

(c) Aggrieved with the decision of the Central Government in rejecting their applications for grant of pension, the applicants keep on submitting representations/ review petitions for reconsideration of their cases. Such cases are considered, if the applicants furnish additional information/acceptable documentary evidence in support of their claims. Further, the Government has set up a Special Audit Team (SAT) under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary in-charge of the Freedom Fighters Division, with two prominent freedom fighters as Members, for assisting the Government in expeditious disposal of pending cases.

(d) The communications received from the Members of Parliament are duly acknowledged and the cases forwarded by them disposed of in accordance with the extant policy.

(e) Receipt and disposal of claims for grant of pension is a continuous process. However, the Government have constituted a Joint Committee of Freedom fighters and Officials to look into various problems of freedom fighters. The functions of the Joint Committee, *inter alia*, include the review of the existing procedure for sanctioning pension.

[English]

Melghat Forests

1078. SHRI ANANT GUDHE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item under the caption "Melghat forests losing animals to poachers" appearing in the "Indian Express" dated July 1, 1997;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the observations made and facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the details of the steps taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) the provision of funds made during the current year for Melghat project and steps taken/proposed for effective implementation and monitoring of the project?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Chief Wildlife Warden, Maharashtra has been requested by this Ministry to enquire into the matter and take immediate necessary steps if the news reporting is correct and intimate the out-come to this Ministry at the earliest possible date.

(d) The Annual Plan of Operation has been received by this Ministry and being processed. Monitoring and Evaluation is done by the Superior officers of the State Government and Government of India, for effective implementation of the schemes/projects.

Misuse of Para-Military Forces for Security

1079. SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJ BHAI CHIKHALIA :
SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem Captioned "Para-Military Forces Are Being Misused for VIP Security" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated May 23, 1997;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether some of the VVIPs who have been provided with SPG security cover have requested the Government for its withdrawal; and

(d) if so, the action proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Due to manpower constraints of Delhi Police, they are utilising the services of the personnel from different para-military forces for static/mobile duties for the security of VIP/VVIPs.

(c) and (d) A request has been received from Shri V.P. Singh, former Prime Minister and his wife and Shri H.D. Deve Gowda, former Prime Minister requesting for withdrawal of SPG. The requests of the Prime Ministers are under examination. Schemes for alternative security arrangements based on latest threat perception which will be required in their cases are being drawn up.

[Translation]

Development of Food Processing Industries

1080. SHRI VISHVESHWAR BHAGAT :
SHRI MAHESH KUMAR M. KANODIA :

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state: