

Maran-Jairam meet today to talk textile sector bailout

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Chennai, August 10: In a move which will provide relief to the textile industry, particularly in the southern states, which house a number of dyeing and textile units, the textile ministry will hold detailed discussions with the environment ministry on the long-pending issue of financing/setting up common effluent treatment plants and letting the treated water directly into the sea, textile minister Dayanidhi Maran has said.

Responding to the request of the Tamil Nadu chief minister M Karunanidhi on finding a permanent solution on the lines of the leather industry (which recently received funds from the Centre to set up treatment plants), Maran, who was in Chennai on Monday to attend the 25th annual award winning celebrations of the Handloom Export Promotion Council, said there is no clarity on who will take up the responsibilities of the issue. "I will be meeting the Union environment minister Jairam Ramesh and industry



representatives on Tuesday in New Delhi to sort out the fiasco, while ensuring assistance from the Centre in this matter," he said.

Tamil Nadu, one of the major exporters of textile garments in India, has been facing challenges, particularly from the Supreme Court and the High Court, on finding a permanent solution for this issue, he said, adding the state government has already made a Rs 900-crore proposal to treat the effluent water and has asked the textile ministry to fund the same, he said. "Based on the discussions with the environment ministry, the textile ministry will take up the next course of action. We hope to solve the issue soon and will find ways to as-

sist in setting up such treatment plants across the country," Maran said.

He also added that the textile ministry has proposed two handloom clusters—one each in Tamil Nadu and West Bengal—with an estimated investment of Rs 70 crore each. The ministry will rope in NIFT to design and develop new technologies to help handloom units to not only withstand the slowdown and competition from other countries, but also improve the exports in a big way, he said. Each cluster is expected to create nearly 50,000 jobs and work will begin on these clusters during the current fiscal, Maran added.

The ministry is also open to encourage foreign direct investment in the textile sector and will come out with plans to go ahead with the proposal, he added. Earlier, addressing the gathering, MK Stalin, deputy chief minister, Tamil Nadu, requested the textile minister to expedite the issue of effluent treatment and asked for assistance in setting up zero-effluent treatment plants in the state.