

MR. SPEAKER : The result of the Division is : Ayes : 70; Noes : 25.

The motion was adopted.

18·07 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION MANUFACTURE OF SCOOTERS

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Samanta.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

SHRI S. C. SAMANTA (Tamluk) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, since 1954 we are hearing about the indigenous manufacture of scooters and allied conveyances in the country. Government gave some licences to three or four units and at the same time there was a ban on further licences. In 1965 this ban was removed; the Government of India decided to lift the ban on further licensing of scooters and auto-cycles; accordingly, these have been deleted from the list of items in respect of which applications for industrial licences may be ordinarily rejected.

I tried to collect information regarding the number of scooters and other vehicles that were being manufactured in the country. I tried to consult the Annual Reports of this Ministry. As you know, this Ministry in different times has assumed different names : sometimes it was Industry, sometimes it was Commerce and Industry, sometimes it was Industry and Supply, and now it is Industrial Development and Company Affairs. I do not know how these names are changed and whom it suits—whether the man who becomes the Minister wants the Ministry to be called otherwise. Whatever that may be, I have collected from those Reports some figures about the manufacture of scooters, motor-cycles, mop-pets and three-wheelers. I have got the figures from 1965 : Scooters manufactured in 1965—20,000 units; in 1966—20,971. In 1967, it was 30,296, and in 1968 (for six months) it was 17,549. There is increase in the manufacture. But I would like to know from the hon. Minister what is the capacity of these units which are licensed and why only these three, or four firms are favoured with this monopolistic licensing. Why

have others not been allowed? Why have they been banned?

Since 1964, Government have been admitting that there are 3 lakh people registered in the waiting list for scooters. I read that only 30,000 are manufactured. When the ban on licensing was lifted, why were not some factories given licence? As you know, when Government are in a difficulty and they have something in their mind, they refer the thing to a Committee. That is the usual practice. In this case, this matter was referred to the Development Council for automobile and allied industries of the Planning Commission on the scooter industry for the Fourth Five Year Plan. Now in answer to a question, the hon. Minister said that only one unit would be opened. There is no ban on further licensing. So why were not two, three, four or five units given licence for speedy Manufacture of scooter which is the middleman's vehicle and transport just as the cycle is the poor man's conveyance?

The Committee I mentioned appointed a sub-committee. They gave a report. The Committee gave a full report and Government said that interested entrepreneurs, including existing producers of these types of vehicles, may now submit applications with complete particulars to the Union Ministry of Industries and Supply. This was on 23rd March 1965. It was stipulated that the application should include information as to the annual capacity, foreign exchange required on capital and maintenance, a phased programme of manufacture, terms of collaboration, anticipated retail selling price etc. It is astounding that nothing has been done when these things have been submitted by 190 units in time. I do not know what Government have in mind. I find that in 1964 West Bengal's proposal for the Haldia Scooter Project to manufacture 150 c.c. Brezza Scooter in collaboration with the world-renowned Italian-American combine, Messrs. Aermacchi Harley-Davidson was recommended originally by the late Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, when the scheme was mooted in 1964. The scheme was suc-

† The following Members also recorded their votes :

Ayes : Sarvashri F. A. Ahmed, Maharaj Singh, Shankarrao Mane; Achal Singh, Shri Gopal Saboo and Shrimati Ila Palchoudhuri.

Noes : Sarvashri Mohammad Ismail, Lakhani Lal Kapoor, Ram Charan and K. Anbazhagan.

cessfully recommended by the State Government under Congress Chief Minister Shri P. C. Sen, United Front Chief Minister Shri Ajoy Mukherjee and P.D.F. Chief Minister Dr. P. C. Ghosh, and all sections of the Press, public and political opinion have demanded its early sanction by the Central Government. The Central Government has something in its mind, because it has come down to only one unit. Why not have six units? I would like to know the difficulties from the hon. Minister. This guise of Committees and other things will not do. This is my demand.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY (Cooch-Bihar): We have heard a very interesting story about the manufacture of scooters. I do not want to call it a scooter scandal, but there is suspicion as to what is actually in the mind of the Government and the Minister concerned.

The demand for scooters has been increasing since 1964, and the number of applications for scooters has been piling up. Now it has reached the figure of three lakhs, while the indigenous capacity to manufacture scooters is only 30,000. So we will never be able to meet the demand adequately. Do they want to create a sort of artificial monopoly, artificial demand and black-market and allow some persons to earn black money? If that is not so I cannot understand why the Government has not come forward with a scheme to manufacture more scooters in this country. There was a Monopoly Commission. It is very clear that this Government is practically the spearhead of all sorts of monopolies in this country.

