

to ensure that cheques are issued and despatched within a period of 15 days.

**II. Action by the Tribunal:**

(i) Top priority is given to the disposal of accident claims cases.

(ii) Circuit benches are held from time to time at stations other than headquarters of the bench for convenience of claimants.

(iii) Members from one bench are deputed to other benches whenever required due to non-availability of a member at that bench.

(iv) Requests of claimants are allowed for transfer of cases from one bench to the other near to their residence for their convenience.

(v) Adjournments are not ordinarily granted to the parties.

**Transfer of DMS to Delhi Government**

\*145. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR:  
SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:  
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:  
Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government had decided to handover the Delhi Milk Scheme to Delhi Government sans liabilities which have accumulated as on 1st October, 1997;

(b) If so, the extent of accumulated liabilities as on October 1, 1997 and April, 1 1997, 1996, and 1995; and

(c) the reasons for the heavy losses and the liabilities incurred year after year?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) In June 1997 Government of India have approved transfer of the Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS) to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD). The Chief Minister of GNCTD had met the Agriculture Minister on 10.9.1997 and informed that GNCTD will take over control of DMS with effect from 1.10.1997. Subsequent to that, there has been no response from GNCTD.

(b) and (c) During the last three years the following has been the excess of expenditure over receipts:

	Rs. (crores)
1994-95	4.63
1995-96	45.14
1996-97	49.68

Losses are primarily due to the selling price of milk being kept below the cost of production. The high cost of distribution is another reason.

Deficits have been met through budgetary support provided by the Government of India. Consequently DMS does not have any accumulated liabilities to discharge.

**Sterlite Industries at Tuticorin**

\*146. SHRI N. RAJENDRAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for which Government have not taken any serious action against Sterlite Industries at Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu inspite of repeated protest and proven health hazards of its activities to the local people.

(b) whether non-action on the part of Government indicates Government's failure in controlling a defaulting multinational;

(c) whether Central Government intends to initiate any fresh action against the said company;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) As per the recent report of Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board, M/s Sterlite Industries Ltd. has taken necessary pollution control measures and is complying with the prescribed standards.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

(e) The Tamil Nadu Pollution Control Board is regularly monitoring the air and water quality of the surrounding areas,

apart from the effluents discharged from the unit.

#### **Clearance of Factory in Orissa**

\*147. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all clearances have been granted to M/s. Sterlite Industries India Ltd. for the establishment of a factory at Bhurkamunda, District Jharsuguda (Orissa);

(b) whether his Ministry has received any protest petitions from the aggrieved person or Organisation; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) No application has been received from M/s Sterlite Industries India Limited seeking environmental and/or forestry clearance(s) from Government of India. However, Orissa Pollution Control Board has issued a Consent to Establish (NOC) on 22nd October, 1997 to this industry for establishment of a Smelter cum captive powder plant at Bhurkamunda, District Jharsuguda, Orissa.

(b) Yes Sir. A representation has been received from Regional Centre for Development Cooperation, Bhubaneswar.

(c) The representation mainly concerns the procedures of public hearing of the project conducted by the State Pollution Control Board on 10.09.97.

#### **Forest cover in Maharashtra**

\*148. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) the total forest cover in Maharashtra at present, district-wise;

(b) what steps Government propose to take to increase the forest area in the State in a big way; and

(c) the role being played by the State Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ): (a) As per the State of Forest Report, 1995, published by Forest Survey of India, forest cover in Maharashtra is 43,843 sq. km. which is 14.2% of the geographical area. District-wise forest cover is given in the Statement. (See *below*)

(b) and (c) Steps taken for increasing forest cover and area in the State in a big way are as under:—

(i) Extensive plantations have been raised under different programmes under plan schemes, Western Ghat Development Programme, various schemes of District Rural Development Agency, Water Conservation, Rural Landless & Employment Guarantee Programme, Jawahar Rojgar Yojna, Employment Guarantee Scheme, and various centrally sponsored schemes.

(ii) The State Government had taken up extensive afforestation programme of social forestry under USAID project on community waste lands and private waste lands.

(iii) The State Government is implementing World Bank aided forestry project since 1992 with an outlay of Rs. 431.51 crores which envisages taking plantations over 3.76 lakhs hectares. Improving the productivity of the forest through technological upgradation and maintenance of biodiversity are also important component of the project.

(iv) Owners of private wastelands are being motivated to grow agroforestry crops through social forestry programmes with the involvement of the non governmental organisations.

(v) Joint Forest Management practices are being encouraged for conservation of forests.