

**COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE**  
**(2023-24)**

**SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**175**

**ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY FIFTH REPORT**

**[Delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change]**

**(Presented to Lok Sabha on 08.02.2024)**



सत्यमेव जयते

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
**NEW DELHI**  
**February 2024/ Magha 1945 (Saka)**

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**COMPOSITION OF COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE**

**LOK SABHA**

**(2023-24)**

Shri Girish Chandra - Chairperson

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2. Shri Shafiqur Rahman Barq
3. Dr. A. Chellakumar
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10. Shri T.N. Prathapan
11. Shri Sellaperumal Ramalingam
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13. Shri Devendrappa Y.
14. Shri Ashok Kumar Yadav
15. Vacant

**SECRETARIAT**

1. Shri R.K. Suryanarayanan - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Naval K. Verma - Director
3. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary

## **INTRODUCTION**

I, Chairperson of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (2023-24), having been authorized by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this 175<sup>th</sup> Report in respect of the delays in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.

2. In terms of the recommendations of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table contained in its First and Second Reports of 5<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha and also in the Second Report of 6<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha presented to the House on 08 March, 1976, 12 May, 1976 and 22 December, 1977 respectively, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the all Statutory/Autonomous Institutes, Companies, Public Undertakings, Corporations, Joint Ventures, Societies, etc. are required to be laid on the Table of the House within nine months of the closure of accounting year i.e., by 31<sup>st</sup> December.

3. The scrutiny by the Committee revealed that the requisite documents of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for the years 2013-14 to 2021-2022 were laid before the Parliament with repeated delays. The requisite documents for 2022-23 have not been laid till the preparation of this Report. The Committee considered the matter of delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai and took oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and NBA, Chennai at their sitting held on 19.12.2023.

4. The Committee considered and adopted the Report at their sitting held on 07.02.2024.

5. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for furnishing the written replies and other material/information for being placed before the Committee.

6. The Committee also place on record their appreciation of the valuable assistance rendered to them by the officials of the Lok Sabha Secretariat attached to the Committee.

7. The Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold letters at the end of the Report.

**New Delhi**  
**07 February 2024**  
**18 Magha, 1945 (Saka)**

**Girish Chandra**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee on Papers Laid on the Table**  
**Lok Sabha**

**REPORT**  
**Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (2023-24)**

**Delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.**

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The National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai is an Autonomous Statutory Body and it performs facilitative, regulatory and advisory functions for the Government of India on issues of conservation, sustainable use of biological resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of use of biological resources and associated knowledge.

The National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) was established by the Central Government in 2003 to implement India's Biological Diversity Act (BD Act, 2002). The Biological Diversity Act (BD Act 2002) mandates implementation of the provisions of the Act through de-centralized system with the NBA focusing on advising the Central Government on matters relating to the conservation of bio-diversity, sustainable use of its components and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of biological resources: and advising the State Governments in the selection of areas of biodiversity importance to be notified under Sub-section (1) of Section 37 of BD Act, 2002 to be read with Section 27 of the Biological Diversity (Amendment) Act, 2023 as heritage sites and measures for the management of such heritage sites. The NBA regulates any activity referred to in section 3,4 and 6, considers requests by granting or rejecting approvals. The NBA with its headquarters in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (India) delivers its mandate through a structure that comprises of the Authority, State Biodiversity Boards, Biodiversity Management Committees, Expert Committees.

Since its establishment, NBA has supported creation of SBBs in 28 states and 8 UT's and facilitated establishment of around 2,77,688 BMCs and 268,031 PBRs are prepared. So far, 44 Biodiversity Heritage Sites have been established. A total of 421 (385+36) species/biological resources as Normally Traded Commodities under section 40 of the BD Act, to be exempted from the purview of the Act, when traded as commodities. NBA has issued Guidelines on Access to Biological Resources and Associated Knowledge and Benefits Sharing Regulations, 2014. About Rs. 200 Crores ABS fund has been collected and about Rs 60.32 Crores Fund has been ploughed back to various institutions/ SBBs/ UTBCs, BMCs etc.

