

# Wooing Sanjay, Soviet style

Financial Express Bureau

NEW DELHI, Oct. 26—Mr Kanwarlal Gupta, Janata member of the Lok Sabha, yesterday said he had referred to the Central Bureau of Investigation the reported contract Maruti Technical Services Ltd. had entered into with the Soviet Union for the supply of petrol-savers worth Rs 80 lakhs.

Mr Gupta said the deal had been struck during the visit of Mr Sanjay Gandhi to the Soviet Union last year along with the former Prime Minister, Mrs Gandhi.

The Janata MP said the alleged deal showed that the Soviet Union

wanted to please Mr Gandhi in the hope that he would be playing a big role in this country. It also showed, Mr Gupta alleged, that Mr Sanjay Gandhi had misused a visit to which he had been invited officially by striking a commercial deal. Following the disclosure, he said CBI was investigating the case.

Giving details of the deal, Mr Gupta said in 1975 Maruti Technical Services Ltd. had advertised a petrol-saver, an instrument supposed to help in decreasing the consumption of petrol in cars. The petrol-saver,

Mr Gupta said, had been manufactured in a Bombay factory.

The Maruti dealers, who had paid big sums while registering for cars, were also asked to market the petrol-saver.

The original price of Rs 105 per piece was later brought down to Rs 45 because no one was buying the gadget. Maruti Technical Services Ltd. had actually purchased it for Rs 7 per piece.

In 1976, Mr Sanjay Gandhi was invited by the Soviet Union at the time of Mrs Gandhi's visit there. He was supposed to have gone on a goodwill visit. Mr Sanjay Gandhi had made the deal there.

It was agreed that the Soviet Union would purchase the petrol-savers for Rs 80 lakhs at Rs 45 a piece.

Mr Gupta estimates that the deal would have given Mr Sanjay Gandhi a profit of Rs 70 lakhs. "This would have been a gift from the Soviet Union to Mr Sanjay Gandhi," Mr Gupta said.

According to Mr Gupta, petrol-savers worth Rs 20 lakhs had already been supplied. He did not say how much money had passed hands so far.

"This shows how big powers were wooing Mr Sanjay Gandhi," Mr Gupta added.

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