INTRODUCTION:

The Indian textile industry has an awesome existence in the Indian economy. It is the second largest employer after the Agriculture. It is one of the largest in the world with a massive raw material and textiles manufacturing base. Currently, it contributes about 14 percent to industrial production, 4 percent to the GDP, and 17 percent to the country's export earnings. Around 35 million people are directly employed in the textile manufacturing activities. Indirect employment including the manpower engaged in agricultural based raw-material production like cotton and related trade and handling could be stated to be around another 60 million.

India has a diverse and rich textile tradition. The origin of Indian textiles can be traced to the Indus valley civilization. The people of this civilization used homespun cotton for weaving their garments. Excavations at Harappa and Mohen-jo-Daro, have unearthed household items like needles made of bone and spindles made of wood, it shows that homespun cotton was used to make garments. The Indian textiles, famous for their fineness and captivating colours for ages beyond 5,000 years, have attracted all parts of the world. India had numerous trade links with the outside world and Indian textiles were popular in the ancient world. Indian silk was popular in Rome in the early centuries of the Christian era. Cotton textiles
were also exported to China during the heydays of the silk route. Silk fabrics from south India were exported to Indonesia during the 13th century. India also exported printed cotton fabrics or chintz, to European countries and the Far East before the advent of the Europeans in India.

Our growth in the fabric production, though steadily have gone up on all economic parameters but inadequate to compete in a globalised scenario. As far as the Indian weaving capacity in the world are concerned, in terms of loomage, we are at the top but our neighbour China has the largest number of shuttleless looms and thus stands at top for its manufacturing capacity.

The development of the textile industry in India can be traced by referring to the development of handlooms, which met major requirements of the population in 19th century. Today the textile industry comprising of textile mills on the one hand and largely dispersed handlooms and powerlooms on the other, fulfilling the clothing needs of the country.

In Indian textile industry has three sectors i.e. a) Mill Sector 2) Handloom Sector and 3) Powerloom Sector. Structurally, the mill sector consists of about 1834 mills including composite and spinning mills. There are about 35 lakh handlooms dispersed all over India. The powerloom sector consists of about 22.05 lakh powerlooms distributed over more than 5 lakh units.
Maharashtra occupies a premier position in the textile map of the country with the largest number of powerlooms in the state. It is next to the agriculture. It has vast potentiality for creating employment opportunities to millions. It is recognized as a self-reliance industry, right from the production of raw material to the delivery of finished product, with substantial value addition at each stage of processing. The State of Maharashtra is having highest area under cotton cultivation i.e. 3.50 million hectares and is second highest cotton producer in the country i.e. 6.7 million bales per annum.

In the State there are 3.96 million installed spindles and 10.054 million installed rotors. The state has a production capacity of 368.45 million kilograms of spun yarn and 339.51 million kilograms of manmade filament yarn. Out of it, in the co-operative sector there are 1.5 million installed spindles and 0.08 lakh installed rotors.

In the state there are about 11.06 lakh powerlooms working in the decentralized powerloom sector. These powerlooms at an average are producing about 10,123.78 million meter cloth per annum and providing direct employment to about 2.00 million people. The cotton and man made fibre yarn is a basic raw material for the powerloom sector. The power loom
sector is spread over small villages and towns of the state. Mostly, units are comprised of 2 to 4 power looms and termed as small and tiny units. As per general assessment 70% to 80% units in the state are working on job work basis.

In the state, the powerloom sector requires 1,012.38 million kilogram of yarn. The spinning mills under the co-operative sector in the state are just producing 1.20 million kilogram of yarn per annum, which is 10% of the total requirement of yarn by the powerloom sector. The requirement of remaining 90% yarn is fulfilled by the other states. The important clusters in the state are Bhiwandi, Malegaon, Ichalkaranji, Solapur and Nagpur.