2. The Committee desired to know from the Ministry to state the Act, Rule or Regulation under which the requisite documents of the NBA are being laid on the Table of the House. The Ministry in its written reply submitted the following:

*“The Biological Diversity Act, 2002, its amendments and Biological Diversity Rules, 2004.”*

3. The Committee further desired to know from the Ministry about the provision and timeline for laying of Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the NBA on the Table of the House. The Ministry in its written reply have submitted the following:-

*“According to Section 28 of BD Act, 2002, The National Biodiversity Authority shall prepare, in such form and at such time each financial year as may be prescribed, its annual report, giving a full account of its activities during the previous financial year and furnish, to the Central Government, before such date as may be prescribed, its audited copy of accounts together with auditor’s report thereon.”*

4. The Committee then sought from the Ministry information regarding the pattern of funding by the Government to the NBA. The Ministry in its written reply have submitted the following:-

*“According to Section 26 of the BD Act 2002, the Central Government, after due appropriation made by Parliament by law in this behalf, pay to the NBA by way of grants or loans for being utilized for the purpose of this Act.*

*Year-wise funds released by the Government of India to NBA, Chennai during the last ten Financial Year:*

<i>Year</i>	<i>Grant-in-Aid (in crores)</i>
<i>2013-14</i>	<i>38.85</i>
<i>2014-15</i>	<i>33.89</i>
<i>2015-16</i>	<i>18.06</i>
<i>2016-17</i>	<i>18.69</i>
<i>2017-18</i>	<i>20.40</i>
<i>2018-19</i>	<i>20.02</i>
<i>2019-20</i>	<i>19.42</i>
<i>2020-21</i>	<i>12.46</i>
<i>2021-22</i>	<i>16.13</i>
<i>2022-23</i>	<i>17.92</i>

:

5. In terms of the recommendations of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table contained in its First and Second Reports of 5<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha and also in the Second Report of 6<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha presented to the House on 08 March, 1976, 12 May, 1976 and 22 December, 1977 respectively, the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Organisations/Corporations/PSUs are required to be laid on the Table of the House within nine months of the closure of the accounting year. To comply with the requirement proper timeline schedule should be laid down for compilation of the Annual Report and Annual Accounts and their auditing. The Committee felt that normally a period of three months would be sufficient for compilation of Annual Accounts and their submission for Audit; the next six months might be given for auditing of accounts, printing of the Reports and sending it to Government for laying. If for any reason, the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of Organisations/Corporations/PSUs could not be laid within the prescribed period of nine months, the Ministry concerned should lay a statement within 30 days of the expiry of the aforesaid period or as soon as the House assembles, whichever is later, explaining the reasons as to why the documents could not be laid.

6. The Committee decided to examine the matter pertaining to the delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the NBA, Chennai for the last ten financial years i.e. 2013-14 to 2021-22 and these were laid on the Table with repeated delays ranging from more than 03 month to 37 months. Further the requisite documents for 2022-23 have not been laid till date. The statement showing the actual dates of laying of the Annual Reports/Audited Accounts of the NBA for 2013-14 to 2022-23, alongwith the extent of delays in laying these documents as appended at **Annexure -I**.

7. The Committee asked the Ministry to state the reasons for delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts since its inception. The Ministry in its written reply has submitted that:-

*“Reason for the delay in some of the years in the last ten years –*

- (i) delay in getting the Final Audit report from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India,*
- (ii) delay in conducting of the Authority meeting due to unavoidable administrative reasons*
- (iii) COVID 19 Pandemic related restrictions*

*The issues leading to delay will be addressed so as to submit the report in time in both the houses of the Parliament.”*

8. The Committee further asked the Ministry about the information in respect of the usual time-line to finalize the Annual Report, Audited Accounts etc. and the actual time taken by the Ministry and the NBA at each stage the years under examination. The information regarding the usual time-line in finalisation of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of NBA, as furnished by the Ministry is appended at **Annexure -II.**

In addition, the Ministry also stated as under:

