

(2) Fifty-third Report on Ministry of Labour and Ministry of Welfare—Action Taken by Government on the recommendations of the Committee on the Welfare of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes contained in their Fourth Report—Reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Private Sector Employment.

11.44 hrs

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR AND WELFARE

Seventh Report and Minutes

[English]

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY (Krishnagar): I beg to present the Seventeenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Labour and Welfare on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Third Report of the Committee on Abolition of Child Labour and Minutes of the sitting of the Committee relating thereto.

11.45 hrs

STANDING COMMITTEE ON URBAN AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Nineteenth Report and Minutes

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI (Contai) : Sir, I beg to present the Nineteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Urban and Rural Development on the 'Action Taken Report on the Fourth Report on National Housing Policy, May, 1992' of the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment along with Minutes of Sitting of the Committee relating thereto.

11.45½ hrs

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

[English]

Re: Situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): In recent weeks, a series of events has again served to underline the tragic consequences of the continuing conflict in Bosnia and other parts of the former Yugoslavia. The hopes of the International Community that it would be possible to effect reconciliation and restore peace in the region have so far been belied. The ceasefire, which had saved lives and brought hope to the citizens of Sarajevo and other cities for several months, has broken down and

hostilities have re-stated. Systematic attacks on UN Protected Areas and the taking of UN peace-keepers as hostages have introduced new and alarming elements in the crisis and set dangerous precedents which do not augur well for the future. The widening of the zone of hostilities once again raises the spectre of a more general conflict which could have implications for peace and stability in Europe as a whole.

Government of India have followed these developments with grave concern and deepening anguish. Ethnic cleansing, forced movement of populations and other atrocities are reprehensible and totally unacceptable in any civilised society. The main victims have been the people, and in particular certain ethnic groups, in the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It is evident that the pursuit of military solutions will be futile and self-defeating. Government of India believes that only a political solution, which is just, equitable and acceptable to all the parties concerned, can endure.

The United Nations, and the Contact Group, must persist with their efforts towards finding a viable political solution, howsoever difficult this may appear at present. While such a solution continues to elude the international community, there is every reason to persist with the search for it, given the seriousness of the situation. Questions are being raised in the present situation, about the ability of the United Nations to restore peace and make an effective contribution to the settlement on the conflict. Pressure is thus bound to mount for other actions, such as air-strikes and the lifting of the arms embargo, the case for which will only become stronger if there is no end to the unnecessary bloodshed and killings. This could, in turn, mean an effective end to the role of the UN in the former Yugoslavia. We believe that this would be a negative development which would result in an escalation of the conflict and further bloodshed.

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I put a question to the hon. Minister? I would just like to ask a question about India's stand on Bosnia-Herzegovina.

MR. SPEAKER: We do not have that procedure. Otherwise, we will continue with it.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : There are Constitutional Bills. Please do not insist on that.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Yesterday, we could not pass the Bill. Let us take it up. That is more important. Later on, at the fog end, if you think that everything can be done, at six of the Clock you can do it.

Now, Bill to be introduced.