

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**20th MEETING OF THE BUREAU HELD TODAY**

The 20th meeting of the Bureau was held on 17 Jan 2012 at New Delhi was chaired by Prof K.V. Thomas, Hon'ble Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Govt. of India and was attended by distinguished invitees consisting of officials from Govt. depts and representatives of various stakeholder organizations, Consumer organizations, etc.

In his presidential address Prof Thomas said that India is an important player in the global market and Indian industry is a major contributor to India's visibility on the International trading scene. However, our country has to play a more prominent role in the present world scenario of greater international competitiveness. For this purpose, it is important that all efforts should be made by manufacturers to adhere to the prescribed standards, i.e. national or international standards, as applicable, so that the consumers of Indian products have confidence in the products they purchase. This will not only help in building our national image overseas but also assure quality goods to consumers.

He further added that another important area, where BIS needs to strengthen its activities, is Hallmarking of Gold and Silver Jewellery / artefacts. We know that Gold has always occupied a special place in the Indian households. For ensuring that the consumer gets value for money, and is not cheated by unscrupulous manufacturers, the Hallmarking Scheme was launched by BIS in April 2000. The Scheme provides third party assurance to consumers on the purity of gold jewellery or its fineness.

Prof Thomas also said that with the advent of strong consumer movement in India and consumers becoming increasingly aware of their rights, greater need is being felt for more transparency and accountability in the delivery of public services. Keeping this in view, Bureau of Indian Standards has formulated an Indian Standard, namely, IS 15700: 2005 "Quality Management Systems – Requirements for Service quality by Public Service Organizations."

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