I am told that a firm of Calcutta submitted its quotation to the Ministry in response to their advertisement, specifically stating that the foreign components required will be only to the extent of 2 per cent, and that too only for three years. Its value will be only Rs. 30 per unit. While we have firms like that which can manufacture and supply scooters at lesser and lesser prices, and the demand of the people can be met, what is the hesitation in the mind of the Minister not to allow that particular firm to manufacture more and more scooters, in spite of the advice of several Chief

Ministers of West Bengal? Is Government prepared to start this factory at Haldia in West Bengal?

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा (हमीरपुर): उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मुझे भी क्वेश्चन पूछने की इजाजत दी जाये। मैंने सुबह नौ बजे आप के सेक्रेटेरियट में सवाल पूछने का नोटिस दे दिया था जबकि आप का समय दस बजे का है तो फिर मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि मुझे अभी सवाल पूछने की आप इजाजत क्यों नहीं दे रहे हैं?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: If I give a little latitude, there are many persons and we shall take a much longer time.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा: मैंने 9 बजे सुबह ही सवाल पूछने का नोटिस दे दिया था फिर क्या कारण है कि मुझे उससे वंचित किया जा रहा है। मैं आपके सामने इस बात की शिकायत कर रहा हूँ कि नौ बजे सूचना आपके दफ्तर में दे देने के बाद भी मुझे क्यों नहीं पूछने दिया जा रहा है?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is ballot and the Speaker has ruled very strictly. The names are balloted and only four names are chosen.

श्री प्रेम चन्द वर्मा: वह चार आदमी तो कोरम को भेदते नहीं करते हैं।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is no argument.

श्री शिवचन्द्र झा (मधुबनी): उपाध्यक्ष महोदय, मौजूदा आंध्र घंटे की चर्चा मैन्युफैक्चर आफ स्कूटर्स को लेकर हो रही है। लेकिन मैं थोड़ी सी बातें स्कूटर रिकशा के मुतालिक रखना चाहता हूँ। हमारे समाज में बहुत से लोग बेरोजगार ब बेकार हैं। जाहिर है कि अगर उनके वास्ते रीजनेबुल तौर पर स्कूटर रिकशाज का इंतजाम हो जाता है तो उनको काम धंधा मिल जायेगा और उन की बेरोजगारी की समस्या भी बहुत कुछ हल हो जायेगी। लेकिन जो कीमत अभी स्कूटर्स की है अथवा स्कूटर रिकशाज की है मैं समझता हूँ कि वह आम नागरिक की ताकत

[श्री शिवचन्द्र झा]

से बाहर है। इसलिए उचित यह होगा कि सरकार के पास कोई ऐसी योजना हो कि यह स्कूटर्स आदि सस्ते दाम पर बनाये जायें ताकि साधारण आदमी जो बेकार हैं वह पैसे का इंतजाम करके इन्हें खरीद सकें और अपनी रोजी रोटी कमा सकें।

क्या सरकार के पास कोई ऐसी योजना है कि यह जो साइकिल रिक्शाज हैं उनमें यह जो मोटरसाइकल रिक्शाज हैं उनकी मशीनरी को फिट करके इस तरीके से उसको सस्ता बनाया जाये ?

क्या सरकार के पास ऐसी कोई योजना है कि सस्ते दाम पर स्कूटर्स और स्कूटर रिक्शाज बनें ताकि लोग ज्यादा उनका इस्तेमाल कर सकें और उनका रोजगार चल सके ?

एक अन्य सवाल यह है कि अभी जो स्कूटर्स का उत्पादन होता है उनमें टायर्स से लेकर दूसरे पुर्जों और मशीनरी आदि को मद्देनजर रखते हुए हम बाहर के देशों पर इन के लिए कितना निर्भर करते हैं और कितने में हम आत्मनिर्भर हो पाये हैं? मोटे तौर पर हमारा देश मोटे तौर पर टायर्स से लेकर दूसरे पुर्जों तक कब तक आत्मनिर्भर हो जायेगा ?

एक सवाल यह है कि जो लोग स्कूटर्स लेना चाहते हैं किराये पर तो क्या सरकार के पास कोई ऐसी कोआपरेटिव या सरकारी कम्पनी है जोकि इन्हें अपने वहां बना कर सस्ते दामों (लोअर रेट) पर स्कूटर रिक्शाज चलाने वालों को दे सकें ?

आखिरी सवाल मेरा यह है कि क्या सरकार के पास कोआपरेटिव के जरिए एक कौमन रजिडेंस की व्यवस्था स्कूटर्स चलाने वालों के लिए करने की कोई एक योजना है? सरकार द्वारा कोई ऐसी योजना बनाई जा रही है या नहीं ?

