

CHAPTER - XIII

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS - SOME SUGGESTIONS

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Cotton textile industry in Maharashtra was in flourishing condition previously but at present it is suffering from various problems. Therefore, serious steps should be taken as soon as possible for the survival of the old and glorious industry, not only for the state but also for the whole of India. Suggestions have already been put forward for its modernisation which was considered as an effective step for increasing the productivity of the mills. With modernisation, decentralisation of the mills from Bombay to the cotton growing areas is essential, because Bombay region is already suffering from high costs of labour, raw materials storage, high rates of taxation etc. Another point must be kept carefully in mind that with modernisation, proper maintenance of machinery in all mills should be taken up. The poor state of maintenance in many mills was due partly to lack of finance and partly to unavailability of spares. Therefore, a proper body should be set up for looking after these problems. The mill management, public or private sector, State Government and as well as Government of India should help the Working Group to continue their work easily.

It has already been pointed out that the industry in the state is in quite imbalance position. Therefore, additional spindles are required for correcting the imbalance between the spinning and weaving capacity including those required for loomage should be introduced. Expansion should be allowed and new spinning units should be permitted in the areas, where there is satisfactory demand from the handlooms and powerlooms weaver or in areas which have adequate supply of cotton but lack in processing capacity. The policy adopted during the 5th Plan period of allowing existing spinning and composite mills to expand upto 25,000 spindles will be continued and this expansion should be allowed in suitable areas on the basis of availability of reasources and available of funds from Financial Institutions.

To control the closure of a number of mills, it is suggested that the mills which are outmoded and have obsolete machinery should be scrapped and new Licence should be issued for starting mills at or about the same location. Mills which are suffering from mismanagement should be investigated and appropriate action should be taken at the right way.

Recurring shortage of cotton was the biggest handicap of the cotton mill industry not only for the state of Maharashtra, but also for whole of India. It could not be

fully made up by imports on account of foreign exchange restriction. The result was a progressively rising trends of cotton prices. The higher level of cotton production is not a freak, it is based on some solid progressive research work. Therefore, clear steps must be taken for increasing the raw materials production and with the quantity, the quality of production must also be kept in mind.

In the State it is found that production per acre is very low, and it is also found that yield per acre/^{is} higher in irrigated areas. Therefore, irrigated area under cotton should be increased as soon as possible. With it, inter or mixed cropping which has already been started, i.e. cotton and maize, cotton and paddy, cotton and groundnut and cotton and soyabeans must be increased. This will not only increase the yield of cotton, but also give an extra product which would be resulting in an additional income over the normal. Inter-cropping or rotation of crops also will help to raise the fertility of the soil. Besides this, the co-operation between the handloom and powerloom sectors will have to be strengthened. Necessary financial and credit assistance have to be provided for. The handloom and powerloom sectors should also be developed along with the composite mills.

Another important point is, that the profitability of the industries is on the decline. Over a period of five years, that is, 1968-73, the average profit, after tax, for all industries was about 9.2% as compared to 4.4% for cotton textile industry. As compared to more lucrative fields, investments in textiles industry enjoy a low priority in the minds of entrepreneurs and investors alike. If, therefore, the textile mill industry is to acquire a better position in the coming years the primary need is to create an atmosphere to enable it to improve its profitability.

Recent relaxations in credit squeeze are not adequate because of the specially difficult conditions through which the cotton mill industry is passing. To improve the industries' position, credit in abundant measure should be made available to it at reasonable rate of interest. Government policy to curb the inflation by restricting the bank credit affected the cotton textile industry the most. The industry is struggling hard to maintain production with the available credit, exploring all avenues of finance and offering very high rates of interest. To overcome this difficulty the first thing which is to be done, is to accept such a policy so that the cotton mill industry be allowed to have special incentive by way of soft loans for carrying out the programme of rehabilitation, modernisation and expansion

at a reasonable rate of interest, so that it may become profitable undertaking.

Another point is to be borne in mind that textile is products of everyday use, making high demands on the standard of production. In a growing fashion conscious market, textile goods must satisfy not only an aesthetic requirement but also fulfil sociological needs. Fashion in clothing is one of the basic features in which the quality of products also depends. Therefore, not only the quantity but also its quality is to be looked after.

In the other sides of the industry it is found that ginning and bailing of cotton is an important aiding industry to the cotton mills. There is a feeling that the machinery in many gins is obsolete and perhaps worn out, and therefore, the quality of ginning is not as good as desired. The detailed survey which has already been started by B.T.R.A. (Bombay Textile Research Association) needs more detailed survey through personal visits and observations of selected gins. This will help to give reliable information on the damage of cotton during ginning and the appointed researcher also will easily make out the remedial measures required to improve the quality of ginning.

A textile house consumes large quantities of heat and water. Both coal and fuel oil which are used as sources of heat are very valuable natural resources which require the most careful and efficient utilisation to avoid unnecessary waste. With it the process of steam generation and steam distribution must be improved. Similar attention should also be given to conservation of water which is becoming a scarce commodity at least in urban areas. Application should be made of well known principles of chemical engineering to the design of textile washing machines which has permitted about 30 to 40 per cent reduction in water consumption.

Looking to the future it would appear that greater emphasis should have to be paid in the textile research programme on the development of improved machinery for increasing productivity. It is hoped that active interest and collaboration from textile machinery manufactures will be forthcoming.

The cotton textile industry which was enjoying a boom period and now in declining conditions can be set right again if the incoming capital can be ploughed back to strengthen the internal health of the industry. If the industry fails to speed up maintenance, repair, renovation,

modernisation and automation of its buildings, plant and machinery the suffering of the industry will be the worst within a decade. Therefore, careful study and step should be taken at proper time and proper way to put the industry again to its glorious past.

Besides all these, "many suggestions have been put forward from the different quarters for the effective development of the biggest large scale industry of India. It is necessary to give priority to the development of this industry not only to provide employment to the largest section of India's industrial population but also for providing adequate cloth to the teeming millions of the second most populous country of the world".¹

1. Dr. M.R.Choudhuri, Indian Industries Development and Location, 1970, p. 71.