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Sericulture policies and schemes in India and their impact on farmers livelihood

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Abstract

Sericulture, the cultivation of silkworms for silk production, plays a vital role in the rural economy of India, providing sustainable employment, particularly to small and marginal farmers, women, and tribal communities. Various central and state-level policies and schemes, such as the Central Silk Board's Catalytic Development Programme, the Integrated Sericulture Development Project under the North East Region Textile Promotion Scheme, and state-specific subsidy and welfare programs, aim to enhance productivity, quality, and market access. These initiatives provide support through improved mulberry plantation, access to high-yielding silkworm breeds, infrastructure development, skill training, and financial incentives. The impact on farmers' livelihoods is significant, as sericulture offers year-round income opportunities, reduces rural-urban migration, empowers women, and contributes to poverty alleviation. However, challenges remain in terms of fluctuating cocoon prices, climate vulnerability, and limited technology adoption. Strengthening policy implementation, market linkages, and farmer training can further enhance sericulture's role in ensuring socio-economic security for rural populations in India.

Keywords: Sericulture, rural livelihood, farmer empowerment, government schemes, India

Introduction

Sericulture and the silk industry in India serve as a significant source of livelihood, especially for rural populations, contributing to employment generation, poverty alleviation, women empowerment, and equitable income distribution, thereby boosting the national economy. Employing millions of rural people, mostly from vulnerable sections of society, the sector achieved a raw silk production of 23,060 MT by the end of the XI Plan, registering an annual growth rate of about 5% despite challenges like land loss due to urbanization and international price volatility. The Central Silk Board (CSB), under the Ministry of Textiles, spearheads research, technology development, seed production, and industry growth, with India being the only nation producing all four commercially exploited silks—Mulberry, Tasar, Eri, and Muga—across 26 states including the North East. Apart from economic benefits, sericulture offers ecological advantages, as silk host plants, being perennial, provide green cover, prevent soil erosion, and aid water conservation, while Vanya silk host plantations promote afforestation and livelihood opportunities for tribal communities in degraded forest areas, underscoring the need to expand silk host plantations. The Central Silk Board is a statutory body constituted during 1948 for the development of sericulture and silk industry in the country. The mandated activities of CSB are:

1. Research & Development and Research Extension,
2. Maintenance of four tier silkworm seed production network,

3. Providing leadership role in commercial silkworm seed production,
4. Standardizing and instilling quality parameters in the various production processes,
5. Promotion of Indian Silk in domestic and international markets and advising the Union Government on all matters concerning sericulture and silk industry.

These mandated activities of Central Silk Board are being carried out by the 300 units of CSB located in different States under the 3 Central Sector Schemes. Till IX Plan, these activities were carried out as regular 'programmes' of CSB. During X Plan, these regular programmes of CSB were grouped as three "Central Sector Schemes" based on the nature and objectives of the mandated tasks which was approved by the Expenditure Finance Committee.

Key Sericulture Policies in India

1. Cluster Promotion Programme (CPP) under CSB

Since the IX Plan, the Central Silk Board (CSB) has implemented the Centrally Sponsored Scheme—Catalytic Development Programme (CDP)—aimed at synergizing and disseminating technologies and innovations developed by its R&D units, while incentivizing stakeholder investments to enhance silk production, productivity, and quality. Serving as an effective vehicle for technology transfer, the scheme was implemented through state governments, with CSB personnel actively involved in programme formulation, appraisal, operation, monitoring, and providing technical inputs.

In 2015–16, following the 14th Finance Commission's recommendation to increase the states' share in net union tax revenue from 32% to 42%, the Government of India decided to discontinue most Centrally Sponsored Schemes, leading to the winding up of the CDP as a centrally sponsored initiative. Recognizing the interlinkages among various central sector schemes and their collective aim of improving silk quality and productivity to boost stakeholder income, the government proposed merging them into a single "Integrated Scheme for Development of Silk Industry," focusing on critical areas such as breed improvement, seed production, post-cocoon technology, and capacity building. Select components of the CDP were integrated into ongoing R&D and seed schemes under the Central Sector for a more visible impact on quality and productivity enhancement.

