

12.18½ hrs.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEEFiftieth and Fifty-first Reports—*Presented**[English]*

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI (Sambalpur) : Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Estimates Committee:

- (1) Fiftieth Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Thirty-fourth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Finance (Department of Economic Affairs)—Prevention of Frauds in Nationalised Bank.
- (2) Fifty-first Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Forty-fifth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of External Affairs—Foreign Missions.

12.18% hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEENinety-eighth and Ninety-ninth Report—*Presented**[Translation]*

SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT (Agra) : Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Public Accounts Committee :

- (1) Ninety eighth Report on the procedural flaws in the working of the principal Accounts offices—Central Excise duty.
- (2) Ninety ninth Report on the action taken on the sixty-sixth report of the Public Accounts Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) regarding marketing by the Indian Railways.

12.19 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGSForty-first Report—*Presented**[English]*

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : Sir, I beg to present to Forty-first Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Public Undertakings on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Thirty-fourth Report (Tenth Lok Sabha) on Cement Corporation of India Limited.

12.19¼ hrs.

*[Translation]***COMMITTEE ON THE WELFARE OF SCHEDULED CASTES AND SCHEDULED TRIBES**Reports on Study visits—*Presented*

SHRI PARAS RAM BHARDWAJ (Sarangarh) : Sir, I beg to lay a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) on the Table of the House :

- (1) A Report on the study visit of Pune, Mumbai, Goa, Udaipur and Jaipur conducted during July, 1994 by the study team - one of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- (2) A Report on the study visit of Calcutta, Patna, Ranchi, Raurkela and Bhubaneswar conducted during September-October, 1994 by the study team - one of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- (3) A Report on the study visit of Bangalore, Mysore, Trivendrum and Madras conducted during September-October, 1994 by the study team-two of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

12.19½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGYSixteenth and Nineteenth Reports—*Presented**[English]*

SHRI DALBIR SINGH (Shadol) : Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Energy :

- (1) Sixteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Energy on Action Taken on Sixth Report of Standing Committee on Energy (Tenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (1994-95) of Ministry of Power.
- (2) Nineteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Energy on Action Taken on Ninth Report of Standing Committee on Energy (Tenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (1994-95) of Department of Atomic Energy.

12.19¾ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYSThirteenth and Fourteenth Reports and Minutes—*Presented**[English]*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English

versions) of the Standing Committee on Railways (1995-96) :

- (1) Thirteenth Report on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations/ observations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on Ministry of Railways - Demands for Grants, (1994-95).
- (2) Fourteenth Report on Ministry of Railways - Demands for Grants (1995-96) and Minutes of the sittings of the Committee relating thereto.

12.20 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS

Eighteenth Report—Laid

[English]

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHY (Visakhapatnam) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy (Hindi and English versions) of the Eighteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment and Forests on the Demands for Grants (1995-96) of the Department of Science and Technology (Ministry of Science and Technology).

12.21 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

Fourteenth Report—Laid

[English]

SHRI K. MURALEE DHARAN (Calicut) : Sir, I beg to lay the Fourteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport and Tourism on Demands for Grants, 1995-96 of Department of Tourism.

12.21½ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND TOURISM

Fifteenth Report—Laid

[English]

SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA (Guntur) : Sir, I beg to lay the Fifteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport and Tourism on Demands for Grants, 1995-96 of Department of Civil Aviation.

12.22 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Situation Arising Out of the Proposed Closure of Newspapers all over the country on 27.4.95

[English]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) : Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Commerce to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon :

"Situation arising out of the proposed closure of newspapers all over the country on 27 April, 1995 and the threat of indefinite strike thereafter for decontrol of newsprint and lifting of stipulation regarding purchase of indigenous newsprint along with imported newsprint and the steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : At the outset, I would like to inform the Hon'ble Members that it has come to the notice of the Government that the Indian Newspaper Society (INS) has given a call for the closure of newspapers all over the country on 27.4.1995, to be followed by indefinite strike, in order to press for their demands. The price of the imported newsprint which had remained constant upto June 1994 started showing upward trend, thereafter. The hike became too steep at the end of the year with the result that the imported newsprint started costing around US \$ 1,000 per Metric Tonne, in March-April 1995 as against US \$ 440 per Metric Tonne in June 1994. Simultaneously and during the period corresponding to this period only, the indigenous newsprint also registered a price rise. As against the average price of Rs. 20,014 per Metric Tonne during the quarter July-September 1994, the average price of indigenous newsprint has reached Rs 26,387/- as at present. INS has been protesting against the sudden and steep hike in the prices of newsprint both imported as well as indigenous and has been insisting on de-control of newsprint.

As per the present policy, the import of newsprint is partially regulated. Newspapers with an annual entitlement of 200 Metric Tonnes or less can freely import the newsprint. But the large newspapers with an annual entitlement of more than 200 Metric Tonnes have to lift two units of indigenous newsprint before they can import one unit of newsprint. This ratio has been prescribed in order to provide partial protection to the indigenous newsprint industry which has to face frequent fluctuations in the prices of imported newsprint. Upto June 1994, the imported newsprint was costing Rs. 3,000 to 4,000 less than the indigenous newsprint. The indigenous newsprint mills had to sell their product without any profit margin and some of them had to even