*The procedure involved in the preparation of Annual Report (AR) is as follows:*

- *Preparation of Annual Report by NBA and finalization of Accounts after Audit (after four months of completion of Financial Year).*
- *Submission of draft AR to the Members of the Authority in the subsequent Authority Meeting for its approval (within three months).*
- *Translation in Hindi and printing of Annual Report/AAs after approval of the Authority (within one month from the date of approval of the Authority).*
- *Submission of Annual Report/Audited Account (Hindi/ English) to the Ministry (MoEF&CC) for laying in the Parliament (within one month from the date of approval of the Authority).*
- *Laying of Annual Report/Audited Account in the Parliament by the MoEF&CC (will be laid in the subsequent parliament session).....”*

9. The Committee desired to know from the Ministry as to whether it had identified the stages in which delays have occurred during all these years and, if so, how did the Ministry propose to curtail the same. In reply the Ministry stated:-

*“All efforts and needful follow-ups are done by the Ministry and NBA to hold the Authority meeting regularly for obtaining the approval of the competent authorities on time and placing the Annual Report/Audited Account on the table of the both the houses of the Parliament.”*

10. The Committee further desired to know from the Ministry as to whether it had prepared any Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to pursue with the auditing of accounts and finally timely receipt of the final audit reports from the audit authorities and the relevant documents from the NBA. In reply, the Ministry stated:-

*“As per MOEF&CC OM no.17(3)/2011-E-II(A) dt.5<sup>th</sup> September 2011, the time lines for preparing and sending Audit Reports are being followed by NBA.”*



11. The Committee questioned the Ministry/NBA as to whether they had faced any procedural difficulties associated with convening the meeting of the competent authority for getting approval of the documents etc. The Ministry in its written reply has submitted as under:-

*“No procedural difficulties arose.”*

12. The Committee enquired from the Ministry about the status of digitization and computerization of the process of accounting to facilitate speedy and timely compilation of accounts, The Ministry in its written reply submitted:-

*“Tally and MS-Excel is being used to compile the Annual Accounts.”*

13. The Committee further enquired as to whether the NBA had any internal auditing mechanism to ensure timely compilation of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts and also to minimize the audit queries at the time of auditing of C&AG. The Ministry in its written reply submitted:-

*“Accounts section headed by Accounts Officer conducts Internal Auditing of Accounts before submission to C&AG.”*

14. On being asked as to whether there was any mechanism in the Ministry to monitor the progress of work to ensure timely laying of documents, the Ministry in its written reply submitted:-

*“The Ministry through regular correspondences/queries/meetings monitors the progress of submission of the Annual Report.”*

15. The Committee desired to know about the remedial measures taken by the Ministry/NBA to ensure timely laying of the documents, the Ministry submitted:-

*“All efforts and needful follow-ups are done by the Ministry and NBA to hold the Authority meeting regularly for obtaining the approval of the competent authorities on time and placing the Annual Report/Audited Account on the table of the both the houses of the Parliament. There are certain delays due to submission of audit report. The NBA writes to C&AG in time for the conduct of audit and it follows it up with the department for the timely submission of report.”*

16. The Committee enquired from the Ministry/NBA about the latest position regarding finalisation of the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the NBA, Chennai for the year 2021-22 and 2022-2023 and also as to how soon are these pending documents were expected to be laid on the Table of the House. In reply, the Ministry submitted:-

*“Annual Report 2021-22 along with Audit Report (English & Hindi) is already approved by the Authority. It has been printed and has been sent to MoEF&CC on 08.12.2023 for laying on the Table of both the houses.*

*Annual Report and Audit Report 2022-23 was approved in the 68<sup>th</sup> Authority Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023. The printed version will be submitted soon.”*

17. The Committee also asked the Ministry to as to whether the Ministry/NBA has taken the help of Information technology to ensure that the documents are laid on the Table of the House, timely. In reply, the Ministry submitted:-

*“Yes. The NBA uses Tally Software and collects and analyses data in MS excel. Further, with regard to its regulation activities as prescribed under section 3,4,6 & 7, it has well developed software through which data is collected. The NBA is developing Phase II with the help of National Informatics Centre which will further enable in getting data in time.”*

18. In order to further examine and discuss the matter regarding delay in laying the Annual Report and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for the years 2013-2014 to 2021-2022, the Committee requested the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change and the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai to appear and tender oral evidence before the Committee on 19.12.2023.