2. Silk samagra

"Silk Samagra-2" is an integrated scheme for the development of the silk industry, approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs on 19 January 2022. The scheme comprises various components and sub-components covering the mulberry, vanya, and post-cocoon sectors, and aims to synergize the efforts of state governments and other implementing agencies to enhance the quality, productivity, and production of raw silk. In addition to boosting output, the programme focuses on creating employment opportunities, particularly for rural communities"

The Silk Samagra-2 scheme comprises of two major activities as under:

i. Core activities of Central Silk Board – Sub-components

- a. R&D, Training, Transfer of Technology and I.T. initiatives
- b. Seed Organization
- c. Coordination and market development
- d. Quality certification systems, export, brand promotion & technology upgradation

ii. Beneficiary-oriented critical field level intervention – Sub-components

- a. Critical Field Level Intervention other than North Eastern Region
- b. Implementation of Sericulture Projects in North Eastern Region
- c. Provisions to meet expenditure of ongoing Sericulture Projects of NERTPS

Under the Silk Samagra-2 scheme, the Central Silk Board (CSB) implements its core activities—comprising four sub-components—through its network of units engaged in research and development (R&D), seed production, project implementation and monitoring, and brand promotion of silk in domestic and international markets. Beneficiary-oriented components are executed by State Sericulture

Departments or other state agencies, with financial support from CSB.

In the mulberry and vanya silk sectors, the R&D institutes focus on key areas such as host plant and silkworm breed improvement for higher productivity, quality enhancement, and resilience to biotic and abiotic stresses; application of molecular tools for breed and hybrid improvement as well as disease diagnosis; advanced seed technology and germplasm conservation; mechanization of sericulture operations to reduce drudgery and improve efficiency; establishment of machinery manufacturing units for the post-cocoon sector and development of improved silk processing technologies; promotion of commercial uses of silk beyond textiles; and research into silk-based biomaterials.

The CSB has been implementing the restructured Central Sector Scheme "Silk Samagra" with the primary goal of enhancing the quality and productivity of indigenous silk and reducing India's dependence on imported silk.

3. Multi-State Project for Promotion of Large Scale Tasar Sericulture Based Livelihoods under Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)

The Central Silk Board (CSB), Ministry of Textiles, Government of India—the apex body for promoting sericulture—and PRADAN, which has been fostering Tasar sericulture-based livelihoods among marginalized communities for over two decades, have collaborated to transfer improved technologies, establish market linkages, and build sustainable people's collectives in the Tasar sub-sector, benefiting over 15,000 rural households in the past decade. Initially supported through a UNDP-funded pilot project, these initiatives were later scaled up via Special SGSY Projects with assistance from the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) in Jharkhand and Bihar. In recent years, NABARD and the Tribal Welfare Commissioner's Office, Government of Jharkhand, have also contributed to the growth of these activities. These efforts have demonstrated the strong livelihood potential of Tasar sericulture, particularly for tribal communities, with growing demand for Tasar-based livelihoods in rural areas. Building on this momentum, CSB and PRADAN proposed multi-state ventures aimed at reaching a larger number of rural households, enhancing family-level incomes, and driving sectoral growth in Tasar sericulture. The concept was discussed with MoRD in 2011, followed by a series of consultations, after which the ministry agreed to support CSB's proposal to develop projects for financial assistance under the Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP) as a logical extension of earlier interventions.

