Chapter 9

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Powerloom industry has been the life-line of Malegaon. The economic, educational and cultural advancement of the city is the product of ever-expanding powerloom in Malegaon. Due to the influx of job-seekers the population of Malegaon is showing an ascending graph. The migrated Muslims from UP made Malegaon their home as well as a place of earning bread and butter.

Malegaon has no old political history. It is only after 1920 political awakening was recorded. The khilafat and Non-Coperation movements were the hallmarks in the political process. The political process was not free from blemish. The movement turned violent for some time inviting the wrath of the British Government which penalized the entire weaving community by imposing three Annas fine on each saree produced by the weavers.

The reasons of politically alertness of the people in Malegaon lie in their brave and glorious history. The Momins of UP had undergone severe atrocities after the upsurge of 1857.

The availability of electricity in 1938 drastically changed the complexion of powerloom industry. Yet the powerloom industry could not keep pace with the rapid growth of handloom industry and mill sector. It has been found out in the foregoing chapters that the flourishing powerlooms created hope in the minds of their owners. With
their hardwork, tenacity, perseverance and imagination they posed themselves as potential contenders in the market. They were on the verge of getting an upperhand over their rivals.

The simultaneous growth of handlooms, powerlooms and mill sector have multi-dimensional features that made the situation fussy and uncertain by turning production-cost sometimes favourable to powerlooms and sometimes to handloom and mill sector. The game of see-saw was effectively influenced by the hectic politics in Malegaon.

Malegaon is characterised by overpopulation, expanding hutment areas, bipolarization of the powerloom business between Hindus and Muslims. Positions of Arhatiyas, Commission agents and sahukars being monopolized by the Hindus while the workers and small powerloom owners are Muslims. The Muslims are exclusively dependent on the Hindus. Both these communities sailed well till the breaking of riot between them. The Hindus and Muslims are aware of the fact that without each other’s cooperation, they would be at loss. From the early 60s the situation in Malegaon worsened.

Malegaon is a city of Muslim majority. The Ansaris constitute a large chunk of population. Caste-based politics is another feature of Malegaon. Of course this is very much in tune with the national politics. Though Hindu population is also showing upward trend, Muslims in spite of their Assembly seat. The consequences of election results show change of parties but ultimately they are not conducive for the powerloom industry. The veteran leader of the then Janata Party and Janata Dal (S) Shri Nihal Ahmed could exercise great influence on the working force and poor people but except the Janata Party rule at the Centre and Purogami Aghadi at the State level, he occupied opposition bench. The opposition party in Maharashtra, save the period of Samyukta Maharashtra movement never registered remarkable performance. Shri Nihal Ahmad sincerely,
scrupulous performance could not bear fruits. The legacy of Praja Socialist Party is clearly traceable upto 1999 with the gap of 1972-77. Shrimati Ayesha Hakeem well-educated lady defeated Nihal Ahmed. And at present the Congress Party candidate Shaikh Rasheed is representing Malegaon constituency. The lamentable fact is, under no party the situation of powerloom industry improved.

Another vital dimension of this sitting is, there is lack of powerful leadership in Malegaon. Leaders belonging to the Congress (I) appear lack-luster. They have also utterly failed in solving the problems of powerlooms. The Muslim leaders belonging to different political parties waste their energies in pulling each other’s legs.

The politics in Malegaon comes to fore on 4 levels.

1. National Politics filtering down to Malegaon.
2. State Politics coming down to Malegaon.
3. Municipal Politics.
4. Politics of pressure groups with vested interests.

Within above frame-work the hypotheses have been put to test during the analysis of previous chapters. The answer derived there from speak volumes about the impact of politics on the powerlooms in Malegaon.

⇒ The first hypothesis is – The Malegaon Municipal Council does not boost and promote powerloom industry. On the basis of explanation attempted in the body of thesis the hypothesis is valid. No doubt the MMC provided some facilities of complex to powerlooms but because of some good steps taken by the MMC, surprisingly the powerloom industry was put to loss. The alter system emerged from goondaism and put the MMC to financially disadvantageous position. However, the alter system reduced the
production cost incurred by the owners of powerlooms. All this revolves around the issue of octroi. The experiment of handing over the responsibility of collection of octroi to Anas Enterprise proved to be exemplary. This hypothesis is concerned with the municipal politics. It has also been traced out that the rampant corruption exists in the MMC. The councillors sale out the immovable property of the MMC as if it belonged to them. The election of President is the source of corruption. Vote of a Councillor can be bought with Rs One lakh. Common amenities are not provided by the MMC.

The second hypothesis that the state and Central Government policy regarding powerlooms is discouraging is also found to be valid. The impact of the clashing interests of powerloom sector and the rest, is a matter of great concern. Right from 1942 the powerloom industry is stamped as the rival of handloom and mill sector. In pre-independence period the powerloom industry was controlled and guided by the order of 1944. Even after independence the Government policy was consistent. First, by Cotton Textile (Control) Order of 1948, the main objective was to restrict the installation of powerlooms. In 1950 Government took a favourable step by reserving production of certain cloth for the powerloom industry. Thereafter the Government attempted to curb the number of unauthorised powerlooms. In Malegaon number of such unauthorised powerlooms was big one. The local politics proved decisive and Government was to issue permission to most of the unauthorised powerlooms on some easy conditions. With this, the fear of unemployment which was created in the powerloom owners subsided.

