakh during the previous year. The Society was achieved a sales turnover of Rs. 5,220.05 lakh during 2003-04 as against the turnover of Rs. 5,152.09 lakh during the previous year.

During 2004-05 (upto 31.12.2004), the society has achieved a sale turnover of Rs. 3,322.00 lakh (Approximately) against the sales of Rs. 3,210.00 lakh achieved during the corresponding period of last year. Regarding the forecast of achievements for the remaining three months, it is expected that better sales would be achieved

**NATIONAL HANDICRAFTS & HANDLOOMS MUSEUM**

The National Handicrafts and Handlooms Museum (NHHM), popularly known as Crafts Museum, is located at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. It is a subordinate office under the Development Commissioner for Handlooms. Its main objectives are to increase public awareness about the India’s ancient traditions of handicrafts and handlooms, provide an interactive forum for the crafts people, designers, exporters, scholars and public, help the artisans to find a platform for marketing their product without middlemen and also serve as a resource centre for the Indian handicraft and handloom traditions. The basic activities of the Museum are collection, conservation and preservation of crafts specimen, revival, reproduction and development of Art and Craft.
Museum Collection: The Museum has a collection of over 24,000 artifacts consisting of Metal Icon, Lamps, Incense Burners, Ritual accessories, Items of everyday life, Wood carvings, Painted Wood, Paper Mache, Dolls, Toys, Puppets, Masks, Folk and Tribal Paintings, Sculptures, Terracotta, Folk & Tribal jewellery and an entire section of traditional Indian textiles. Around 3000 art objects are exhibited in Folk and Tribal Art Gallery, Temple Gallery, Courtly Crafts Gallery and Textile Gallery and the rest are kept in the Museum Collection Store. The Art Purchase Committee of NHNM meets every year to screen proposals received from sellers.

Craft demonstration programme: To re-establish the weakening links of traditional handicrafts and handlooms, a regular craft demonstration programme is organized round the year in the Museum except during the monsoon season. Craftsmen, not exceeding fifty per month, are invited for the Craft Demonstration Programme to demonstrate their skills in the respective craft and sell their products. From April 2004 to December 2004, around 261 Craftsmen participated in the Programme and around 29 performers participated in the Museum.

Replication: Under the Replication of Masterpieces programme, the replication of Banarsi Brocade Saree is under progress.

Research and Documentation: The Research and Documentation of traditional Indian Handicrafts and Handlooms is an important activity of the Crafts Museum. Under this scheme, Museum provides funds for scholars to undertake fieldwork to document the traditions of Handicrafts and Handlooms, including Folk & Tribal Arts.

From April 2004 to December 2004, the documentation of 235 craftspersons, who participated in Crafts Demonstration Programme of the Museum was completed. Detailed crafts Documentation Report was prepared on about 300 objects which were displayed in different Exhibitions in the museum and exhibition, “India -The living Art” in National Museum, Manila (Philippines).

Village Complex: The Museum’s Village Complex is a replica of rural India. The complex was set up in 1972 as a Rural India Complex. The complex is spread over an area of nearly seven acres within the Museum Complex. The Complex displays typical huts, characteristic of various regions of the country, walls and courtyards decorated with traditional “folk painting”. The Complex includes:

Kulu Hut (Himachal Pradesh); Meher Hut (Saurashtra, Gujarat); Gadbha Hut (Orissa) Banni Hut (Gujarat); Madhubani Courtyard (Bihar); Adi Hut (Arunchal Pradesh); Nicobar Hut (Andman & Nicobar Islands); Typical courtyard of a Hut (Jammu & Kashmir); Rabha Hut of Assam; Naga Hut, Konyak ‘Morung’ or Traditional Men’s House (North Nagaland); Toda Hut (Tamilnadu) and Gond Hut of Madhya Pradesh; Shrine of Devanarayan (Rajasthan) and Bengal Courtyard (West Bengal).
Three open-air theatres have been developed in the complex for staging folk performances:

- Kadambari theatre
- Saranga theatre
- Angan Manch theatre

**Library:** There is a specialized reference Library on traditional Indian Arts, crafts, textiles and major anthropological works on Indian tribes etc. in the Museum. The Library has more than 20,000 reference books and other periodicals. Research scholars and students from various institutions regularly visit the Museum. From April 2004 to December 2004, around 3,190 people patronised the Library and 3,025 books and 256 Magazines were issued for reference.

**Conservation and Preservation:** From April 2004 to December 2004, the Museum chemically treated 760 textiles, cane & bamboo, wooden and metal objects and mounted 82 paintings, and replaced background clothes in the showcases of Galleries. Also 60 types of textiles were preserved for proposed exhibition in Manila (Philippines).