Key Project Activities

- To strengthen the existing SHGs and clusters and orienting them to livelihood activities
- To promote functional activity groups across the Tasar silk value chain

Project Area:						
State	Project Districts					
Project Implementing Agency	Project Beneficiaries					
Tasar-Direct	Tasar-Indirect	Grand Total				
Jharkhand	Godda, Dumka, Pakur, East Singhbhum, West Singhbhum, Saraikela Kharswan , Giridih and Deoghar	PRADAN	6427	2142	11938	
Chhattisgarh	Raigarh, , Bastar, and Balrampur		1893	586	4505	
Orissa	Kendujhar		1525	381	2654	
West Bengal	Bankura and West Medinipur		1525	381	2654	
Maharashtra	Gadchiroli, Gondia, Chandrapur and Yavatmal (6 blocks, 9 clusters, 145 villages)	BAIF	3326	831	5790	
Total	States : 5 , Districts: 18		14696	4321	27541	
Project outlay and sharing pattern:						
State/ Category	MORD	CSB	Project grant (lakh Rs.)	Credit	Beneficiary	Total Cost (lakh Rs.)
Jharkhand	1795.460	598.486	2393.946	192.928	195.789	2782.663
Chhattisgarh	598.703	204.286	802.989	47.784	69.806	920.579
Orissa	358.586	119.447	478.033	39.155	38.812	555.999
West Bengal	400.399	133.599	533.998	39.107	44.152	617.257
Maharashtra	759.800	253.211	1013.011	81.377	109.152	1203.540
Total Project Outlay	3912.95	1309.029	5221.977	400.351	450.711	6080.040
% to total outlay	64.35	21.52	85.88	6.58	7.52	100.00
% to project grant	74.93	25.07				

Fig 1: Shows project area and project outlay and sharing pattern

Investment on Equipment, training and common assets per family:					
State	Investment/ Family (Rs.)			Total investment/ family	Total project grant/ beneficiary
	Equipment	Training	Common assets		
Jharkhand	7,739	2,951	5,436	23,309	23,309
Chhattisgarh	5,540	3,011	4,838	22,695	19,795
Orissa	3,461	2,929	3,394	20,949	18,011
West Bengal	4,016	2,929	4,025	23,260	20,123
Maharashtra	7,922	4,176	5,490	20,784	17,493

Project output:							
State/ Category	Block plantation raised (ha.)	Forest plantation regenerated (ha.)	Basic Seed Production (dfls)	Commercial seed production (Lakh dfls)	Cocoon production (lakh)	CRPs promoted (No.)	Raw Silk Prodn* (MT)
Jharkhand	607	3150	2.25	21.390	1161.41	161	92.913
Chhattisgarh	300	900	0.50	4.450	292.40	56	23.392
Orissa	80	940	0.50	4.150	265.40	37	21.232
West Bengal	130	805	0.50	4.250	267.00	37	21.360
Maharashtra	200	1750	0.48	6.750	212.57	82	17.006
Total	2459	7210	5.25	47.20	1179.48	373	175.903

* during the project period of three years

Fig 2: Shows project output on multi-state project for promotion of large scale tasar sericulture based livelihoods under mahila kisan sashaktikaran pariyojana

4. North East Region (NER) Textile Promotion Scheme (Sericulture Projects for NE during XII Plan)

To boost the textile sector in the North East Region (NER), the Government of India approved a project-based strategy under the umbrella scheme "North East Region Textile

Promotion Scheme" (NERTPS) during the XII Plan. Implemented alongside the Ministry's regular schemes, NERTPS is funded from the 10% budget allocation earmarked for the North Eastern States, with the Planning Commission allocating ₹1038.10 crore for the scheme. It

received approval from the Expenditure Finance Committee (EFC) on 8 April 2013 and the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) on 7 November 2013. The NER, with its rich tradition of handloom weaving, handicrafts, and sericulture, accounts for over 50% of India's handlooms, though most production serves local consumption. Recognizing the sector's high growth and employment potential, the scheme aims to develop and modernize textiles in the region by providing government support in raw material supply, seed banks, machinery, common facility centres, skill development, design improvement, and marketing assistance. Its specific objectives include increasing textile production value, promoting technology upgradation, enhancing design capabilities, diversifying products, adding value, improving access to domestic and export markets, fostering cluster development, and raising labour productivity.

