

Statement of the Chairman at the conclusion of the 217th Session

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Members, the 217th Session of Rajya Sabha comes to a close today. It commenced on 2nd July, 2009 and was largely devoted to the financial business of the Government.

In addition to the Government business, this Session provided rich opportunity to the Members to discuss several issues of importance.

Working of six Ministries was discussed during the Session, which is a record in terms of number of Ministries covered in the recent past. Various procedural instrumentalities such as Calling Attention and Short Duration Discussion were also used for discussions. Members were also provided regular opportunity to make Special Mentions on matters of public importance. I commend the Members for the constructive manner in which they participated in these discussions and I thank the Ministers of the Government for doing likewise.

Despite the marked improvement in the functioning of the House, the Question Hour was lost on four days due to disruptions. It is to be hoped that the collective wisdom of the 'House of Elders' will bring forth an arrangement by which the

concern of Members on a matter of recent occurrence can be expressed without transgressing on the right of fellow Members to seek answers to carefully crafted questions.

I have directed the Secretary-General to make available Statistical Information regarding the Session.

Seventeen new members from ten States and NCT of Delhi joined the Council of States during this Session. I am sure, they would make rich and valuable contributions to the House in the days to come.

I thank the Leader of the House, the Leader of the Opposition, the Leaders of various parties and groups and the Hon'ble Members for the whole-hearted co-operation extended by them to facilitate smooth conduct of House proceedings.

I also thank the Deputy Chairman, the Members on the Panel of Vice-Chairman and the officers and staff of the Secretariat for their help and co-operation.