SHRI S. S. KOTHARI (Mandsaur) : This is the worst chapter in the history of the Industrial Development Ministry. Everybody knows that there is a shortage of scoo-

ters. It is a sad and sorry state of affairs. I speak more in sorrow than in anger. The shortage is such that it would take about 10 years or perhaps more to meet the demand. Still the Ministry was sitting over the applications for 3-4 years. There is no justification for that. It is a tragedy in this country that industrial licensing process as are such that it takes such a long time to issue licences. It makes one doubt the *bona fides* of the Ministry. I request the Minister to personally look into the matter even at this late stage and see that the licences are issued immediately. Why are licences confined to one party only? The demand is for about 2-3 lakhs of scooters; the demand is so great and the supply is so short. Let them issue four or five licences, do justice to various regions and various applicants and ensure that the manufacture of scooters increases to such an extent that the black market in them vanishes and the black dot on this ministry is wiped out once for all. I express the strong feelings of the middle class on this matter. It is the middle-class people who are suffering due to the black market and the increase in prices. I request the hon. Minister to look into this matter personally and issue more licences so that scooters are manufactured on a large scale. Who has the vested interest here? Let the Minister ponder over this respect.

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI F. A. AHMED) : Sir, before the House two issues have been raised. One is the shortage of scooters and the other is that they should be made available to the consumers at the lowest price. I shall deal with both these aspects. It is a fact that the manufacture of scooters is much less than the present demand. As the hon. Member has rightly pointed out, till 1964, this particular industry was on the banned list and when it was considered necessary that there should be a greater production of scooters the ban was removed. But even till 1966, because of the shortage of foreign exchange availability, the production of scooters could not reach the licensed capacity the various units had been given. Only after devaluation, when foreign exchange was made available, the units which had licences for the purpose of manufacturing scooters were able to work to their

maximum capacity. Since then every year they have been manufacturing more and more scooters.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : What is their maximum capacity ?

SHRI F. A. AHMED : The maximum capacity for all the vehicles is about 75,500. But for scooters alone, it is about 30,000. And last year they produced more than this capacity. I have got the present figures. From the production of July it appears that their performance is even much better than before.

श्री एस० एम० जोशी (पूना) : यह 30,000 एक साल में है ?

SHRI F. A. AHMED : Only scooters. They were removed from the banned list. Then the question arise what steps should be taken which would make more scooters available, and then at the same time, make the scooters available at lesser or reduced prices. So far as the existing licensees are concerned, we approached the licensees and asked them whether they were prepared to go in for expansion and at the same time agree to a reduction in price. They refused to do it, and after they refused, we thought it would be better, instead of giving licences for a small unit, and keeping the price at the same level, if someone is prepared to go in for the production of about 40,000 or 50,000 scooters and, at the same time, is agreeable to a considerable reduction in price. We thought that it would be in the interests of the consumers also.

Therefore, with that end in view, we invited applications and a large number of applications were received. They were gone into and because they did not furnish all the details, it took time for the Committee, to go into these matters, and after these figures were available, they selected about a dozen or a little more of these applications for consideration. After that, again a Committee was appointed and the Committee has selected three applications for final decision. From these three applicants we wanted to ascertain the price at which they would agree, or, the extent to which they would agree to reduce the price. At present, I may inform the House that the ex-factory price of the three types of scooters is as follows : Lumbretta, Rs. 2,388 ; Vespa Rs. 2,402 and Fantabulus, Rs. 3,200. These

three parties have quoted the prices and one said they will be able to give us the scooters at Rs. 1,450. The other party has quoted Rs. 1,640 if the production is 40,000 and if the production is beyond 55,000 then they will be able to bring it down further to Rs. 1,590, and another party has quoted Rs. 1,200.

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURY : What are the names ?

श्री प्रेमचन्द वर्मा : जिन की कीमत एक 1200 और 1400 रु० बतलाता है, दूसरे उसी की कीमत 2388 और 2800 बतलाते हैं। यह ब्लैक-मार्केट कैसे होती है ? कहीं आप इसको मोनोपोलिस्ट्स को तो नहीं दे रहे हैं। जिन के पहले से कारखाने हैं इसमें उनका ताल्लुक तो नहीं है ?

SHRI F. A. AHMED : One of the parties is from Haryana—Mr. Ajit Singh. The second is Maheshwari from West Bengal and the third is Laxman Engineering Industries, U.P. we have asked them to let us know whether they will stick to those prices. We have also asked them to submit detailed project reports. On the receipt of this one party will be selected for the production of about 50,000 scooters. I wish I could give to more than one party but some foreign exchange also will be required for this purpose. Instead of giving it to several parties, each producing 4,000 or 5,000 scooters, we thought it would be better to give it to one party which will commit itself to supply the scooter at the reduced price. In the licence, we shall fix the price at which it will have to be supplied to the consumers.

SHRI SONAVANE (Pandharpur) : Why not allow free competition ? That will bring down the price.

SHRI F. A. AHMED : I have already said that we invited applications and out of the applications received, we selected 17. Out of them, 3 best parties have been selected and they are from different areas. It will be possible for us take a decision within the next two or three months. Thereafter, I hope within 2 years, they will go for production.

18.35 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the clock on Tuesday, August 6, 1968/Sravana 15, 1890 (Saka).