18. During the oral evidence, the representatives of the Ministry/NBA made the following submissions:-

*“ यह एनुअल रिपोर्ट है। इसका थोड़ा लेंदी प्रोसिजर है। हम 28 स्टेट्स के बायो-डायवर्सिटी सेन्टर्स से इंफॉर्मेशन कलेक्ट करते हैं, उसके बाद हम सारी चीजों को यहाँ पर आपके सामने प्रस्तुत कर रहे हैं.....*

*उसके बार 28 स्टेट्स से रिपोर्ट कलेक्ट करके, एक रिपोर्ट बनाकर हम मिनिस्ट्री को सब्मिट करते हैं। उसके बाद मिनिस्ट्री से वह पार्लियामेंट में पेश किया जाता है। This is the procedure.*

*हम लोगों ने यहाँ पर डिले के कारणों को एक्सप्लेन किया है। एक्चुअली जितना हो पा रहा है, उतना हम लोग कर रहे हैं, लेकिन कभी-कभी अथॉरिटी को कांस्टिट्यूट करने में देरी*

होती है, नॉन-ऑफिशियल मेम्बर्स के रूप में पाँच लोग होते हैं, जिनको कांस्टिट्यूट करने में देरी होती है, उनका समय तीन साल का होता है। चेयरमैन का टर्म भी तीन साल का होता है। दूसरे चेयरमैन को सिलेक्ट करने में कभी-कभी चार-पाँच महीने का डिले होता है। इसलिए एडमिनिस्ट्रेटिव इश्यूज के कारण कभी-कभी डिले हो जाता है। *This is our submission.*

सर, हम एक स्पेशल सेल भी बना रहे हैं, क्योंकि नेक्स्ट टाइम से हम एक दिन भी डिले नहीं करना चाहते हैं। हम 28 स्टेट्स से भी कह रहे हैं कि वे लोग जो भी प्रोग्राम करते हैं, उनको वे तुरंत वेबसाइट पर अपलोड करने के लिए कर रहे हैं। इसके लिए हमने एक इंटरनल ऑफिस ऑर्डर भी निकाला है for timely completion of audit. ऑडिट वालों से भी कोलैबोरेट करके नेक्स्ट टाइम से जल्दी से जल्दी टाइम के अन्दर हम लोग सब्मिट करेंगे।

सर, कम्पाइलेशन में थोड़ा डिले हो रहा है, इसे हम एडमिट करते हैं। इसमें एक और बात है, अथॉरिटी से इसका अप्रूवल होना है। मीटिंग्स करने में थोड़ा डिले हो रहा है। इसको हम लोग जल्दी करेंगे।

..... मैं यह निवेदन करना चाहूंगा कि अथॉरिटी द्वारा जब एनुअल रिपोर्ट की समीक्षा की गई, वैसे तो इनके अपने रूल्स भी हैं और फाइनेंस डिपार्टमेंट के डायरेक्शंस भी एग्जिस्ट करते हैं, यह 05.09.2011 के ओएम के अनुसार है, यह कहता है कि इसको नौ महीने के अंदर प्रस्तुत कर देना चाहिए। हमने इनसे चर्चा करके इनका एक इंटरनल आदेश निकलवाया है, जिसमें हमने आगे के लिए माइलस्टोन्स निर्धारित कर दिए हैं।“

### Observations/ Recommendations

19. In light of the examination of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for the years 2013-2014 to 2021-2022, the Committee observe that these requisite documents were laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha with repeated delays. Also, the requisite documents of NBA for the year 2022-23 have not been laid till the submission of this Report. The Committee are disappointed with the sluggish approach in fulfillment of their statutory obligation of laying the requisite documents before the Parliament within stipulated time period. The Committee recommend the Ministry to lay the pending requisite documents of NBA for the year 2022-23 at the earliest and also to ensure that in future, the requisite documents of NBA are laid on the Table of the House within stipulated time, as per the earlier recommendations of this Committee and as per General Financial Rules, 2017.

20. The Committee were apprised that delay in getting the Final Audit report from the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) was one of the reason for delay. The Ministry also submitted that NBA regularly writes to C&AG for holding timely audit and also regularly does the follow up thereafter. However, the Committee note that despite the regular follow up, there has been a delay in the audit process. Hence, the Committee recommend the Ministry to take up the matter of delay in audit process with the higher officials of the office of C&AG requesting them to expedite the audit process in order to ensure that the final audit report is furnished timely to NBA Chennai, so that the subsequent stages involved in finalisation of the requisite documents does not get delayed.