5. MGNREGA with CDP

The schemes operated by Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles, Govt. of India, under the Catalytic Development Programme have similar objectives as MGNREGA. These are:

The initiative aims to promote systematic plantations of mulberry, tasar, muga, and eri host plants as economically viable assets by integrating MGNREGS with the Ministry of Textiles' Cluster Development Programme (CDP). It seeks to generate rural employment and create durable assets for vulnerable communities, enhancing their socio-economic security. The program also focuses on improving land productivity, soil health and water conservation, while empowering marginalized groups such as women, SCs, STs and small farmers. Additionally, it addresses the labour-intensive nature of sericulture by engaging trained MGNREGS job card holders beyond the assured 100 days of work (CSB report).

5. Case Studies

5.1 India

In India, sericulture has played a transformative role in rural economies, particularly in states such as Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, which are known for their robust silk industries. The growth of sericulture in these regions has led to substantial socio-economic improvements, contributing to both income enhancement and infrastructure development. In Karnataka, the districts of Mysore and Channarayana have become prominent centers for silk production, with sericulture providing livelihoods for thousands of rural families. The state's focus on developing sericulture has led to the establishment of numerous mulberry plantations, silk rearing facilities and processing units, which have collectively boosted local economies. (Cheng *et al.*, 2018)^[1] The income generated from sericulture often exceeds that of traditional agriculture, providing farmers with a more stable and higher income. Additionally, the development of sericulture has prompted improvements in local infrastructure, such as better roads, irrigation systems, and market facilities, which have further supported economic growth. The expansion of sericulture has also led to the creation of local cooperatives and training programs, enhancing the skills of workers and fostering community development. These initiatives have empowered rural

communities, improved living standards, and contributed to the overall socio-economic progress of the region.

6. Seri 5k Project-Cluster Profiles XII Plan (2012-2017) Bivoltine Sericulture in India.

The Government of India, through initiatives such as the National Sericulture Project (NSP) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)-assisted programmes, has made significant efforts to develop bivoltine sericulture in the country. These interventions enabled the Central Silk Board (CSB) to develop suitable mulberry varieties, standardized packages of practices, high-yielding silkworm breeds like CSR2 × CSR4, CSR4 × CSR5, and CSR18 × CSR19, along with appropriate rearing methodologies, disease management protocols, and improved reeling technologies adapted to the tropical climate of peninsular India. Large-scale demonstrations of these technologies were conducted with 3,700 farmers and 298 reelers across the southern states, leading to a substantial increase in bivoltine silk production. Raw silk output in India rose from 366 MT in 1998–99 to 1,685 MT in 2011–12, registering an annual compound growth rate of 11.62%. The share of bivoltine silk in total silk production also increased from 2.57% in 1998–99 to 7.15% in 2011–12.

Building on the success of JICA-supported programmes for promoting bivoltine sericulture in India, the Government of India, under its XII Five Year Plan (2012–13 to 2016–17), prioritized employment generation for economically weaker sections in rural areas through the production of import-substitute bivoltine silk under the Catalytic Development Programme (CDP). In the mulberry sector, the plan set an ambitious target to increase the production of high-quality bivoltine silk (3A grade and above) from 1,685 MT to 5,000 MT—a 197% rise from one plan period to the next. To achieve this, the XII Plan proposed a strategic shift focusing on research, extension, seed production, improved cocoon production practices, marketing, credit facilitation, policy reforms, and greater stakeholder participation in decision-making processes.

Keeping the extension system formulated in the project as base, Central Silk Board in its XIIth Plan (2012-17) proposed to formulate about 179 clusters all over India.

7. Tribal Sub Plan (TSP)

Implementation of Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) under sericulture

Sericulture holds a unique position in generating employment and livelihood opportunities for poor and marginalized rural families. It serves as an effective tool for poverty alleviation, helps prevent migration of local youth to urban areas, and contributes to improving their social and economic status. The Central Silk Board (CSB) has been implementing various beneficiary-oriented components under the *Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP)*, aimed exclusively at empowering tribal families through sericulture, in coordination with State Sericulture Departments and other implementing agencies across the country. Under this initiative, CSB released ₹30.00 crore in 2017–18 to benefit 9,181 families and ₹15.00 crore in 2018–19 to benefit 2,801 families. For 2019–20, the Ministry of Textiles sanctioned ₹20.00 crore for implementing TSP beneficiary components, of which ₹13.74 crore had been released to states up to November 2019.

