

**Bill No. 231 of 2024**

**THE TRADITIONAL WEAVERS (PROTECTION AND  
WELFARE) BILL, 2024**

By

SHRI RAJEEV RAI, M.P.

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BILL

*to provide for the protection of traditional weavers in the country particularly in Mau and adjoining regions of Eastern part of State of Uttar Pradesh and for the welfare measures including life insurance coverage, interest free working capital and consumption loan, healthcare, education to the children, availability of affordable raw material, modernization of looms, housing, training, electricity subsidy and compulsory purchase of finished product by the Government and for establishment of an authority and a welfare fund and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto.*

BE it enacted by Parliament in the Seventy-fifth Year of the Republic of India as follows:—

**1.** (1) This Act may be called the Traditional Weavers (Protection and Welfare) Act, 2024.

Short title and  
commencement.

## Definitions

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires,—

(a) “appropriate Government” means in the case of a State, the Government of that State and in all other cases, the Central Government;

(b) “Authority” means the Traditional Weavers Welfare Authority set up under section 3;

(c) “Fund” means the Traditional Weavers Welfare Fund constituted under section 5;

(d) “loom” means any loom including handloom and/or powerloom;

(e) “prescribed” means prescribed by rules made under this Act;

(f) “traditional weaver” means a person whose ancestors of atleast three generations have been engaged in weaving profession to earn their livelihood;

(g) “weaver” means a person engaged in the production of cloth on handloom or/ and powerloom and includes a person who owns, works or operates on a loom for the production of cloth, silk fabric etc.; and

(h) “worker” means a loom worker, whether male or female, who earns wages on daily or any other basis by working on a loom.

Establishment  
of Traditional  
Weavers Welfare  
Authority.

3. (1) **The Central Government shall, as soon as may be, by notification in the Official Gazette, establish an Authority to be known as the Traditional Weavers Welfare Authority for carrying out the purposes of this Act.**

(2) The headquarter of the Authority shall be at Mau district in the State of Uttar Pradesh and the Authority may establish offices at such other places in the country, as it may deem necessary for carrying out the purposes of this Act.

(3) The Authority shall consist of the following members who shall be appointed by the Central Government in such manner as may be prescribed, namely:—

(a) a Chairperson having adequate knowledge and professional experience in handloom sector;

(b) a Deputy Chairperson with such qualification, as may be prescribed;

(c) five members of Parliament, of whom three shall be from Lok Sabha and two shall be from Rajya Sabha, to be nominated by the Presiding Officers of the respective Houses;

(d) three members to represent weavers cooperatives;

(e) three members to represent loom weavers;

(f) four members to represent the Union Ministries of Finance, Planning, Labour and Employment and Textiles; and

(g) four members to be nominated by the Government of the States to be rotated amongst them in alphabetical order.

(4) The Authority shall be a body corporate by the name aforesaid, having perpetual succession and common seal, with power to acquire, hold and dispose of property both movable and immovable and to contract and shall, by the said name, *sue or be sued*.

(5) The term of Office of the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and members of the Authority and the procedure to be followed in the discharge of the functions of the Authority shall be such as may be prescribed.

(6) **The Authority shall have a secretariat with such Officers and members of staff and with such terms and conditions of services as may be prescribed.**

Functions of the  
Authority.

4. (1) Subject to any guidelines issued by the Central Government under the provisions of the Act, the Authority shall take steps in close coordination with Government of the States

for the overall welfare of weavers including, removal of poverty and indebtedness, raising the standard of living, modernizing the looms and making easy availability of raw materials at affordable prices and marketing of cloth on behalf of the loom weavers.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions, the Authority shall,—

- 5 (a) formulate welfare policy for the loom weavers and workers;
- (b) maintain records of looms existing in all the villages, districts and other places throughout the country;
- (c) maintain a District-wise register of loom weavers and workers with such particulars and in such manner as may be prescribed;
- 10 (d) regulate the service conditions of workers in such manner as may be prescribed;
- (e) fix minimum wages for loom workers from time to time;
- (f) ensure modernization of old handlooms;
- (g) encourage and provide all necessary assistance to loom weavers cooperatives;
- (h) organize exhibitions, melas and such other activities to promote loom sector in  
15 different parts of the country;
- (i) make suitable arrangements for purchase of handloom cloth by the Textile Development Corporation or other Government agencies on cash and carry basis;
- (j) encourage export of loom cloth and garments from the country in a big way; and
- (k) perform such other functions as may be assigned to it by the appropriate  
20 Government from time to time.

