

[The President]

and more deadly weapons of war continue to be received. It is however a matter of some gratification that the volume of world opinion against the continuance of experiments has reached a higher level than ever before. My Prime Minister in a statement before the Lok Sabha in April 1954 put forward for consideration the proposal for a "Standstill Agreement" to suspend these explosions. These proposals have since gained much support and the movement of world opinion in favour of it has gathered momentum. My Government will continue to exert their influence with other nations and in the counsels of the world to bring about the abandonment of these test explosions and the prohibition of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons.

We meet here today one hundred years after the great rising which began in Meerut and spread over considerable parts of India. That was the first major challenge to foreign rule and it threw up notable figures, famous in India's history. The uprising was cruelly suppressed, but the spirit of freedom and the desire to be free from foreign domination continued and found expression on many subsequent occasions. Ultimately it led to a great national movement which followed peaceful methods and succeeded in achieving the independence of India and the establishment of this Republic of ours. We pay tribute now to all those who gave their lives or otherwise suffered so that India may be free.

India has been independent for nearly ten years now and during this period Parliament has laboured for the well-being and advancement of this country and her people and for peace and cooperation in the world. These labours have produced substantial results which we see all round us in the country. The progress we have made during these years in our own land has produced in our people hope and self-reliance. This

is a substantial foundation on which we can build for the future.

Abroad, my Government have striven strenuously to help to lower existing tensions in the world and to serve the cause of peace. The country has also accepted heavy responsibilities in the pursuit of this policy, in regard to maintaining the independence of its approach as well as in making contributions to the maintenance of peace, as in Korea, Indo-China and now in the Middle East.

The tasks that confront us both at home and abroad are not only considerable but at times appear overwhelming. But these tasks have to be faced, difficulties surmounted and objectives achieved if the fruits of independence are to be ensured to our people and if we are to help the world being spared the continual stress and horror of impending catastrophe.

My Government will continue their strenuous endeavours in all these directions, to the best of their capacity conscious of the confidence reposed in them by the country, and fortified by the conviction that despite clouds of war, and even despair, the desire for survival and progress is inherent in humanity. Our capacities and resources are limited and our voice in the world may be but small. But neither our national interests nor our history and traditions, nor our convictions chart any other course for us. Happily for us, this is the common aim and the firm desire of all our people.

Members of Parliament, I wish you success in your labours.

PRESIDENT'S ASSENT TO BILLS

Secretary: Sir, I lay on the Table the following 9 Bills passed by the Houses of Parliament during the Fifteenth Session of First Lok Sabha and assented to by the President

since a report was last made to First Lok Sabha on the 18th March, 1957:

1. The Appropriation Bill, 1957.
2. The Appropriation (No. 2) Bill, 1957.
3. The Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 1957.
4. The Kerala Appropriation Bill, 1957.
5. The Finance Bill, 1957.
6. The Appropriation (Railways) Bill, 1957.
7. The Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill, 1957.
8. The Kerala Appropriation (Vote on Account) Bill, 1957.
9. The Appropriation (Railways) (Vote on Account) Bill, 1957.

I also lay on the Table copies, duly authenticated by the Secretary of Rajya Sabha, of the following 2 Bills passed by the Houses of Parliament during the Fifteenth Session of First Lok Sabha and assented to by the President since a report was last made to First Lok Sabha on the 18th March, 1957:

1. The Sea Customs (Amendment) Bill, 1957.
2. The Foreigners Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1957.

MOTIONS FOR ADJOURNMENT

RELIEF TO EAST BENGAL REFUGEES

Mr. Speaker: I have received notices of as many as seven adjournment motions; two were presented the other day. The first one has been tabled by Shri T. K. Chaudhuri, and Shri Ghoshal. The subject is:

"The situation created by the refusal of the Central Rehabilitation Ministry to provide the minimum relief by way of food and temporary shelter on human . .

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri (Berhampore): A slight verbal change, Sir. It

should be 'humanitarian' and not 'human'.

Mr. Speaker: . . . "humanitarian grounds even to 10,000 (ten thousand) destitute East Bengal refugees, under the charge of the Union Rehabilitation Ministry and the Union Government, who were forced to come back to Calcutta to escape the intolerable conditions of life in Bettiah where they were sent under the auspices of the Union Rehabilitation Ministry and the resulting death of men, women and children refugees by starvation, malnutrition and epidemic diseases in the streets of Calcutta, in Howrah maidan and Sealdah Railway Station precincts in Calcutta."

How many have died?

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: The daily rate of death, to my knowledge, in Howrah Maidan and Sealdah station is about 6.

Mr. Speaker: How long has this been going on?

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: About a month.

Mr. Speaker: At that rate, already 200 people have died; is it?

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Minister.

The Minister of Rehabilitation (Shri Mehr Chand Khanna): Sir, I have made enquiries from the Government of West Bengal as well as the Government of Bihar. There have been no deaths either in Bihar or Howrah maidan, either due to malnutrition or starvation. Normal deaths do take place and they are taking place. The percentage of deaths in both these States, according to the information given to me, is in no sense higher than the normal percentage which prevails in those places. Not even that, Sir, in this matter we have supplied

Shri T. K. Chaudhuri: If I may intervene, I am not interested in and