21. The Committee were apprised that the NBA has issued internal orders stating the milestones set for future as one of the measures taken to avoid delay in laying of the requisite documents on the Table of the House.

The Committee recommend the Ministry to prepare and circulate a consolidated date-wise time schedule indicating a deadline for completion of each task involved in finalization of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts till its presentation before the House, not only for the NBA, but for all the organizations under the administrative control of the Ministry. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry should ensure the time schedule is duly adhered to, both by the Ministry and by all the organizations.

22. The Committee were apprised that there was no procedural delay in convening the meeting of the competent authority for getting approval of the requisite documents. However, vide the same reply, the Committee were apprised that another reason for delay was due to delay in appointment of the Chairperson/non-official members of the Authority. The Ministry had also submitted that delay in laying of requisite documents for the year 2022-23 was due to vacant post of non-official Members of the authority and that the process of filling up the vacant post initiated only after the seat became vacant. The Committee are not satisfied with ambiguous reply furnished by the Ministry and would thus seek further clarification in the matter.

Further, the Committee are of the opinion that the delay in constitution of the Authority delayed the holding of Authority meeting, which is essential for finalisation of requisite documents. The Committee hence, recommend the Ministry to direct all the organizations, bodies etc. under its administrative control to ensure that the process of filling up of any anticipated vacancy in the Authority must be initiated well in advance to avoid any similar delay in future.

23. The Committee further note that the Ministry/NBA had given incorrect replies/submission to a few questions contained in the questionnaire sent by this Secretariat which formed the basis for the discussion during the oral evidence. For example, the Ministry in its reply had submitted 30.11.2016; 09.03.2017; 06.04.2017 and 16.06.2018 as the dates of laying the requisite documents of NBA for the years 2013-14 to 2016-17 respectively. However, from the scrutiny of the Bulletin Part-I of the Lok Sabha Secretariat, the Committee observed that the requisite documents for these years were actually laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha on 16.12.2016; 21.03.2017; 16.12.2016 and 16.03.2018 respectively.

Further, the Ministry vide its same reply had furnished that the NBA had sent its requisite documents for the year 2021-22 to the Ministry on 08.12.2023 for laying on the Table of the House. However, during the oral evidence, the Ministry *vide* the power point presentation had submitted that the Annual Report for the year 2021-22 was submitted to the Parliament on 15.12.2022.

In view of the factual inaccuracies mentioned above in the replies furnished by the Ministry, the Committee would expect the Ministry to be more diligent and careful while replying to queries raised by the Committee.

**24. The Committee take note of the assurance given by the Ministry that there will not be any delay in laying the requisite documents before the Parliament from 2023-24 onwards. The Committee were also apprised that it has taken steps to ensure timely finalisation of the requisite documents i.e., initiated steps for making provision in the website to collect data from all its 28 State Bio-diversity Boards and 8 Union Territory Councils etc.**

**In this context, the Committee would recommend the Ministry to chalk out the possibility of creating a dashboard in their existing website, for showing the live status of each step involved in finalization of requisite documents of every organisation under its administrative control and, for issuing automated reminders to such organisations which fail to meet the timeline set by the Ministry regarding preparation and finalization of the requisite documents. The Committee are of the opinion that this alteration in the existing website will help the nodal Ministry to keep a strict vigil over the functioning of all organizations.**

