

Proceedings of the Fourth Session of the First Assam Legislative
Assembly assembled under the provisions of the Government
of India Act, 1935

THE ASSEMBLY met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 a.m., on
Thursday, the 3rd March 1938

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Surma Valley Students' Association

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA asked :

*127. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) If the Surma Valley Students' Association has been proscribed as an illegal association by the Government of Assam or Bengal ?

(b) If not, will Government be pleased to state if they are aware that the Head Master of the Government High School, Sunamganj, is trying to keep students away from the said Association ?

*128. Has the attention of Government been drawn to a notice issued by the said Head Master on certain students on the 27th January, 1938, threatening disciplinary action for their sympathy for the said Students' Association ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

127. (a)—No.

(b) and 128.—Government have no information, but have enquired.

Abolition of the new scheme Madrasas

Maulavi MABARAK ALI asked :

*129. (a) Are Government aware of the fact that new scheme Madrasas are not wanted by the public ?

(b) Do Government propose to consider the desirability of abolishing the new scheme Madrasas and to divert that grant to old scheme Madrasas ?

(c) If not, do Government propose to give grant-in-aid to old scheme Madrasas ?

(d) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

129. (a)—No. They are very popular, as is proved by the fact that the number of Madrasas has increased from 3 in 1920-21 to 75 in 1931-32 and 112 in 1937-38.

(b)—No.

(c)—“Old scheme Madrasas” are now “Middle Madrasas” teaching Arabic, Persian and Urdu but not English.

Thirteen of them are in receipt of grants.

(d)—Does not arise.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Is there any bar to giving grant-in-aid to old scheme Madrasas ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: No bar.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Will Government consider the desirability of granting grant-in-aid towards these Madrasas ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Yes, Sir, I am prepared to discuss the matter.

Appointment of a teacher in the Nilmoni High English School, Karimganj

Maulavi MABARAK ALI asked :

*130. Will Government please state—

(a) Whether any teacher in the Nilmoni High English School, Karimganj, has been appointed either permanently or temporarily within a year or so ?

(b) Whether he is a Hindu or a Muhammadan ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

130. (a)—Yes. (temporarily).

(b)—A Hindu.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: May I know whether any circular was issued by Government that no Hindu teacher would be appointed unless and until the percentage of Muslims is reached ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: It that a request by the hon. member ?

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Was any circular issued by the Government ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: No, so far as I am aware.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: May I know whether this temporary teacher will be permanently engaged ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: That I cannot say, Sir.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(to which answers were laid on the table)

Re affairs of the Sunamganj Jubilee High School

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

390. Is it a fact that a receipt book for enlisting members for the Students' Associations has been snatched away from one student of the Sunamganj Jubilee High School by the Assistant Head Master and submitted to the Head Master ?

391. Is it a fact that the Head Master threatened the guardians that he would drive out the students from the school, if any of his students are found, in any way, associated with any students' association ?

392. Is it the policy of Government that the students' associations should be dissolved ?

393. Do Government propose to make enquiries about this Sunamganj affair and take steps to discontinue such intervention on the part of the staffs of Government educational institutions ?

394. Is it a fact, that there is a Muslim students' association functioning in various schools of the district of Sylhet ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

390 & 391.—Government have no information, but have enquired.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Will Government take it from me as correct that a receipt book was snatched away from a student on the 2nd October by the Assistant Head Master of the Sunamganj Jubilee High School and confiscated? The Headmaster himself told me that.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Will the hon. member state what he means by “confiscated” ?

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: What I want to say that one of the teachers took away the receipt book and gave it to the Headmaster and the Headmaster kept it with him.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: All that I can say is that I have called for a report and the matter has engaged my attention.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Has the attention of Government been drawn to the letter of the President, Surma Valley Federal Students' Association, published in the *Anandi Bazar Patrika*, dated 22nd Magh last ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Yes, I have seen that letter.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Do Government favour the growth of Students' Associations ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: We are not going to prevent that.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: What will be the attitude of Government with regard to the formation of Students' Associations in the province ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Our attitude will be that of indifference and no action will be taken unless they go wrong.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: In case there is such growth of numerous Students' Associations, will Government have any point of suspicion upon them ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Nothing of the kind.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: If a Headmaster is to threaten like this what attitude will Government take?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Like what?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Like that stated in question No.391.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: As I have already stated, I have called for a report and I cannot say anything just now as to what was the attitude of the Headmaster.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

392.—No, provided that they function in a legitimate manner.