Government’s adverse attitude towards powerloom owners was reflected in the decision of hiking excise duty to Rs. 200/- per powerloom. The reactions were noteworthy as the strikes and morchas were organized. The manufacturing of coloured sarees on powerloom was banned. This also indicates that Government was not sympathetic towards the powerloom owners. Due to the pleading of the delegation, some
relief was granted. Shri Nihal Ahmed put this question in the Assembly forcefully. However, it was clearly observed that the Government took the side of handloom industry. The opposition against the ban was never well-organised. The Tidke Committee’s recommendations approving ban of coloured sarees produced by the powerlooms went against powerloom owners. The powerloom owners were sandwiched between the policies of protecting handlooms and appeasing the mill sector. The textile policy of 1985 dilapidated the condition of powerloom-owners. There was adequate flow of loans in the mill-sector. The loans were not properly used. Comparatively the area of powerloom remained almost dry as far as loans were concerned. Government danced to the tunes of the capitalists.

The third hypothesis relates to the rivalry between the Congress (I) and Janata Dal (S). It is conspicuous that the politics in Malegaon is personality based. Shri Nihal Ahmed pioneered labour movement and organized zopadpattiwalas. His image has been that of a saviour of poor people. However his long tenure in the Assembly was spent on the opposition bench. He had to endure all the limitations opposition member has to suffer. The leadership as has been revealed, does not show quality and ability. The congress MLAs did not fare well. Smt. Ayesha Hakeem raised some hopes but failed to leave her mark on the Malegaon politics. The hypothesis is not valid.

The fourth hypothesis states that the Government was pressurized to follow a particular way of policy. Undoubtedly the Government is influenced by the vested interests. However the hypothesis is not wholly true. The mill-sector can bring pressure but the handloom sector is not strong enough to have its say in the policy-making. Giving due place to handloom sector does indicate Government’s honour for Gandhian principles. At least it has to make a show. Considering a total textile policy which is applicable to our country with dimensions of export import, balance of payment, earning
of foreign exchange, it is possible that the Government may not solely concentrate on the powerloom industry only. However as said earlier powerloom industry occupied a unique position in Malegaon’s economy as well as polity. In several aspects the powerloom owners should blame themselves, since they did nothing to modernize themselves. Rather they are equipped with obsolete machinery and old ideas. Mentally they are not prepared for a change. The physical ability of the powerloom owners and workers is also below average. Their habits of taking tea and smoking make the things worse.

Fifth hypothesis is – The powerloom industries have encouraged economic development in Malegaon. Here economic development should not be taken in a narrow sense. It does not mean the emerging buildings and houses or show-rooms, bear-bars, petrol pumps, vehicles etc. Economic development presumes increase in depending and associated industries opening great avenues for employment and technology. The capacity of powerlooms does not possess potential for these factors. They provide employment to skilled and unskilled workers on meager wages. Modernisation in all walks of life is a parameter to find out the degree of development. Modernisation in standard of living is an exclusive privilege of Hindus except a few Muslims. The profit accrued from the sale of their products is not reinvested in more increative production. Even if one accepts that to take interest is a sin, earning profit is not. The propensity to consume is much more than the propensity to save. Not much scope for the multiplier to work.

The next hypothesis states that the various labour problems curb the powerloom industry. Ordinarily labour problems are the products of strained relationship between the owners and workers. In several powerloom industries the owners themselves work. The bargaining power of the workers is normally non-existent. Either they belong to the
Ansaris or they are migrants from nearby villages and khandesh. Owner-worker relations are cordial. Though Minimum Wages Act and dearness allowance are not applicable and the earnings of the workers are low, owners help their employees in emergency and ceremonies. Thus the problems of working class are not related with the owners. The problems of the working class relate to sanitation, housing, health, education, health-work place and canteen etc. these problems are not solved. The trade-unions fail to make any in print. The owners drive the union-members out of employment. In spite of a socialist background created by Shri Nihal Ahmed one cannot find traces of Marxist thinking in Malegaon. Thus there was never a serious leftist Challenge. There was no noteworthy development in Malegaon and the workers have no strength to curb it.

Seventh hypothesis was on the communal factor and its effect on the development of Malegaon. In spite of that for their livelihood they must compromise. It was a pressing need for both. So this hypothesis is not valid.

And lastly a conclusion is drawn that the political awareness of the people in Malegaon has harmed the powerloom industry. Political awareness of the people made them vote for competent candidate and returning him to the Assembly. He belonged to the opposition party. In democracy it is very difficult to do anything without majority support. Hence this hypothesis is correct.

Summary and Suggestions

Thus the politics Malegaon powerloom industry is influenced by politics in several ways. Primarily the national textile policy has an adverse effect on powerlooms in Malegaon. It always favoured mill sector and handloom sector at the cost of powerloom sector. The local Leadership never proved to be powerful at the state-level because most
of the time opposition party candidate was returned to the Assembly. In the case of coloured saree the leadership failed to do anything in favour of powerloom industry. At the municipal level politics in no way boosted the powerlooms. The issue of collection of octroi was very important. It is observed not the when octroi was collected as ‘alter’ it was profitable for the powerlooms. But it was illegal system. With the introduction of legal system powerlooms faced losses. The policy of MSEB has not been encouraging. The trade-unions were not formed. It appears to be a strange phenomenon that the socialist party candidate was elected but still trade-unions were absent. The powerloom owners were also workers on their powerlooms and the pure workers heavily depended for their livelihood on their employers. This impeded the process of minor formation. Eight hypotheses have been tested in the last chapter of conclusion.

Malegaon municipality was established in 1863. The number of the members increased gradually with giving memberships to the ladies and scheduled castes people. From 48 Presidents (till 1998), 20 Presidents came from weaver-biradari. In municipal politics the Congress (I) Socialist Party and for a short time Muslim League were the parties to be reckoned with.

judged as socialist trend. But definitely it registered unity of the poor masses and their faith in their saviour. Nihal Ahmed has also been a fiery orator who could win applause from the masses. With so many limitations inherent in Malegaon politics its economy, he made public aware of their plight and endeavoured to consolidate them on socialist lines.