

(a) whether the information has since been collected;  
and

(b) if not, the specific reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

(PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ) : (a) Yes, Sir. The assurance of Lok Sabha, Unstarred Question No. 3590 for 18.3.1997 has been complied with. The copy of the compliance report is enclosed as a *statement*.

(b) Does not arise.

#### **Statement**

Ministry of Environment and Forests

Date of Fulfillment: 20 June 1997

Q. No., Date and Name of M.P	Brief Subject	Promise Made	When and How Fulfilled	Reasons for Delay
Q. No. 3590 for 18.3.1997 by Shri Satyajit-sinh D. Gaekwad	"SUNDERBANS" (a) whether a large chunk of the Sunderbans Sanctuary has been converted into the residential site; (b) if so, the details thereof; and (c) the steps proposed to be taken to protect the sanctuary?	(a), (b) & (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.	(a) & (b) No, Sir. How-ever, in compartments 1,2 & 3 of Herobhanga forest block under 24 Pargana Distt. (outside sanctuary) 1773 ha. of land was handed over to Refugee Relief & Rehabilitation Deptt. of West Bengal Govt., which was prior to the notification of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. (c) Intensive regular patrolling and improvement of habitat through various measures are being undertaken to protect the sanctuary areas, which include awareness generation amongst the forest fringe dwellers and involvement of local people through eco-development Committees formed in the area.	

[*Translation*]

#### **'Freedom Fighters' Pension Pending Cases**

1077. SHRI RAJESH RANJAN *alias*  
PAPPU YADAV :  
SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of freedom fighters' pension cases pending for more than five years, State-wise;

(b) the number of cases accepted by the Government during the last five years in respect of which certificates have been given by the freedom fighters but court records are missing or have been destroyed as per the norms fixed by the Government;

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to dispose of these pending cases;

(d) whether the recommendations made by Members of Parliament are not acknowledged and the pending cases are not disposed of; and

(e) the reasons for keeping thousands of cases of the freedom fighters under pendency and whether the Government are contemplating to simplify this procedure in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) According to information available, no such application is pending with the Government.

(b) No such statistics are being maintained.

(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 BHA:  
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: