

sintering plants, blast furnaces, steel melting shops etc. The agreement also provides for sending Indian engineers for necessary training in the Soviet Union and for the deputation of Soviet specialists to Hindustan Steel to render technical assistance for developing the Central Engineering & Design Bureau.

(4) The agreements have not resulted in any financial disadvantage. On the other hand, the agreement with Tiajpromexport is expected to enable us to reduce our dependence of foreign assistance for either consultancy or for supply of equipment, enabling the Central Engineering & Design Bureau to do detailed project Engineering and to work out the parameters of the machinery which could be manufactured within the country. The agreement with United Engineering and Foundry Company would make indigenous manufacture of rolling mills of modern design and larger sizes possible. It would thus very considerably reduce our foreign exchange expenditure.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

Opposition to Agreement on Airborne Mineral Survey in India

*1614. SHRI SAROJ MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is strong opposition to the Government's agreement with Bureau De Recherches Geologiques (BRGM) and Compagnie Generale de Geophysique (CGG) to conduct airborne mineral survey in India; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MOHAN KUMARAMANGLAM) : (a) and (b). There has been some criticism regarding Government's agreement with Bureau De Recherches Geologiques (BRGM) and Compagnie Generale de Geophysique (CGG) to conduct airborne mineral survey in India. The questions raised in this connection ranged from the effectiveness of airborne surveys as such in geological conditions obtainable in India to the benefits which would accrue under the contract to the country by way of training and expertise in airborne techniques and data processing and interpretation.

More important among the questions raised were whether :

- (i) the airborne surveys and techniques are at all effective in locating potential ore bearing areas in the geological conditions obtainable in India.
- (ii) airborne surveys could be conducted indigenously.
- (iii) Indian scientists would get adequate training in airborne techniques and methods of computerisation of geophysical data and analysis etc.

National Panel for Welfare of Bangla Desh Refugees

*1615. SHRI S. M. KRISHNA :
SHRI PRABHUDAS PATEL :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether any decision has been taken with regard to the suggestion made by certain political parties for a national panel to be formed to look into the welfare of the Bangla Desh refugees in India ; and

(b) if so, the aims and functions of this panel ?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR) : (a) We are not aware of the suggestions for the formation of any National Panel.

(b) Does not arise.

Production of Gold in India

*1616. SHRI D. K. PANDA: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether gold production in India had remained stagnant in the last few years ;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ;

(c) whether any attempts have been made to find new gold deposits in the country ; and

(d) if so, the results thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI MOHAN KUMARAMANGLAM) : (a) The production of gold metal