8. FPOs: Karnataka, renowned for its mulberry silk, has long been a cornerstone of India's sericulture industry. The state's commitment to sericulture, driven by a legacy of over two centuries, is evident in its extensive mulberry cultivation and significant employment generation, particularly for women and youth. Despite its prominence, Karnataka's sericulture sector grapples with challenges such as fluctuating cocoon and silk prices, untimely availability & rising cost of inputs, climate change and disease outbreaks. In addressing these issues, Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) have emerged as a transformative force. By pooling resources and negotiating collectively, FPOs enhance market access, reduce costs and facilitate knowledge sharing among farmers. Their role extends to promoting sustainable practices and technological adoption, though they encounter hurdles including financial constraints, limited technical skills and infrastructural inadequacies. Government initiatives like the Seri-Plus and SERICARE Schemes, along with support from NABARD and various state programs, are crucial in bolstering FPOs. These efforts aim to improve productivity, infrastructure and market linkages. This underscores the pivotal role of FPOs in revitalizing Karnataka's sericulture industry, highlighting both their impact and the ongoing challenges they face. (Gunasekhar *et al.*, 2024)^[6]

In Sericulture FPOs enhance small and marginal sericulture farmers' collective bargaining power, access to modern technology and facilitate better market linkages. Key challenges include financial constraints, inadequate technical and managerial skills and insufficient infrastructure, all of which hinder the growth and efficiency of FPOs. In Promotion of sericulture FPOs requires capacity building, infrastructure, technology adoption and value addition for a sustainable, profitable future in Karnataka.

While the concept of sericulture FPOs holds immense promise, their current prevalence in Karnataka remains limited and as of recent data, Karnataka has over 31 sericulture FPOs, spread across major silk-producing districts (WDD, 2024).

9. BAIF: encourages small-scale farmers to begin sericulture with half to one acre of mulberry plantation to minimize initial risks. Farmers receive guidance from 'Rasham Doots' or area lead farmers, who provide inputs and technical support. Over time, experienced rearers can become lead farmers themselves, supplying materials like silkworm eggs. Notably, 66% of participating farmers have less than two hectares of cultivable land. (Patil *et al.*, 2009)^[8]

10. Sericulture Equipment (Silkworm Rearing Equipment) Subsidy Guidelines

Sericulture equipment worth ₹75,000 is provided with a 75% subsidy (₹56,250) to eligible silk worm rearers. Applicants must have a rearing shed and be registered with the sericulture department. Only empaneled suppliers can provide the equipment, and its use is restricted to sericulture.

Misuse within 3 years leads to subsidy recovery and legal action.

11. Sericulture in Jammu and Kashmir

₹32.10 lakh was provided as marketing support to cocoon growers facing low prices. 25 sericulture clusters were developed under a holistic Cluster Development Programme. Over 11 lakh mulberry saplings were planted through farmers and departmentally. Rearing kits were distributed to 2,000 rearers in 2012–13 and 1,600 in 2013–14. These initiatives aimed at boosting sericulture, farmer income and rural employment. (Bhat *et al.*, 2024)

12. List of on-going schemes implemented in the department of Meghalaya

A. Sericulture sector (state plan schemes)

- a. Upgradation of Seed Farms:** Modernizing mulberry, eri, and muga seed farms with better seed preparation and reeling equipment.
- b. Strengthening of Headquarters:** Enhancing administrative capacity at Shillong and Tura for effective scheme implementation.
- c. Strengthening of Silk Reeling Unit:** Supporting farmers by purchasing cocoons, producing raw silk and offering training.
- d. Research and Development Support:** Conducting R&D on bivoltine races, pest control, and soil suitability for silkworm food plants.