393.—Government have undertaken to enquire into the facts and will pass such orders as to them may appear necessary, consistent with the maintenance of proper discipline in their schools.

394.—Yes.

Number of officers of the Special Excise Staff at Golakganj

Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA asked:

395. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The number of officers of the Special Excise staff at Golakganj in the Dhubri subdivision with their names and monthly salaries?

(b) What are their duties?

(c) For how long the staff is there?

(d) Where they live and how much Government spend annually for their quarters?

(e) Whether Government propose to keep the staff there permanently?

(f) If so, whether Government propose to have permanent quarters of its own for the staff to minimise expenditure incurred for their quarters?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

395. (a)—1. Srijut Kamal Chandra Saikia, Special Inspector of Excise on Rs.100 per mensem and his two peons named Chandra Kanta Sarma and Hararam Kalita on Rs. 12 per mensem each.

2. Patrol Party	{	Syed Almasuddin, Special Excise Jemadar on Rs. 18 per mensem.
		Iswar Chandra Pal, Special Excise peon on Rs. 15 per mensem with special pay of Rs. 4 per mensem.
		Akaluram Kahar, Special Excise peon on Rs. 13 per mensem with special pay of Rs. 4 per mensem.

(b)—The duties of the staff are to patrol the trains from Sorbhog to Sonahat for the purpose of prevention and detection of the smuggling of opium and other excisable articles. The Special Inspector has jurisdiction over the Dhubri subdivision and supervises the work of the Patrol party.

(c)—Since 1928 when Government adopted the policy of reduction of rations of opium consumers under 50 years of age, by ten per cent. annually.

(d)—Golokganj, their headquarters.

Rupees 180 for the Special Excise Inspector, Rs. 48 for the Special Excise Jemadar and Rs. 48 for the two Special Excise peons are being spent annually as their house allowances.

(e)—No. The headquarters of the preventive staff are required to be changed from time to time as the smugglers change their routes and so the headquarters of the staff at Golokganj are liable to be transferred elsewhere at any moment in accordance with the exigencies of the circumstances.

(f)—Does not arise.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

GRANT No.19

(40.—AGRICULTURE)

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.5,93,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The motion moved is that a sum not exceeding Rs.5,93,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department".

Srijut DEBESWAR SARMAH: Before the subject is taken up, may I have a little bit of information from you, Sir? I put certain questions and they were admitted as starred questions. Will they be coming up at all?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: If the Government send the replies to the Assembly Department in time then they will be available. I think to-day is the last date for Government to send the replies to be put up on the 5th. I do not know which questions the hon. member means. If the replies have already come to our possession, of course they will be put up.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: There are as many as 32 cut motions. The first one stands in the name of Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.22,726 under Grant No.19, Major head—40.—Agriculture, Minor head—A.—Direction, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Clerks, at page 147 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.5,93,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To criticise the general policy of the administration.)

Sir, at the outset, I should point out that the shortness of time within which we have to confine our debates makes us quite unable to deal with the subjects very properly. We expected that after having heard the grievances of the hon. members of this House during the last Budget session, the Hon'ble the Chief Minister would kindly try to accommodate us and allow some more time than what has been granted during that Budget session for discussion. He gave us definite assurance, but we are sorry to see that in this Budget session the time for discussion has been more reduced than what we had in the last session. So, we cannot but complain of the inadequacy of time allotted for the purpose. I am sure I am voicing the sentiment of the whole House in the matter. (Voices—Yes).