**New Delhi  
07 February 2024  
18 Magha, 1945 (Saka)**

**Girish Chandra  
Chairperson  
Committee on Papers Laid on the Table  
Lok Sabha**

**Annexure -I**  
**vide para 06 of the Report**

**Statement showing the dates of laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for 2013-2014 to 2022-2023.**

<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>Date by which Annual Reports and Audited Accounts were required to be laid</b>	<b>Date of laying reported by the Ministry in their reply</b>	<b>Actual date of laying of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts</b>	<b>Extent of delay</b>
2013-2014	31.12.2014	30.11.2016	<b>16.12.2016*</b>	24 Months
2014-2015	31.12.2015	09.03.2017	<b>21.03.2017*</b>	15 Months
2015-2016	31.12.2016	06.04.2017	<b>11.04.2017*</b>	03 Months
2016-2017	31.12.2017	16.06.2018	<b>16.03.2018*</b>	03 Months
2017-2018	31.12.2018	12.07.2019	12.07.2019	06 Months
2018-2019	31.12.2019	06.02.2023	06.02.2023	37 Months
2019-2020	31.12.2020	06.02.2023	06.02.2023	25 Months
2020-2021	31.12.2021	06.02.2023	06.02.2023	13 Months
2021-2022	31.12.2022	20.12.2023	20.12.2023	12 Months
2022-2023	31.12.2023	--	Not laid as yet	--

*\*as per Bulletin Part-I of Lok Sabha Secretariat (copy enclosed for ready reference)*

**Annexure -II**  
**vide para 08 of the Report**

**The chronological sequence in respect of finalization of Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for 2013-2014 to 2022-2023.**

Sl. No	Points	Year –wise details									
		2013 - 14	2014 - 15	2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2021 - 22	2021 - 22	2022 - 23
(i)	Date of approach to the audit authorities	<b>As per Section 29 (2) to (4) of Biological Diversity Act, 2002, Annual Account of NBA is audited by Comptroller and Auditor General of Account from date of inception. The Director General of Audit, Environment and Scientific Departments, New Delhi conducting Audit of Annual Accounts of National Biodiversity through Regional Office, Chennai every year. The Chennai office with the concurrence of the HQ intimate the schedule of audit to NBA every year.</b>									
	Time taken after the closure of accounting year										
(ii)	Date of appointment of statutory auditors										
	Time taken after the approaching the audit authorities for appointment of auditors										
(iii)	Date of compilation of annual accounts	12.6.2014	15.6.2015	24.6.2016	23.6.2017	25.6.2018	16.9.2019	17.7.2020	8.9.2021	30.6.2022	26.6.2023
	Time taken after the closure of the accounting year	2 months 11 days	2 months 14 days	2 months 23 days	2 months 22 days	2 months 24 days	5 months 15 days	3 months 17 days	5 months 8 days	3 months	3 months
(iv)	Date of submission of Annual Accounts to auditors	12.6.2014	15.6.2015	24.6.2016	23.6.2017	25.6.2018	17.9.2019	23.7.2020	9.9.2021	30.6.2022	27.6.2023
	Time taken after closure of respective accounting year	2 months 11 days	2 months 14 days	2 months 23 days	2 months 22 days	2 months 24 days	5 months 16 days	3 months 23 days	5 months 9 days	3 months	3 months
(v)	The date and duration for auditing the annual accounts by statutory auditors	17.6.2014 to 26.6.2014	16.6.2015 to 22.6.2015	23.6.2016 to 28.6.2016	27.6.2017 to 12.7.2017	25.6.2018 to 17.7.2018	24.7.2019 to 19.8.2019	3.8.2020 to 18.8.2020	9.9.2021 to 1.10.21	7.7.2022 to 19.7.2022	3.7.23 to 14.7.23
(vi)	The date of queries raised by auditors during auditing / after completion of the Annual accounts	17.6.2014 to 26.6.2014	16.6.2015 to 22.6.2015	23.6.2016 to 28.6.2016	27.6.2017 to 12.7.2017	25.6.2018 to 17.7.2018	24.7.2019 to 19.8.2019	3.8.2020 to 18.8.2020	9.9.2021 to 1.10.21	7.7.2022 to 19.7.2022	3.7.23 to 14.7.23
	Time taken by auditors in raising the queries during auditing / after completion of the annual accounts to audit authorities	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit	Time to time raising queries during Audit
(vii)	The date on which the replies to the audit queries were furnished to the Auditors	17.6.2014 to 26.6.2014	16.6.2015 to 22.6.2015	23.6.2016 to 28.6.2016	27.6.2017 to 12.7.2017	25.6.2018 to 17.7.2018	24.7.2019 to 19.8.2019	3.8.2020 to 18.8.2020	9.9.2021 to 1.10.21	7.7.2022 to 19.7.2022	3.7.23 to 14.7.23
	The time taken to resolve the queries	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit	Time to time submitting replies to Audit