B. Handloom sector (state plan schemes)

- a. Intensive Production of Handloom Fabrics:** Boosting non-traditional handloom fabric production and employing skilled weavers.
- b. Handloom Training and Research:** Providing training in design, dyeing, embroidery, and engaging master weavers for skill enhancement.
- c. Establishment of Weaving Centres:** Setting up handloom training centers at Saikarap and Nongtra for youth self-employment.
- d. Establishment of Mini Yarn Bank:** Supplying various silk and cotton yarns to handloom centres and individual weavers.
- e. Modernization of Handloom:** Encouraging power loom weaving in select districts for employment generation.
- Income Generation for Weavers:** Providing free yarn to traditional and new weavers to promote fabric production and women empowerment.

C. Centrally sponsored schemes

- a. Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojana (RKVY):** Promoting private sector eri and muga plantations with infrastructure and capacity building support.
- b. Integrated Scheme for Eri Silk in Ri-Bhoi (ISDP):** Developing eri silk sector in Ri-Bhoi to improve livelihoods and skills.
- c. Silk Samagra-2 (Meghalaya):** Promoting eri rearing and livelihood enhancement through technology and training.
- d. Textile Tourism Complex at Nongpoh:** Establishing a tourism hub to showcase the entire silk production process.
- e. Cluster Development under NHDP:** Developing weaver clusters to help them achieve self-sustainability.

13. Tamil Nadu Sericulture Loan Scheme: ₹49,000 to ₹79,000 Per Acre for Farmers

The “Primary Cooperative Agriculture and Rural Development Bank: For Sericulture in Irrigated Areas” scheme, launched by the Co-operation, Food and Consumer Protection Department of Tamil Nadu, provides financial assistance to farmers engaged in sericulture within irrigated regions. Under this scheme, loans are offered on a per-acre basis to help farmers expand and improve their sericulture activities, with amounts ranging from ₹49,000 to ₹79,000 per acre. The applicable interest rates range from 11% to 12.75% per annum, subject to periodic revisions (Monalisa, 2025).

State and Central Sericulture Schemes:

- a. **High Yielding Mulberry Plantation:** 75% subsidy (₹10,500/acre); eligibility includes 1–5 acres with 5000 saplings and paired row system.
- b. **Silkworm Rearing Shed:** 30% subsidy (₹1,20,000/unit); minimum 1 acre plantation, shed >1000 sq.ft, 4–5 crops/year.
- c. **Farm Equipment Supply:** 75% subsidy (₹52,500); rearing rack worth ₹17,500 required, 4–5 crops/year.
- d. **Cash Awards for Farmers/Reelers:** Recognizes best performers based on cocoon yield and raw silk quality.
- e. **Eri Food Plant & Rearing Shed:** 90% subsidy for SC/ST; requires high-yield castor plantation and 0.5–1 acre land.
- f. **Eri Appliances Supply:** 90% subsidy (₹18,000); shed with rack worth ₹2,000 and 0.5-acre plantation needed.
- g. **Chawkie Rearing & Seri Poly Clinics:** 75–90% subsidy; criteria include education, training, infrastructure, and drip irrigation.
- h. **Reeling/Twisting Units & Nurseries:** Up to 90% subsidy; land, water, electricity, and experience in silk reeling essential. (https://www.tnagrisnet.tn.gov.in/people_app/sericulture_schemes.html)

14. West Bengal schemes

Welfare schemes

- a. **Old Age Pension to Handloom Weavers:** Provides Rs.1000–1500/month pension to weavers aged 60+ with 10+ years in cooperatives.
- b. **Mahatma Gandhi Bunkar Bima Yojana (MGBBY):** Offers life and accident insurance with scholarship benefits for weavers and their children.
- c. **RSBY for Handloom Weaver Families:** Provides hospitalization cover up to Rs.30,000 for five family members at a nominal registration fee.