If Hamlet had method in his madness, our Government have no method in their wisdom. The Agricultural Department is spending a lot of money annually, but, as we have oftentimes repeated on the floor of the House, that no planned system of working exists. The Agriculture Department

is rather wasting its sweetness in the desert air. Practically all their labour has gone in vain for the last two decades. Shakespear's Hamlet had a method in his madness but our administrators have got no method in their wisdom. That is why they have found no response from the villagers.

During the last Budget session, the Hon'ble the Chief Minister sprang a surprise upon us by bringing out of the Cabinet a giant pineapple. We had a glimpse of it, but no taste of the forbidden fruit. Our European friends might have a taste of it like their Biblical ancestor. Otherwise in yesterday's debate they could not have claimed monopoly of all common sense. We have no pretension to the monopoly of wisdom. Of course, they are in the privileged position now under the present constitution of the Assam Legislature so they dare say anything like this.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. member will come to the real point in his motion.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Now, there is no necessity of appointing some Demonstrators here and some Inspectors there unless they have got some programme of policy to follow. If these Inspectors and Demonstrators and other officers of the Department are not given any definite policy or programme for work, they would be given sermons to villagers which would have no better effect than the sermons of our missionary friends in villages. Before anything is done in agricultural improvement I think there must be a survey of (1) lands under cultivation, (2) cultivable wastes, (3) lands which yield no crop due to the vagaries of nature. If a systematic plan is adopted, I think much more can be done to ameliorate the lot of our poor cultivators.

Then comes the question of agricultural marketing. Some Marketing officers have been appointed by Government. I do not know up till now what they have done for the purpose of providing better marketing facilities for our rural people. So far as we know, they are collecting a statistics which may go on for any time. With the question of agricultural finance is inter-linked the whole question of agriculture. Agricultural finance requires two kinds of finances—the short term finance and the long term finance. Short term finance is mainly concerned with giving the cultivator temporary credit for purchasing seeds and plough cattle and other agricultural implements by hypothecation of the crop. Our Co-operative Department was intended to help the people for agricultural finance. Our Co-operative Societies missed the point between short term and long term finance. People take loans from Co-operative Societies, but utilise that in a way for which they are not really intended. That is why the Co-operative Department has practically met with failure in coping with the demands of our agricultural people.

Sir, these are important questions which cannot be discussed in the course of 7 or 8 minutes. But what I want to impress upon Government is that they should adopt a definite policy to which they should confine themselves and try to concentrate all their energy and harness their efforts to the execution of that policy. Otherwise all their efforts will be in vain.

Sir, the other day, I quoted a portion from the Report by Sir John Russell on working of the experimental stations. Our Agriculture Department should consider how to convey the results achieved by the experimental stations to the door of the cultivator. They are making new inventions, finding out improvements, and I should like that our Agriculture Department should carry them to every house.

