

as recommended by the Committee be granted?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, yes.

MR. DEPUTY - SPEAKER: The leave is granted. The Members will be informed accordingly.

13.24 hrs

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Eighteenth Report and Minutes

[English]

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman & Nicobar Islands): Sir, I beg to present the Eighteenth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting - Newsprint Policy and Minutes of the sittings of the Committee relating thereto.

13.24 1/2 hrs

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Third Report and Minutes

[English]

SHRI CHOKKARAO (Karimnagar): Sir, I beg to present the Third Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Agriculture on the Ministry of Rural Development - New Strategy for Integrated Rural Development and Minutes of the Sittings of the Committee relating thereto.

STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

(I) Export And Import of Wheat

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES CON-

SUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): Sir, In a Press statement on January 2, 1992 I had stated that the requirements of the public distribution system will continue to be met out of the stock of foodgrains in the Central Pool. This has been borne out in practice because not only have normal releases of wheat and rice been made for the PDS since January onwards, but additional wheat and rice has been released since June this year under the revamped public distribution system covering 1700 target blocks in drought prone, desert/hill and tribal areas.

In a statement made in this august House on March 9, 1992, I had explained the circumstances under which export of wheat had been permitted during 1990-91 and 1991-92 in order to cope with the sharp decline in our foreign exchange reserves. I would like to again clarify that no *de novo* decision had been taken by the present Government to export wheat. Wheat export had been authorised by the then Governments in August, 1990 and thereafter in April, 1991 to earn foreign exchange. As per the latter decision, 10 lac tonnes of wheat was authorised for export during 1991-92. The present Government took two decisions connected with wheat export, the first in September, 1991 to reduce the export ceiling from 10 lac tonnes to 8 lac tonnes and the second in January, 1992 to ban further export contracting. Thus both the decisions taken by the present Government were intended to restrict the exports.

I had also clarified in my statement of March 9, 1992, that with the objective of containing rise in prices, Government had decided in October, 1991 to release wheat in the open market through FCI. FCI accordingly sold 0.94 million tonnes of wheat upto 31st March, 1992.

As mentioned in my statement of March