Regular schemes

1. Handloom clusters development projects
2. Mega Handloom Cluster Development Project
3. Handloom projects under Natural Fibre Mission,
4. Comprehensive Handloom Development Programme at Dakshin Dinajpur
5. Indian Institute of Handloom Technology at Fulia
6. West Bengal Handloom Circuit, 2014
7. Integrated Skill Development Training (ISDS)
8. Textile Policy 2013-2018 with special emphasis on Handloom Sector,

9. Revival of primary weavers co-operative societies individuals/ SHGS / Apex society under Revival, Reform & Restructuring Package,
10. 10% price subsidy on hank yarn under Mill Gate Price Scheme
11. Marketing support to handloom industry through organization of district level fairs, State Level Fair
12. Tantisathi
13. Weaver Credit Cards (WCC)
14. MGBBY
15. RSBY
16. Old Age Pension to handloom weavers

Marketing & Export Promotion Scheme (Handlooms)

The scheme promotes exportable handloom products through financial aid for product development, skill upgradation, design innovation, buyer-seller meets, foreign trade fair participation and publicity.

Projects

- **Implemented/Terminated:** 10
- **Under Implementation:** 10
- **Awaiting Sanction:** 1
- **Weavers Covered:** 1239

Marketing Initiatives

To boost handloom sales, State & District Level Fairs/Festivals are held under the Central Sector:

a. State Level

- **2017–18:** 1 event
- **2018–19:** 1 event

b. District Level:

- **2017–18:** 6 events
- **2018–19:** 6 events

Mill Gate Price Scheme

Provides all yarn types at mill gate price to weavers for uninterrupted raw material supply and full employment utilization.

Handloom Reservation Act, 1985

Protects handloom products by reserving specific items (like sarees with extra warp/weft, lungis, blankets, shawls, etc.) for handloom production only. Exemptions apply for items made predominantly with synthetic fibers.

Handloom Mark

Implemented by the Textiles Committee, Kolkata – assures a product is handloom-made.

Spinning Mills (MSSET Department)

Six mills operate under MSSET Deptt.

- **Kangsabati:** Produces acrylic yarn
- **Tamralipta & others:** Produce cotton hank/cone yarn
- **Kalyani:** Now producing high-count cotton yarn

Marketing Support

Tantuja (The West Bengal State Handloom Weavers Coop. Society Ltd.) is the sole apex body supporting primary

cooperatives and individual artisans through marketing assistance.

Handloom & Khadi Weavers Financial Benefit Scheme 2024:

a. Financial Assistance to Weavers & PWCS:

- One-time settlement of NPAs (100% principal + 25% interest) for viable PWCS.
- Financial aid of ₹1–10 lakh to active PWCS.
- ₹5,000 for loom/work shed repair and ₹10,000 for raw material to individual weavers.
- Yarn supplied at 10% subsidized rate.

b. Marketing & Promotion

District-level (Tanter Haat) and state-level (Banglar Tanter Haat) handloom fairs organized to boost sales.

c. Employment & Infrastructure

- Subsidized saree production for semi-skilled weavers.
- Cluster development, work shed construction, road links, and loom distribution to weavers.

d. Welfare Support

- ₹1,000/month pension for weavers above 60 with no income.
- ₹2 lakh one-time death benefit for families of deceased weavers/artisans.

15. Andhra Pradesh policies and schemes

The Andhra Pradesh government is expanding mulberry cultivation from 1.18 lakh to 1.27 lakh acres and promoting sericulture through MGNREGS and subsidies. Due to COVID-19 disruptions, farmers were uncertain, but recovery is now expected with government support. The Agriculture Budget allocated ₹97.36 crore for sericulture, especially in drought-prone areas, offering financial aid for sheds, mechanisation, and reeling units. SC/ST farmers receive 90% subsidy benefits. An action plan promotes organic farming, chawkie worm rearing, and setting up automatic reeling units for high-grade raw silk. The goal is to increase cocoon output from 66,900 to 69,100 MT and raw silk from 9,120 to 9,452 MT. Incentives include ₹50/kg for Bivoltine cocoons (with productivity targeted at 75 kg per 100 DFLs) and ₹130/kg for silk reelers. Anantapur and Chittoor districts contribute 50% of state silk production, with 3,750 acres being added in Anantapur and 250 new sheds sanctioned with ₹3 lakh aid each. (Press report 2021)