(viii)	The date on which draft Audit Report was issued by Audit Authorities	22.7.2014	5.8.2015	20.7.2016	7.8.2017	10.12.2018	20.9.2019	18.9.2020	25.10.2021	12.8.2022	16.8.2023
	Time taken after auditing of the Annual Accounts	25 days	1 month 12 days	21 days	24 days	4 moths 22 days	1 month	1 month	24 days	24 days	1 month 2 days
(ix)	The date of which final Audit Report was issued by Audit Authorities	20.11.2014	19.11.2015	28.10.2016	15.11.2017	14.1.2019	16.3.2020	11.3.2021	21.12.2021	30.9.2022	2.11.2023
	Time taken after issue of draft report	3 months 27 days	3 months	3 months	3 months	1 month 3 days	5 months 25 days	5 months 22 days	1 month 27 days	1 month 19 days	2 months 17 days
(x)	Total time taken by the audit authorities after receiving of the annual accounts to furnishing the final audit report to the organisation	5 months 19 days	5 months 18 days	4 months 27 days	5 months 15 days	6 months 13 days	5 months 15 days	7 months 10 days	2 months 20 days	3 months	4 months
(xi)	Date of finalization of the annual report	05.12.2014	01.10.2015	21.12.2016	16.11.2017	20.09.2018	11.01.2020	14.4.2021	03.11.2021	08.08.2022	10.11.2023
	Time taken after the closure of the financial year, and also	8 months	6 months	9 months	7 months	6 months	9 months 11 days	1 year 14 days	7 months 3 days	4 months 8 days	7 months
	Time taken after the receipt of the final audit report	14 days	0 days	1 month 23 days	0 days	0 days	0 days	3 days	0 days	0 days	8 days
(xii)	The Date on which documents were got approved from the Competent Authority	17.04.2015	13.10.2015	21.12.2016	28.11.2017	26.09.2018	12.03.2020	30.04.2021	29.11.2021	26.08.22	01.12.2023
	Time taken after Finalization of Annual report	4 months 11 days	12 days	0 days	10 days	5 days	2 months	16 days	26 days	18 days	20 days
	Time taken after the receipt of the final audit report	4 months 27 days	0 days	1 month 23 days	13 days	0 days	0 days	1 month 19 days	0 days	0 days	1 month
(xiii)	The Date on which documents were taken up for translation & Printing	08.02.2016	02.11.2016	22.11.2016	01.02.2018	28.03.2019	28.02.2022	28.02.2022	28.02.2022	12.09.2023	-
	Time taken for completing the task at each stage	1 year 11 months	1 year 1 month	7 months 22 days	11 months	11 months 28 days	2 years 8 months 27 days	1 year 11 months	11 months	1 year 5 months 12 days	-
(xiv)	The Date for sending documents to the Ministry for being laid in House after the completion the task at each stage	19.05.2016	07.12.2016	15.03.2017	21.02.2018	24.05.2019	17.11.2020	01.07.2021	25.02.2022	29.12.2022	-
	Time taken by the organisation in sending the documents to the Ministry	2 years 1 month 18 days	1 year 8 months 6 days	11 months 14 days	10 months 20 days	1 year 1 month 23 days	1 year 7 months 17 days	1 year 3 months	10 months 24 days	8 months 29 days	-
(xv)	The date of laying the documents to the House	30.11.2016	09.03.2017	06.04.2017	16.06.2018	12.07.2019	06.02.2023	06.02.2023	06.02.2023	Yet to be laid	
	Time taken after receipt of the documents from the organisation	6 months 10 days	3 months 2 days	21 days	23 days	1 month 18 days	2 years 2 months 18 days	2 years 2 months 18 days	2 years 2 months 18 days	Yet to be laid	

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**Committee On Papers Laid On The Table (2022-2023)**

**Extracts of the Minutes of the third sitting of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (2023-2024) held on 19.12.2023.**

The Committee sat on Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> December, 2023 from 1500 hours to 1600 hours in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

***Present***

Shri Girish Chandra - ***Chairperson***

***Members***

***(Lok Sabha)***

2. Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser
3. Shri Jamyang Tsering Namgyal
4. Shri Devendrappa Y.
5. Shri Ashok Kumar Yadav

