

Industrial Pollution

52. The rapid industrialisation has exerted extra pressure on infrastructural facilities of human settlements manifesting in environmental problems, in terms of increased incidence of air, water, noise pollution and land degradation. The Government is providing fiscal incentives to industrial units in the country for installation of pollution control equipment. These are in form of customs duty waivers and soft loans. In addition, fiscal incentives are being provided for installing pollution control equipment. Legal action is being taken against defaulting units. According to Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), as on the January 31, 1998, out of 1554 units belonging to 17 categories of industries, 1264 units had facilities commensurate with environmental standards, 125 were closed and 165 were reported to be lacking in adequate facilities.

53. A major initiative in the area of industrial pollution has been the Industrial Pollution Control Project under the aegis of the World Bank. The project aims to provide technical and financial assistance to clusters of small scale industrial units for setting up common effluent treatment plants (CETPs). The "Eco-Mark" is also in operation for certifying industrial products fulfilling prescribed pollution control standards with regard

to production, packaging and waste disposal. In order to motivate environment-friendly technologies and practices, submission of Annual Environmental Statements has been made compulsory. Environmental clearance of development projects based on impact assessment has been made mandatory for 29 specified categories of industries. State Governments have been empowered to decide on environmental clearance for specific categories of thermal power projects. During 1997-98 the total number of projects received for environmental clearances were 88 and the projects cleared during the same period was 137.

54. The National Environmental Tribunal Act, addressing the issue of providing relief, compensation etc. to accident victims and for environmental damages is currently in vogue. Separate notifications have been issued prohibiting the handling of 70 Azo Dyes and open burning of waste oil throughout the country. A National Environmental Awareness Campaign is conducted by the Government every year on selected themes for enhancing general awareness of environmental issues. The themes selected for the year 1997-98 were (i) Pollution prevention and control, and (ii) Conservation and plantation of trees for preventing environmental pollution.