

12.13 hrs.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Eighty-third Report and Minutes

SHRI BANSI LAL (Bhiwani) : I beg to present the Eighty-third Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Industry—Motor Cars, and Minutes of the sittings of the Committee relating thereto.

12.13 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

Ninety-fourth Report and Minutes

SHRI MADHUSUDAN VAIRALE (Akola) : I beg to present the Ninety-fourth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Public Undertakings on H. M. T. Ltd. (Excluding Tractors Division) and Minutes of the sittings of the Committee relating thereto.

12.14 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON WELFARE OF
SCHEDULED CASTES AND
SCHEDULED TRIBES

Fifty-first and Fifty-fourth Reports

SHRI A. C. DAS (Jajpur) : I beg to present the following reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes :—

- (i) Fifty-first Report on the Ministry of Home Affairs—Socio-economic conditions of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli.

- (ii) Fifty-fourth Report on the Ministry of Defence—Reservations for, and employment of, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in Defence Services.

12.15 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Harish Rawat—absent.

Shri Bishnu Prasad.

12.15 hrs.

[MR DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

- (i) Need to develop the air-strip at Misa near Kaziranga, Assam, for Vayudoot service.

SHRI BISHNU PRASAD (Kaliabor) : Kaziranga, the National Park in Assam, is famous for one horned Rhinos. This is a rare species not to be found anywhere in the world.

Presently both foreign and Indian tourists, going to this National Park have to get down at Gauhati and from there they have to motor down a distance of 137 miles, which in itself is a tiresome journey.

There is an Airstrip at Misa, constructed during the Second world war. It is about 20 miles from Kaziranga Park area. If this airstrip is renovated and made operational for Vayudoot service, it will give a tremendous boost to tourism which will help improve the economic conditions of the people living nearby.

In and around Misa there are large number of tea gardens and a permanent Military Camp. Probably that is why Misa was included for survey in the Sixth Five Year Plan, as also in the Programme of Action by the Civil Aviation Department to provide an airstrip there.

Keeping all these factors in view, I would request the Minister for Tourism and Civil Aviation to give serious thought to providing an airstrip for Vayudoot service at Misa which, in my opinion, will be a viable proposition keeping in view the traffic which will originate due to the National Park at Kaziranga, Tea gardens and permanent military camp there.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-
TARY AFFAIRS, SPORTS AND
WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI BUTA
SINGH) : Today we are going to take
items 8 and 9 which are on the same sub-
ject. I request both may be taken to-
gether and we will sit through lunch hour
and we may not adjourn for lunch be-
cause already we are behind schedule.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND
REHABILITATION (SHRI VEEREN-
DRA PATIL) : I have one submission
to make. I fully support my colleague.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It has al-
ready been taken up last time.

SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL : Last
time only item 8 was taken up—amend-
ment to the Payment of Gratuity Act.
Item 9 is also regarding further amend-
ments to the Payment of Gratuity Act.
The suggestion is that I may be allowed
to move this Bill and make a few remarks.
Afterwards both the Bills may be taken
up together for discussion.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : When it
is taken up, you can say that.

Now, Smt. Jayanti Patnaik—absent.

Shri Monmohan Tudu—also absent.

(ii) Need to abolish taxes on medicines
import of drugs and re-vitalise Public
Sector drug industries

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shri
Ramavtar Shastri.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI
(Patna)—rose

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Shastri
Ji, sometimes you get up and talk and
sometimes you also sit and speak.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI : I
also stand up and speak if you allow
me.

Medicines today are the one commo-
dity taxed heavily. The ailing consumers
have to pay 48 paise on every rupee
worth of medicine they buy. 100 to
125% customs duty on the imported raw
material, 13% excise duty, 10% sales tax
on pharmaceuticals raw materials, 12%
sur charge, 4% sales-tax on pharma-
ceuticals formulations and 1 to 2% actroi,

And added to this, there are direct and
indirect taxes on bottle caps, aluminium
foils, packaging materials etc.

Now, as per new budget, there is again
5% increase in auxiliary duty (plus appli-
cable CVD). About 8 essential medicines
have been exempted from the above duty
of which import value is only 10 to 15
crores of rupees whereas the rest are im-
ported to the tune of 190 crores and the
burden of this additional duty will auto-
matically fall on the ailing consumers to
that extent. The drugs now attracting
additional auxiliary duty include also
antibiotics and sulphas which are equally
essential.

Here the question arises why the medi-
cines are not available in the rural areas,
why the medicines are costly beyond the
reach of the commonman and why there
still exists a high taxation on medicines.

Almost half of the population of our
country is below the poverty line. For
them, it is not possible to purchase such
costly medicines.

In view of the serious situation, I
would request the Government to abolish
all taxes on medicines for stopping the
import of drugs revitalisation of public