

TITBITS OF SME HISTORY

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Law for SSIs GROPPING IN THE DARK STILL

P.M. MATHEW

SMALL ENTERPRISES in India are a sensitive subject. Irrespective of the developmental imperatives, there is more politics than economics on the subject. With its roots in the Industrial Development and Regulation Act of 1956, the policy for the small industry acquired elements of a protective regime. Yet, it did not imply a recognition of the role and relevance of this sector in the economic development. Thus, small enterprise development was reduced to an appendage to the industrial policy.

Policies for the sector have not get shaped in a vacuum. Nor are they static; they do reflect the dominating interest of the time. Therefore, any form of Inspector Raj naturally will have a discretion when it applies to the large sector on the one hand and the SSI on the other.

between labour and capital), the Factories Act does not capture it; and information is mechanised and centralised.

The Abid Hussein Committee, appointed by the Industry Ministry, in its report submitted in January 1997, recommended a 'Basic Law of Small Enterprises.' Its objective was to be to define the small enterprises sector and outline the broad framework for the promotion of this sector.

The Planning Commission appointed an Expert Committee on Small Enterprises under Dr. S.P. Gupta to look into the host of issues relating to the development of this sector. Its terms of reference clearly included a review of the definitions and the legal framework keeping in mind the heterogeneous composition of the SSI sector.

THE MISSING LINKS

This suggests that the question of legal reforms

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