With these few words, I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The motion moved is—that the provision of Rs.22,726 under Grant No.19, Major head—40.—Agriculture, Minor head—A.—Direction, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Clerks, at page 147 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.5,93,500 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir. In supporting the motion, I want to draw the pointed attention of the Government in connection with the financial aspect of the department. Sir, it will be found from the information supplied by the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture the other day on a question put by Mr. Abdur Rahman that 58 per cent. of the budgeted amount of the Agriculture Department is spent in superintendence and establishment charges and only 16 per cent. is spent in supplying improved seeds, manure and agricultural implements to the agriculturists. Now, Sir, I believe this is not supplied free of charge, but they are sold to the cultivators. As in other departments the top heavy character of this department is evident. The Government have budgeted only Rs.25,000 for rural upliftment work and as usual we find the curious spectacle of a Special Officer drawing, I believe, a salary of one thousand rupees in pay and allowance. This Special Officer has to formulate a scheme, but I understand a sum equivalent to one-eighth of the sum allotted for the scheme has already been spent in connection with the pay and allowance of that Officer in merely conceiving the scheme. We do not know how much more money will be needed before the scheme actually sees the light of the day. To our mind, Sir, this is unthinkable. There is the Director of Agriculture sitting in the height of Shillong apparently with all knowledge of agriculture and village uplift who in our opinion can be entrusted with the work of drawing up of a workable scheme under the guidance of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Agriculture and in collaboration with the other departmental heads. Then, Sir, as regards the actual working of the scheme, it may be entrusted to the Deputy Directors of Agriculture in charge of districts. A Special Officer, to our mind is unnecessary. Sir, if the department had been just a little more imaginative it might have in many matters caused better improvement in cultivation specially with regard to sugarcane cultivation. Sugarcane cultivation is, Sir, dying out to the humbler section of the people on account of abnormal fall in the price of *gur*. This is mainly due to the import of large quantity of *gur* from the sugar producing provinces I mean the United Provinces and Bihar. Some protection in this matter is needed and in my opinion a duty may be imposed on imported *gur*. It may, of course, be argued that taxation will be on the consumers but I think, they will not be affected. It will afford protection to them, and a descent revenue may be expected from this source which may be ear-marked for the improvement of sugarcane cultivation in this province. It may be pointed out that this is allowable under Appendix 1, Chapter 6 of the Government of India Act under heads either 48 or 49—tax on sale of goods or cess on the entry of goods into local area for consumption. So Government can very well impose tax on this imported goods.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member has exceeded his time.

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA: I will finish soon. I may also point out that the fruit garden in Shillong may be abolished and the land may be sold and the money thus obtained may be utilised for the improvement of cultivation. This fruit garden is absolutely unnecessary according to our opinion. With these few words, I support the motion.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURI: I would rather say, Sir, that so long the field of activity occupied by our Agriculture department was confined only to central places. They have their agricultural farms somewhere near the towns. They have their cattle breeding farms some where near the metropolis. Now the scheme of model village is in the contemplation of Government and we hope that model villages should be in central places within easy access. Sir, my suggestion would be that these fields of activity must be now changed and all these should be located in such places where the people require help and suggestion of the department very badly. Their case must be first taken up. For the agriculturists what we require? We require cattle and for cattle we require grazing lands. It is also the business of the department to see that these agriculturists' cattle should have good grazing and pasture lands. The agriculturists should have, I should say, protection for their fields from visits of animals and birds, etc., and have protection from pest of water hyacinth and ravages of floods. In this connection I would submit that the Agriculture Department should mobilise all its energy and force to the interior of the villages. My next point is that so far as the distribution of seeds are concerned we often find costly advertisements in some newspapers. I should ask in this connection what is the percentage of literacy amongst our agriculturists? I think, there are very few people. So I suggest that all the energies of the department should be mobilised in such a way that our agriculturists who, as we all know, are mostly illiterate can have some sort of benefit from this department. It is no good running an Institution and spending the entire amount in maintaining its officers, without looking to the interests and comfort of the agriculturists. I do not know whether much benefit will come out by appointing a Special Officer. I would rather suggest that the money that is going to be allotted for the model village scheme should be entrusted to the Subdivisional Officers. They may be asked to take into confidence and asked to take suggestion from the Local Members of Legislative Assembly or some other leading people who have got interest in agricultural matters. If one Special Officer were deputed to tour throughout the province—although I do not know what would be his travelling allowance—it would not be practicable for him to look into the needs of the agricultural people of the province. If it is at all the intention of Government to see to the betterment of the poverty stricken agriculturists, I should say that much work in that direction could be done in co-operation with the Subdivisional Officers and local officers. So far as the removal of indebtedness of the agriculturists is concerned, I should submit that without the help of the Co-operative Department it is not practicable. Although the Money Lenders' Bill has been intended to do away with the *Mahajans*, I should say that these *Mahajans* were of great help to the agriculturists in times of need. (*Hear! hear!*) Of course, in some cases some of the *Mahajans* have been very hard hearted, but I should say from my own experience that those who were careful to utilise the money of the *Mahajans* were much benefited. Now, we find that the *Mahajans* are very shy in lending out their money, and the Agriculture Department have not been of any real help to the masses. We find in most cases that some sort of influence is exercised by the officers of the Agriculture Department, and so, my submission is that the Agriculture Department should not take up the money lending business but if they really want to relieve the distress of the people, they should look into the real needs of the people, and not behave like the *Pathan Mahajans*. I have already given the suggestion that without protecting their cattle and land it is impossible for Government to improve the

