

and English versions) of the Estimates Committee on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Tenth Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (Department of Tourism)—'Development of Infrastructure for Growth of Tourism'.

12.02¹/₂ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

Twenty-sixth Report

[Translation]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I beg to present the Twenty-sixth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Petitions.

12.03 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON ABSENCE OF MEMBERS FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Minutes

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN (Banda): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table minutes (Hindi and English versions) of the 12th sitting of the Committee on Absence of Members from the sittings of the House held on 4 March, 2003.

12.04 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

One Hundred thirty-fifth Report to One Hundred forty-first Reports

[English]

SHRI G.J. JAVIYA (Porbandar): I beg to lay on the Table a copy each (Hindi and English versions) of the following Reports of the Standing Committee on Human Resource Development:—

- (1) One Hundred thirty-fifth Report of the Committee or Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Department of Health;
- (2) One Hundred thirty-sixth Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Department of Family Welfare;
- (3) One Hundred thirty-seventh Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Department of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homeopathy;
- (4) One Hundred thirty-eighth Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Department of Elementary Education and Literacy;
- (5) One Hundred thirty-ninth Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Department of Secondary and Higher Education;
- (6) One Hundred fortieth Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Department of Women and Child Development; and
- (7) One Hundred forty-first Report of the Committee on Demands for Grants (2003-2004) of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Sir, we would like to know as to what has happened in the Women's Reservation Bill from the Prime Minister. He was supposed to get back to the House after the break.

[Translation]

What has happened to the negotiations with respect to the Women's Reservation Bill? That is more important than it.

MR. SPEAKER: You can ask about it later.

12.05 hrs.

STATEMENT BY PRIME MINISTER*

RE: Recent visit to Jammu & Kashmir

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I went to Jammu & Kashmir on a two-day visit on April 18-19, 2003.

*Also placed in Library. See No. LT 7407/20033.

I had five programmes in Srinagar. The first had to do with the Foundation Stone laying ceremony for modernization of Srinagar Airport. This project would double the capacity of the airport. We would like international air services to start from Srinagar.

The second programme related to the National Highway Development Project. Under this, work on a four-lane highway from Srinagar to Kanyakumari was launched. The newly elected Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir, Shri Mufti Mohammed Sayeed, had been insisting that work on this project in the Kashmir Valley should start as early as possible.

In my public rally, I congratulated the people of Kashmir on participating in the Assembly elections in large numbers. They exercised their franchise defying the threat of bullets. I assured them, "We have come here to share your pain and suffering. Whatever complaints you have, try to address them collectively. Knock on the doors of Delhi. Delhi will never close its doors for you. The doors of our heart will also remain open for you."

I assured the people of Jammu & Kashmir that we wish to resolve all issues—both domestic and external—through talks. I stressed that the gun can solve no problem; brotherhood can. Issues can be resolved if we move forward guided by the three principles of Insaaniat (Humanism), Jamhooriyat (Democracy) and Kasminiyat (Kashmir's age-old legacy of Hindu-Muslim amity).

In my speech, I spoke of extending our hand of friendship to Pakistan. At the same time, I also said that this hand of friendship should be extended by both sides. Both countries should resolve that we need to live together in peace.

My last programme was about the start of work on the construction of Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla railway line. It is our resolve to ensure that train services start in Kashmir Valley before August 15, 2007.

Unemployment is the greatest problem facing the youth of Jammu & Kashmir. We have decided to facilitate creation of one lakh opportunities for employment and self-employment over the next two years. For this, a special Task Force would be set up with representatives from the Central Government, State Government, industry, commerce, banking and financial institutions. The Task Force will present its report by June 30 and implementation would commence from August 15 this year.

At a press conference before returning to Delhi, I expressed the hope that a new beginning can take place between India and Pakistan. I said that we have extended our hand to friendship. Let us see how Pakistan responds to this. Stopping cross-border infiltration and destruction of terrorist infrastructure can open the doors for talks. Talks can take place on all issues, including that of Jammu & Kashmir.

12.07 hrs.

(I) RE: CERTAIN OBSERVATIONS MADE IN THE NINETEENTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON DEFENCE ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE FOR 2003-2004—*Contd.*

MR. SPEAKER: I go to 'Zero Hour' now.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for your kind observation. The most important issue that I raise today is not an issue concerning any political party. It is an issue concerning the entire House and before I make my observation, I profusely thank the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Defence Shri Madan Lal Khurana. ...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, today the reports of almost 15 standing committees have been submitted. ...(*Interruptions*) I am raising a point of order.

[*English*]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, under what rule is he raising a point of order?

MR. SPEAKER: There is no point of order during 'Zero Hour'. But since he wants to say something let him say that.

[*Translation*]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, today reports of seven-eight standing committees have been submitted whereas yesterday the reports of some other Standing Committee were submitted. There are 17 Standing Committees out of which 11 are of the Lok