25 **5. (1) The Central Government shall, as soon as may be, but within one year of the commencement of this Act, by notification in the Official Gazette, establish a fund to be called the Traditional Weavers Welfare Fund with a corpus of rupees five thousand crore and thereafter shall contribute to the fund from time to time after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf along with the Government of the States in such ratio as may be prescribed.**

Establishment  
of Traditional  
Weavers Welfare  
Fund.

(2) There shall also be credited to the fund such other sums as may be received by way of donations, contributions, assistance or otherwise from individuals, weavers and workers, body corporates, financial institutions firms, partnerships, etc.

30 (3) The fund shall be managed by a Board of Trustees, which shall be constituted by the Central Government in such manner as may be prescribed.

(4) The Fund shall be spent on:—

- (a) providing interest free consumption loans to traditional weavers from time to time;
- 35 (b) making *ex-gratia* payments at prescribed rates to each of the bereaved families of traditional weavers who die prematurely;
- (c) providing loans at nominal rate of interest for purchasing cotton yarn and other necessary raw materials to the traditional weavers;
- (d) insuring all traditional looms, traditional weavers and workers;
- 40 (e) providing healthcare facilities, maternity and such other facilities to the traditional weavers and workers;
- (f) providing educational facilities and vocational training to the wards of weavers and workers; and
- (g) such other welfare measures as may be prescribed.

Role of Central Government and other Ministries.	6. (1) It shall be the duty of the Central Government to ensure regular supply of yarn to the weavers at affordable and subsidized rates.	
	(2) The appropriate Government, all its Ministries, Departments, subordinate Offices, Public Sector Enterprises shall purchase their entire cloth requirements for dusters, curtains, tablecloth and such other things exclusively from the weavers including from the mills and powerloom sectors.	5
	(3) The Central Government shall ban the export of cotton and cotton yarn from the country.	
Central Government to provide Funds.	<b>7. The Central Government shall, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, provide to the Authority such sums as it may consider necessary for the efficient functioning of the Authority.</b>	10
Annual Report.	8. (1) The Authority shall prepare, in such form and manner, as may be prescribed, an annual report giving a true and full account of its activities during the previous year and submit it to the Central Government.	
	(2) The Central Government shall cause to be laid before each House of the Parliament the report submitted to it under sub-section (1).	15
Accounts and Audit.	9. (1) The Authority shall in consultation with the Comptroller and Auditor General of India maintain proper accounts and other relevant records and prepare an annual statement of accounts in such form and manner and at such time of each financial year as may be prescribed.	20
	(2) The accounts of the Authority as certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India together with the Audit report thereon shall be forwarded annually to the Central Government by the Authority.	
Ban on export of Cotton and Cotton yarn.	10. Notwithstanding anything contained in any other law, for the time being in force, the export of Cotton and Cotton Yarn is hereby banned.	25
Appointment of officers and staff etc.	11. The appropriate Government shall appoint as many Inspectors Welfare Officers and such other Officers and staff as it considers necessary for carrying out the purposes of the Act.	
Saving of other Laws.	12. The provisions of this Act shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other law for the time being in force regulating any of the matters dealt with in this Act.	30
Power to remove difficulties.	13. (1) If any difficulty arises in giving effect to the provisions of this Act, the Central Government may, by order published in the Official Gazette, make such provisions, not inconsistent with the provisions of this Act, as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for removing the difficulty:	
	Provided that no such order shall be made after the expiry of the period of two years from the date of the commencement to this Act.	35
	(2) Every order made under this section shall, as soon as may be, after it is made, be laid before each House of the Parliament.	
Power to make rules.	14. (1) The Central Government may, by notification in the Official Gazette, make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Act.	40
	(2) Every rule made under this Act shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made, before each House of Parliament, while it is in session, for a total period of thirty days which may be comprised in one session or in two or more successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session immediately following the session or the successive sessions aforesaid, both Houses agree in making any modification in the rule or both the Houses agree that the rule should not be made, the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect, as the case may be; so, however, that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under that rule.	45

## STATEMENT OF OBJECTS AND REASONS

One of the most essential things of civilized human beings has been cloth and majority of it comes from small scale loom weavers. India has the distinction of being the second-largest producer of textile fibre globally and almost contribute to five percent of GDP. Further, it is second largest sector providing employment after agriculture and it employs about 50 million people directly and indirectly to about 60 million people. The textile manufactured through looms are quite popular because these are beautiful and stylish.

