

ment during the current session and assented to since a report was last made to the House on the 25th June, 1971 :—

- (1) The appropriation (Railways) No. 2 Bill, 1971.
- (2) The Bengal Finance (Sales Tax) (Delhi validation of Appointments and Proceedings) Bill, 1971.
- (3) The Salaries and allowance of Officers of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 1971.
- (4) The Mysore State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Bill, 1971.
- (5) The Delhi Sikh Gurdwaras (Management) Bill, 1971.
- (6) The Punjab Appropriation Bill, 1971.

12.55 hrs.

STATEMENT CORRECTING REPLY TO
S. Q. No 736 RE. CULTIVATION OF
OPIUM

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI K. R.
GANESH): I beg to lay on the Table a
statement correcting the reply given on the
25th June, 1971 to Starred Question No. 736
regarding cultivation of opium.

Statement

While replying to the question by Hon'ble Member Shri Laxmi Narayan Pandey seeking information whether Government was thinking of increasing the area under opium poppy cultivation, and if so how much, it was stated that there was no proposal to increase the area under poppy cultivation.

2. As a result of re-check of the position, it is found that to meet our increasing demand of export opium a proposal to increase the area under poppy cultivation for 1971-72 crop season was under the consideration of the Government. It has been tentatively proposed to increase the area from 40,825 Hectares in 1970-71 to 50,000 Hectares in 1971-72 season. It is not certain whether it would be possible to bring this area actually under poppy cultivation, as it would depend upon the cultivators who will be engaging their lands for poppy cultivation.

3. The correct reply should, therefore, be as follows :

"Yes, sir. The Government is considering a proposal to increase the area under poppy cultivation from 40,825 Hectares in 1970-71 to about 50,000 Hectares in 1971-72 season".

12.57 hrs

RE. BANGLA DESH REFUGEES

SHRI B. K. DASCHOWDHURI (Cooch-
Behar) : I have to quote a telegram that I have received :

"Incessant rain and tremendous shelling by Pak military from Hatibanda and Barakhata from 22nd June to 29th June, shell splinters injured many people within Indian territory Sital Kuchi P. S. Thirty thousand refugees Hindus and Muslims Majority Muslims with women, children are in open field, no arrangement for shelter, no food, mass death apprehended. Local authority pleading helplessness. Immediate bold action to save refugees urgent necessary.

ARUN BHATACHARYA
Cooch behar."

In this connection, I would request that the Government should make a statement thereon.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur) : We are having a discussion on Bangla Desh during the non-official business this afternoon. We are also going to have the debate on the External Affairs Ministry's Demands later on the 13th or on the 14th, may be on the 19th.

There are several statements made by Yahya Khan and a false propaganda is being launched that these people are crossing over to India and we have captured them and detained them in Jail. This is really amazing. Some statement should be made by the Minister to expose this false propaganda.

MR. SPEAKER : That I have already told him.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : He is not obeying you at all.

MR. SPEAKER : I conveyed your request to the Minister.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE : We don't regard you simply as a Post Office. You are the highest man here. When you say something, it is final.

12.59 hrs.

*DEMANDS FOR GRANTS, 1971-72—Contd.

MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES—Contd.

MR. SPEAKER : The hon. Minister will reply now.

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MOHAN KUMAR MANGALAM) : Mr Speaker, Sir, there can be no doubt that steel is the life blood of any modern nation. Nothing can be built in our country, nothing of any significance without steel. Whether it be a major industrial complex costing hundreds of crores of rupees or a hydro-electric station or some small agro-industrial establishment in the village or a sports stadium, nothing can be built without steel. We all know, therefore, that it is on our steel industry depends to a very large extent, perhaps to a decisive extent, the future of our country's economy and of our country's industry. That is why I think large number of Members have participated in the discussion on the Demands of the Ministry of Steel and Mines. There can be no steel without iron ore, no steel without coal, no steel without manganese and therefore it is but right that these two departments of the Government should go together and I am conscious—acutely conscious, I must say,—that, to a decisive extent, the work of this Ministry will determine the future of Indian economy. I know that the hon. Members who have participated in this debate are equally conscious of this and I share with them their concern about all the obvious weaknesses in the development of our steel industry over the years.

13 hrs.

I can assure Mr. H. M. Patel that there is no complacency on this side of the House, that we do regard very seriously the responsibilities that have been placed on us and we do appreciate that in the heart of the development of the Indian economy lies the development of steel. Are we going to get over the difficulties that we have been facing, man-made difficulties etc ? There is no doubt there have been

difficulties for which the Government cannot and does not want to or does not try to escape responsibility. Are we going to get over these difficulties ? I do assure this House that we do understand how serious the position is and we shall make every effort to see that a new direction is given to the development of the steel industry in our country.

May I first of all take up a subject which has been raised by several hon. Members ? This is : What is our perspective ? What is the future of Indian steel ? We expect, by the end of this decade, by 1979-80, to reach very hardly 19 million tonnes of steel. This is based on particularly the expansion of Bokaro right up to 5.5 million tonnes or so, Bhilai going up to 4 million tonnes and the expansion possibly also in Durgapur and Rourkela. All these are under discussion because there is a compulsion to expand and we do not propose to standstill when the nation is expecting that our Steel production should be able to take our economy forward, as it must. Now, this means, of course an enormous investment. From some where round about Rs. 2,000 crores to day in both the public and the private sectors, we have to rise up to about Rs. 5,000 crores by 1980 and perhaps more depending upon the mid-term appraisal that we are making of the Fourth Five-year plan, and even beyond that we have to think already.

That is why, in relation to the points raised by hon. Members—for instance, Mr. Panda said about Orissa,—we are studying them very closely because we know that our present targets will only take us to somewhere like 19 to 20 millions by 1979-80 and also we know that beyond 1980 we will have to expand at least to a rate somewhere in the region of 2 million tonnes a year. And, if we are to achieve this 2 million tonnes a year, that means virtually we must be able to build a new steel plant every year.

Hon. Members know that the gestation period or rather the lead time, as it is called, in regard to steel plant is somewhere in the region of 6 or 7 or 8 years. It depends upon the complicated problem of the actual product-mix that we put into the steel plant. Obviously, if we are to expand beyond 1980 at a proper speed then we have to start planning