

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMICALS & PETROCHEMICALS**

**RAJYA SABHA
UN STARRED QUESTION NO. 1809
TO BE ANSWERED ON 06.03.2020**

Small scale companies attached due to closure of SCP

1809: SHRI NARANBHAI J. RATHWA:

Will the Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers be pleased to state:-

- (a) whether Government is aware that several small scale companies have been affected due to stoppage of sulphuric acid production from Sterlite Copper Plant (SCP) in Tamil Nadu, after its closure due to vested interest;
- (b) if so, the complete details thereof; and
- (c) whether Central Government would take adequate remedial measures in the interest of the livelihood of more than 25,000 people engaged in the business of sulphuric acid and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER FOR CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS
(SHRI D. V. SADANANDA GOWDA)**

(a) & (b): In Tamil Nadu, the Sulphuric Acid (SA) is being procured from the following three enterprises.

- i) M/s. Sterlite Copper Ltd., Thoothukudi
- ii) M/s. SPIC, Thoothukudi
- iii) M/s. Chemplast Ltd., Mettur

Sterlite Copper at Thoothukudi in Tamil Nadu was closed by directions of Tamil Nadu State Pollution Control Board (SPCB) dated 23.05.2018, which was issued after the rejection of application of renewal of Consent to Operate of the plant vide letter dated 09.04.2018.

The company filed an appeal before the National Green Tribunal (NGT) against the closure order and NGT constituted a Committee under a retired High Court Judge to examine the matter. Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change and Central Pollution Control Board representatives were members in the Committee. Based on the report of the Committee, NGT ordered on 15.12.2018 for allowing operation of

the plant revoking closure order. However, the order of NGT was stayed by

Hon'ble Supreme Court on 18.02.2019 on the ground that the matter is outside Tribunal's jurisdiction, as the matter is pending in High Court.

Consequent to the closure of M/s. Sterlite Copper Ltd., Sulphuric Acid is being procured from M/s. SPIC and M/s. Chemplast Ltd, Mettur regularly.

As on date, there is no difficulty in procuring Sulphuric Acid, as the other enterprises, viz. M/s. SPIC & M/s. Chemplast are supplying the required quantity of Sulphuric Acid. As per the information received from State Government of Tamil Nadu no specific representation has been received from the MSMEs on the stoppage of Sulphuric Acid from Sterlite Copper Plant.

(c) The appeal for re-opening of the plant is pending in the High Court since February, 2019. The last hearing was held on 08.01.2020 and judgement has been reserved. As the matter is sub-judice, no action is possible by the State/Central Government.