It is the small-scale weavers who are steering this sector. It is rightly said that weaving is one of the oldest professions of mankind. The handloom weaving was the cornerstone of weaving industry during earlier times. However, with technological innovation and upgradation, the power loom industry has grown up from handloom sector. These loom units are primarily clustered in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra with each region having its unique quality, specialization and trademark. Mau district in Eastern Uttar Pradesh, in particular is considered the powerhouse of textile weavers. There are establishments in the district that process fibre into fabric and fabric into clothing and other textile products. Its craft of weaving are producing rare types of sarees with unique designs.

The decentralized loom sector plays an important role in Indian Textile and Clothing Industry. For most of the weavers, it is their family profession which passes on from one generation to other and their entire families are involved in this profession such as dyeing, bleaching, mercerizing, embroidery, printing, etc. For them, weaving is the only source of their livelihood and prosperity.

However, over the years, the socio-economic condition of weavers has become pathetic, due to low manufacturing output. Unfortunately, the State Governments as well as the Central Government has largely remained apathetic to their hardships. Weavers are mostly living in abject poverty. Their large family size with low level of literacy, inadequate power supply, untimely and prolonged power outages, increased rate of electricity per unit, and poor Government support, are compounding their miseries. The cotton yarn, which is the principal raw material for handloom cloth has become very costly and unaffordable and it is difficult for the weavers to purchase it from the market. The main reasons for the price spurt in cotton yarn is the export of cotton and cotton yarn. Other reasons include non purchase of their products by Government departments resulting in their exploitation by private traders, non availability of loans at minimum interest resulting in their exploitation by money lenders, absence of any welfare fund for the handloom weavers and the absence of any statutory authority to watch their interest. There is no proper channel set up by the Government between the seller and the buyer, and sometimes the trade ends up being unprofitable for the seller.

In addition, weavers are exposed to many occupational hazards. The powerloom industry exposes its workers to airborne dust, which contains infections, allergies and toxic substances related respiratory syndrome. They are also affected by additional occupational hazards mainly occurring due to threads emitting hazardous chemical substances, long manual working hours, noise pollution, etc. Poor ergonomics condition causes pain in their hands and legs, and repetitive injuries affecting their wrist, neck, shoulder and knee.

The State's apathy towards the weaving sector has badly affected the weavers' community whose livelihoods largely rely on the business. The Government has failed at empowering the Bunkar community. Survival with limited income resources is getting difficult day by day, due to which people are migrating to gulf countries. Reports of many starvation deaths of weavers have also come to light, which is no doubt is a blot on our

democratic polity. As such remedial measures must be taken urgently so that weavers and small-scale loom factories are saved from extinction. It has, therefore, been proposed to establish the Traditional Weavers Welfare Authority and also the Traditional Weavers Welfare Fund for the purpose. Some other miscellaneous provisions have also been proposed. This will certainly improve the lot of weavers and save them from perpetual indebtedness and starvation in various parts of our nation.

Hence this Bill.

NEW DELHI;  
*November 13, 2024*

RAJEEV RAI

## FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM

Clause 3 of the Bill seeks to constitute the Traditional Weavers Welfare Authority and to have a Secretariat with such officers and members of staff. Clause 5 provides for the establishment of Traditional Weavers Welfare Fund. Clause 6 provides that the Appropriate Government should ensure regular supply of yarn to loom weavers at subsidised rates. Clause 7 provides that the Central Government to provide appropriate funds to the Authority.

The Bill, if enacted, will involve expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India. It is estimated that a sum of rupees five thousand crore may involve as recurring expenditure per annum.

A non-recurring expenditure of rupees two hundred crore is also likely to be incurred.

#### MEMORANDUM REGARDING DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Clause 14 of the Bill empowers the Central Government to make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Bill. As the rules will relate to matters of detail only, the delegation of legislative power is of a normal character.



## LOK SABHA

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### BILL

to provide for the protection of traditional weavers in the country particularly in Mau and adjoining regions of Eastern part of State of Uttar Pradesh and for the welfare measures including life insurance coverage, interest free working capital and consumption loan, healthcare, education to the children, availability of affordable raw material, modernization of looms, housing, training, electricity subsidy and compulsory purchase of finished product by the Government and for establishment of an authority and a welfare fund and for matters connected therewith and incidental thereto.

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