Government Initiatives Supporting Sericulture

The Andhra Pradesh government, in collaboration with the Central Silk Board, has launched several initiatives to promote sericulture. Key programs include:

- Subsidies and Financial Assistance:** Farmers receive subsidies for mulberry plantation, drip irrigation, and silkworm rearing equipment.
- Training and Capacity Building:** Regular workshops and training programs equip farmers with knowledge about pest management, disease control, and innovative farming practices.
- Market Linkages:** The government facilitates direct market access for cocoon and silk producers, ensuring fair prices.

- Technology Adoption:** Initiatives to introduce advanced technologies, such as automatic reeling machines and bio-fertilizers, have improved efficiency and sustainability.

Innovations and Future Prospects

Andhra Pradesh is embracing innovations to overcome these challenges and enhance the sector's growth. Some notable developments include:

- **High-Yielding Silkworm Varieties:** The introduction of hybrid silkworms that are disease-resistant and yield higher-quality silk has benefited farmers.
- **Digital Platforms:** Mobile apps and online portals help farmers access market information, technical support, and government schemes.
- **Organic Sericulture:** Growing demand for organic silk is encouraging farmers to adopt eco-friendly practices, such as using bio-fertilizers and natural pest control methods.

16. Silk Vision 2030

India holds immense potential to enhance its silk production and position itself as a leading supplier of raw silk and silk products in both domestic and international markets. At present, the country imports a significant quantity of high-quality raw silk from China, primarily due to the slow growth of bivoltine silk production. This slow growth is attributed to the shrinking area under mulberry cultivation in traditional regions, the low output of bivoltine eggs, and the limited availability of Automatic Reeling Machines. In line with the *Indian Silk Vision 2030*, and considering the current status, potential, and future prospects, a set of mid-term (2020–21 to 2024–25) and long-term (2025–26 to 2029–30) strategies have been proposed for the industry. The production targets for CB/ICB and bivoltine raw silk, along with the corresponding requirements for commercial seed. (CSB, 2018)

Policy interventions and other issues

- Price stabilization fund to safeguard the interests of stakeholders
- Rationalization of duty structure and duty exemption on silk machinery
- Continue anti-dumping duty on raw silk for some more years
- Revoking most favored nation (MFN) status
- Establish 'Sericulture Complexes' to work as single window system to provide solutions to stakeholders along the value chain
- Encourage seri-startups/entrepreneurs/incubation centers
- Brand promotion for different varieties of silks and sericulture products
- Sericulture stakeholders should be interlinked in the production chain to establish organic linkages and coordinated functioning
- Focus on Vanya sericulture as India is unique in the production of Tasar, Eri and Muga
- Controlling illegal silk/cocoons trade.

Marketing

To overcome existing challenges in sericulture, a well-organized production-linked value chain is essential. Emphasis should be on cost-effective diversification of products that align with consumer preferences. An efficient marketing system is needed to control price fluctuations and ensure stability. Introducing cocoon insurance can protect farmers against price crashes or distress sales. Additionally, the use of AI-based market calendars and price forecasting tools can enhance decision-making. Strengthening government bodies like KSMB (Karnataka Silk Marketing Board) is crucial for their active role in price stabilization and market support.

Conclusion

India's sericulture policies, particularly Silk Samagra-2, are empowering rural communities by integrating modern technologies, infrastructure, and market access in to the silk value chain. These initiatives bolster year-round livelihoods, especially for women and marginalized groups, through employment across mulberry cultivation, silkworm rearing, and reeling. In regions like Assam and Maharashtra, local-level implementation and seed-production support are reviving traditional silk clusters and enhancing farmers' resilience. Sustained impact depends on further strengthening research infrastructure, farmer producer organizations, and climate-resilient practices to ensure long-term sustainability in the silk sector.

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