

13.28½ hrs.

STATEMENT RE: CUSTOMS
(AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE, 1966

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (Shri B. R. Bhagat) : I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the explanatory statement giving reasons for immediate legislation by the Customs (Amendment) Ordinance, 1966, as required under rule 71(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT-6760 /66].

13.29 hrs.

MOTION RE: PRESENT ECONOMIC
SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY—
contd.

Mr. Speaker: The House will now take up further consideration of the following motion moved by Shri Sachindra Chaudhuri on the 26th July, 1966, namely :—

“That the present economic situation in the country be taken into consideration.”.

The Finance Minister may now reply.

The Minister of Finance (Shri Sachindra Chaudhuri) : Sir, as I told you yesterday, I propose to take as little time as possible over my reply. This is a matter which has been debated in this House practically from the time the House re-assembled for this session. And while I must say that on occasions I have not been able to present to listen to the very valuable and critical suggestions which were made on the economic situation in the country, I have kept myself informed of the suggestions made and criticisms offered and the advice that was given to me. It is not necessary for me, having regard to the way that this Motion has been debated, to answer every point made in the speeches by

everyone of my hon. colleagues in this House. I have made an endeavour—it may be imperfect, but I have still made an endeavour—to classify the points that have been raised and I will shortly answer those points because I wish to contain myself within twenty minutes.

13.31 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair.]

One of the questions which has been agitating the minds of quite a number of people is : why was devaluation necessary; why couldn't we go on with the steps that had been taken on earlier? That takes me into a little background consideration of the economic conditions in the country. After independence, our endeavour has been—the ambition of the country has been—to try and develop ourselves in the economic field as well as in other fields as quickly as we possibly could and to ensure the sharing of the resources of this country equitably and justly, as was proper, and having regard to our accepted principles of socialism. In that background, one has to see how one should progress. It was felt that it was necessary to have capital investments in this country, if this country was to take its place, and proper place, in the comity of nations with the more advanced countries in the industrial sense. In this respect, one has to take a view. Those of my colleagues in this House—and I see one of them opposite me, Shri Dandekar—who have been concerned with the matter of promoting industries know very well that, whether to expand an existing business or to start a new one is always a problem, and a problem which has got to be looked at purely from the economic and financial point of view. Ultimately, the results yielded may be in one way or another. But where we have got to start from scratch, where we have got to think in terms not of expanding something which we have got out but of starting, we have no option but to think in terms of putting