

# PM not convinced: Gangwar on NREGS benefits for artisans

Union textile minister **Santosh Gangwar**, who was in the city on Thursday, spoke to dna's **Kanchan Srivastava** on various issues related to his ministry. Excerpts from the interview:

**Last December, you told dna that the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) would soon be extended to rural artisans, including handloom weavers, to revive the traditional dying art of India and stop them from switching to other professions for livelihood. Why hasn't it materialised yet?**

I had discussed the issue with the prime minister and had submitted a written proposal to him also. There are a few technical issues. The PM is not yet convinced with the idea. Moreover, rural development ministry is not willing to extend the NREGS to artisans for reasons best known to it.

**Does that mean the proposal is scrapped?**

I want this plan to take off. To build pressure, I am now seeking to initiate a nationwide campaign on the issue of extension of NREGS to artisans. This could

probably help convince the PM.

**You had announced two textile clusters in Uttar Pradesh — in the prime minister's constituency Varanasi and in your own Bareilly. Both couldn't take off due to hurdles in land allotment. Your comment.**

The fact of the matter is that the Samajwadi Party government is not cooperating with us. There seems to be lack of enthusiasm among the northern states towards development. We had also advertised about the textile parks; unfortunately, the northern states didn't show any interest. In comparison, the north-eastern states are more

willing. We are investing Rs20 crore in each northeast state for development of apparel centres. A beautiful centre is also being set up in Srinagar, besides a Pashmina dehairing plant in Leh.

**What is the status of centre-owned Indu Mills' transfer to the state for the memorial of Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar?**

We have cleared everything from our side. The ball is in the state government's court now.



**Q & A**

**Santosh Gangwar**

# Students left in lurch as FDDI denies degrees

By **Kamana Sharma**  
in New Delhi

SCORES of Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) students were in for a shock after an institute allegedly denied them a degree in the middle of the course. The FDDI was affiliated with the University of Mewar but the latter pulled out the affiliation.

"I had enrolled in FDDI in 2012 for an integrated programme in retail management which includes BBA + MBA. When I entered the third year, we were told that Mewar University had with-

drawn its affiliation and hence we will only receive diplomas," said a student on condition of anonymity.

Students said a meeting to resolve the issue was held in March where the chairman of Mewar University was

## Deadlock as Mewar varsity pulls out affiliation

present. "In the middle of this controversy, Rajeev Lakhera, then FDDI chairman also resigned. My parents were getting threat calls from the institute.

to remain quiet," another third-year student told MAIL TODAY.

Students have been protesting outside the college but have not been given a convincing response by the institute yet.

"We have been protesting everyday outside the college campus. Sandeep Bhatia, DGM, Training Cell of FDDI told us that with Mewar University backing out, there is little chance that another university will give affiliation to FDDI," students said.

When contacted by MAIL TODAY, FDDI secretary Ajay Kumar and Bhatia refused to comment on the issue.

## ‘समस्याओं को लेकर अभियान चलाएंगे’

नोएडा (एसएनबी)। अखिल भारतीय विश्वकर्मा शिल्पकार महासभा बुनियादी सुविधाओं को लेकर पूरे देश में जनजागरण अभियान चलाएगी। यह बात महासभा के राष्ट्रीय अध्यक्ष रामआसरे विश्वकर्मा ने रविवार को सेक्टर-33 स्थित अग्रसेन भवन में आयोजित राष्ट्रीय कार्यकारिणी की बैठक में कही।

उन्होंने कहा कि पहले चरण में उत्तर प्रदेश, मध्य प्रदेश समेत देश के अन्य राज्यों में महासभा की प्रदेश कमेटी गठित कर सदस्यता अभियान चलाया जाएगा। इसके बाद जागरूकता अभियान के तहत विश्वकर्मा, शिल्पकार जैसे लोहार, बढई, स्वर्णकार, कसेरा, मूर्तिकार आदि जातियों को उनके अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूक किया जाएगा। कार्यकारिणी बैठक के दौरान शिल्पकार विकास निगम की स्थापना करने, विश्वकर्मा जयंती पर राष्ट्रीय अवकाश घोषित करने, शिल्पकार वर्ग की जातियों को अनुसूचित जाति में शामिल करने समेत तमाम मांगें उठीं। रामआसरे विश्वकर्मा ने कहा कि समाजवादी पार्टी के मुखिया मुलायम सिंह यादव और उत्तर प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री अखिलेश यादव ने विश्वकर्मा समाज की लंबित मांगों को मानकर समाज को एक नई पहचान दी है। इस मौके पर वक्ताओं ने कहा कि प्रदेश सरकार ने पहली बार समाज के रामआसरे विश्वकर्मा को राज्यमंत्री व राज्य पिछड़ा वर्ग आयोग का अध्यक्ष बनाकर समाज का सम्मान बढ़ाया है।

### **भिवंडी के पावरलूम कर्मी आज से हड़ताल पर**

मुंबई। भिवंडी के करीब 9 लाख पावरलूम कर्मी सोमवार से हड़ताल पर जा रहे हैं। ये कर्मी चीन से कपड़ों के आयात पर प्रतिबंध की मांग कर रहे हैं। इस क्षेत्र के संकट की ओर प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी का ध्यान खींचने के लिए भिवंडी पावर लूम एसोसिएशन उन्हें एक लाख पोस्टकार्ड भी भेजेगी। इसके अलावा ये कर्मी बिजली दर में वृद्धि, धागा उत्पादकों द्वारा उनके काम में बाधा का भी विरोध कर रहे हैं।

## Bhiwandi powerloom workers to go on strike

### PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, August 23

Around nine lakh powerlooms in Bhiwandi will go on strike from tomorrow, to press for their demands, including ban on import of clothes from China.

The Bhiwandi Powerloom Association will also send one lakh postcards to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to draw his attention towards the crises in the sector.

They are protesting against hike in power tariff, obstruc-

tion in their work by yarn producers and are asking for permission to export their cloth.

### Power tariff hike

Bhiwandi Powerloom Association spokesperson Sharadram Sejpal said that around nine lakh powerloom units will go on strike from tomorrow. He alleged that hike in power tariff has always been ignored by the government and that yarn producers are exploiting powerloom owners.

"Yarn traders have a strong association and they use their might to change the price of yarn everyday. It affects the production cost of our cloth," Sejpal said.

### Cheaper in China

"There is a slight margin of profit in cloth production since China has captured the Indian market, and, in such a situation, a difference of ₹10 affects us a lot," he added.

Sejpal demanded that there should be a ban on im-

port of Chinese clothes as they are cheaper than Indian clothes.

"Production cost of cloth depends upon labour charges, power charges and yarn prices. Ultimately, rate of cloth production in India is costlier than that of China," Sejpal said.

"We will send one lakh postcards to the PM and will demand that the government impose heavy import duty on Chinese clothes to protect the domestic sector," Sejpal said.