**Exhibitions:** The Museum has two Special Exhibition Galleries for holding thematic exhibitions.

An Exhibition of ‘Pankha: Hand Fans of the Indian Sub-continent’ was organized where the unique collection of an eminent artist Shri Jatin Das was displayed in the Museum. The exhibition was on view till 06.06.2004.

An exhibition “Objeto Colombia” was put up in collaboration with Embassy of Colombia from 02.07.2004 to 31.07.2004.

An exhibition “abhivyakti” – on traditional Crafts of individual expression in Mithila art at Crafts Museum was organised from 23.09.2004 to 03.10.2004.

**“Nimble Fingers”** – An exhibition on Embroidered Textiles was held from 03.12.2004 to 31.12.2004.

**Advisory Committee:** The Advisory Committee is headed by the Minister of Textiles and comprises officials and non-officials as its members. The non-officials are drawn from experts in the field of traditional arts and crafts and related fields. The tenure of the Committee is for three years. The committee was reconstituted on 02.05.2002, and its last meeting was held on 12.02.2004.

**Financial Progress:** For April 2004 to December 2004, Museum has a Non-Plan outlay of Rs. 297.00 lakh and Rs.172.94 lakh was spent.

**Scheme for reimbursement of onetime Rebate @ 10% given by the Handloom Agencies on sale of handloom cloth from 2002-03 to 2004-05.**

❖ The then Prime Minister had made an announcement on 15.08.2002 that the Ministry of Textiles would earmark a sum of Rs.100 crore for a one-time special rebate on handloom fabrics to kickstart this employment-intensive industry and revive its production cycle.
Accordingly in February 2004, a Scheme for reimbursement of one time rebate @ 10% given by the handloom agencies on sale of handloom cloth during 2002-03 to 2004-05 was introduced. However, it came into effect from 15.08.2002. The entire assistance under the Scheme is provided by the Central Government.

The Scheme envisages reimbursement of 10% rebate to National/State Level Handloom Corporations/Apex Societies on sale of accumulated handloom cloth from 15.08.2002 to 31.01.2004. Thereafter, from 01.02.2004 to 31.03.2005 the assistance to these agencies, including the Primary Handloom Weavers Cooperative Societies is available on sale of all handloom cloth during the calendar of festivals and National/Special Handloom Expos/District Level Events approved by the Development Commissioner for Handlooms. In addition, the States Governments/UTs have the option to extend the benefit of the Scheme for a period of 7 days for any important festival/occasions other than the festivals mentioned in the calendar of festivals approved by the Office of Development Commissioner for Handlooms.

During 2003-04, Rs. 20 crore was released to various State Governments and in 2004-05 (till 11.02.2005), Rs. 820.39 lakh has been released.

HANDLOOM ACTIVITIES IN NORTH EASTERN REGION

The North Eastern Region has the highest concentration of Handlooms in the country. Out of 25.4 lakh units engaged in handloom activities, 14.6 lakh units (household and non-household) are in five States – Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland and Tripura (Source: handloom census 1995-96). Over 53% of looms in the country and more than 50% of weavers belong to North Eastern States. The share of these five States of North Eastern Region in the domestic looms is 82%. However, only 13.4% of the commercial looms of the country are in those States and the contribution of those States in total production of handloom fabrics is merely 20%.

Keeping in view the potential of the region, it was decided to upgrade the Weavers' Service Centre, Guwahati to Regional Design Centre in pursuance of the recommendations of the conference of the State Ministers (Handlooms) of North Eastern States held on September 21-22, 2000. It is now functioning as a Nodal Centre for design development and dissemination of designs to the weavers of the region.

The Centre has set up a website which includes a museum of North-Eastern designs. The web-site has been linked with the National Centre for Textile Design, for the benefit of the user agencies. It will also help link all those connected with the handloom industry. The Regional Weavers' Service Centre imparts training to the weavers in and outside the
cooperative fold under Decentralised Training Programme and Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana for providing value addition to the fabrics.

A special dispensation has been made under the Deen Dayal Hathkargha Protsahan Yojana for the North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttaranchal and Himachal Pradesh. The grant portion of some of the components of the scheme is shared between Central and State Governments for North Eastern States, Sikkim, and Jammu & Kashmir in the ratio of 90:10, except marketing incentive, which is in the ratio 50:50. Further, transport subsidy is extended to handloom agencies of North Eastern States, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir to facilitate marketing of handloom products in other parts of the Country and strengthen backward linkages in terms of more employment opportunities.