***Secretariat***

1. Shri R.K. Suryanarayanan - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Naval K. Verma - Director

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting and apprised them of the agenda regarding consideration and adoption of a original draft Report and oral evidence of the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, (i) National Bio-diversity Authority, Chennai and (ii) G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Almora, in connection with delay in laying of the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the:-

(i) National Bio-diversity Authority, Chennai; and

(ii) G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development, Almora

3. Thereafter, the Committee took up the Report regarding the delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the Animal Welfare Board of India, Ballabgarh under the administrative control of the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying).

The draft Report was adopted unanimously. The Hon'ble Chairperson was authorized by the Committee to finalize and present the Report to the Lok Sabha on a date convenient to him.

4. The Committee then called the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC); National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai; and G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development (NHE), Almora.

**Representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC);**

- (i) National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai; and**
- (ii) G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development (NHE), Almora.**

1. Shri Tanmay Kumar	-	Additional Secretary, MoEFCC
2. Ms. Nameeta Prasad	-	Joint Secretary, MoEFCC
3. Shri C. Achalendra Reddy	-	Chairperson, NBA
4. Dr. Balaji	-	Secretary, NBA
5. Dr. Sunil Nautiyal	-	Secretary, NIHE

The Chairperson welcomed the representatives and informed them about the provisions of Direction 58 by the Speaker, Lok Sabha, regarding the confidentiality of the proceedings.

5. At first, the Committee desired to know the reasons for delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai for the years 2013-14 to 2021-22 which were laid with delays ranging from 02 months to 25 months. The representatives of the Authority admitted to the delays and regretted the same. They apprised that collection of data pertaining to 28 State Biodiversity Authorities and 8 Union Territory Councils and also the time taken in convening the Authority Meeting due to administrative factors were the main reasons for the delay. Thereafter, the NBA explained the steps taken by them to avoid delays in future and assured the Committee that the requisite documents of the NBA would be laid within stipulated time in future.

6. X X X X X.

7. The Chairperson thanked the representatives of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC); (i) National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai; and (ii) G.B. Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment & Development (NHE), Almora for their free and frank views and requested them to respond to various queries raised during the meeting.

*The witnesses then withdrew.*

The Meeting then adjourned.

*(A Copy of the verbatim proceedings of the sitting is kept.)*

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**The Extracts of the Minutes of the sitting of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (2023-2024) held on 07.02.2024.**

The Committee sat on Wednesday, 07<sup>th</sup> February, 2024 from 1500 hours to 1530 hours in Committee Room 'D', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

***Present***

Shri Girish Chandra - ***Chairperson***

***Members***

***(Lok Sabha)***

2. Shi Pallab Lochan Das
3. Choudhary Mehboob Ali Kaiser
4. Smt. Aparupa Poddar
5. Shri Devendrappa Y.

***Secretariat***

1. Shri R.K. Suryanarayanan - Joint Secretary
2. Shri Naval K. Verma - Director
3. Shri Rahul Singh - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee to the sitting and apprised them of the agenda regarding consideration and adoption of one XXXX, 08 original and 5 Action-taken draft Reports.

3. X X X X X

4. Then, the Committee took up the following eight Original and five Action-taken Reports for consideration and adoption:-

- |      |   |   |   |   |    |
|------|---|---|---|---|----|
| i.   | X | X | X | X | X; |
| ii.  | X | X | X | X | X; |
| iii. | X | X | X | X | X; |
| iv.  | X | X | X | X | X; |

v.	Delay in laying the Annual Reports and Audited Accounts of the National Bio-diversity Authority (NBA), Chennai;				
vi.	X	X	X	X	X;
vii.	X	X	X	X	X;
viii.	X	X	X	X	X;
ix.	X	X	X	X	X;
x.	X	X	X	X	X;
xi.	X	X	X	X	X;
xii.	X	X	X	X	X; and
xiii.	X	X	X	X	X.

The draft Reports were adopted unanimously. The Hon'ble Chairperson was authorized by the Committee to finalize and present these Reports to the Lok Sabha on a date convenient to him.

The Meeting then adjourned.

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