present condition of agriculturists. Now, as I have said, the seeds that are to be distributed should be left in the hands of the Demonstrators. I would welcome if the services of some high officials are dispensed with and in their places a larger number of Demonstrators are appointed. They should be placed in some centres of activities of our ignorant and illiterate masses so that the masses will get their help.

Maulavi DEWAN MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to say only a few words and give my humble suggestions regarding the policy of the Agricultural Department. But at the same time it must be made clear that I do not support the censure motion of the hon. mover.

Sir, India at the present age is primarily an agricultural country. Once India was an industrial and prosperous country who supplied food and clothes to the rest of the world. She had her own navy, own industry and own army to safeguard her shores from the hands of the foreign aggression. She was called by Lord Macaulay as Garden of Eden. But, alas, she has now been degraded to the status of agricultural country! She has become so poor that she had no food to eat and no clothes to put on. Burma, Siam, China have become suppliers of our food.

Sir, cultivators are the backbone of our society. Upon their prosperity, the prosperity of the whole India depends. So, it is our foremost duty to ameliorate the condition of the agriculturists.

Sir, agriculture may truly be called a nation building department. Agriculture and Industry are the two pillars upon which the structure of our nation depends.

Sir, I am very glad that the portfolios of Agriculture and Industry have been entrusted in the worthy hands of the present Minister of Agriculture and Industry—I mean the Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri. He comes from the village. He is perfectly familiar with the needs and requirements and grievances of the agricultural people. He has already caught the imagination of the masses and has become the hero of the mass people. We fully appreciate his ideals and services.

Sir, my hon. friend Mr. Omeo Kumar Das and Mr. Haladhar Bhuyan have referred to the benefit of the masses. I heartily appreciate the ideas, but at the same time, I do not understand the mass contact movement which has political *chal* and motive behind it.

"*Dal Bhat*" is the real problem of our country. In my first budget speech I said that we hear that socialism and communism are gaining ground in India. Give them food and every thing will vanish. I still stick to my former views. We do not like to exploit the poor illiterate masses to attain our selfish political ends. Sir, I was born in villages and born and brought up in the agricultural surroundings. I feel proud to say that I belong to the agricultural class. If you have a real *darad* and sympathy for the poor agriculturists, come and live with them in villages. Sir, we live in the village and die for the agriculturists.

Some of our friends are apt to say we the members of the Moslem League have no plan and programme of our own. In order to remove their misconception I think it will not be irrelevant and out of place if I quote below a few items of our programme.

To adopt measures for rural uplift, improvement of village communication, provision of better medical facilities, water supply in rural areas, provision of pastures and grazing lands, State Agricultural Farms.

To make an agricultural survey of the province with a view to improvement of agricultural lands by constructing *bunds*, excavating *khals* and by other means and also with a view to crop planning cultivation of suitable money crops.

To adopt measures for protection against ravages of recurring floods.

To encourage cottage industries and small indigenous industries.

Adoption of a well defined labour policy aiming at amelioration of the condition of labouring and working classes including payment of fair and equitable wage, provision for insurance, better housing and adequate educational and medical facilities.

Adoption of preferential policy favouring use of Assam and Indian products in the province and in Government Department.

Sir, with the permission of the House and with all due respect to them may I read a few lines regarding the village programme :

এচেম ব্লিত খোপনিত্তে

স্বাধিকা আনিবই

গাবে গাবে নকবে ভ্রমন।

বন্ধু নাই সৰ্ব্বদাব

সংগঠন কি দৰ্কাব

ঘন ঘন শিলঙ ভ্রমন।।

গাওঁ ভূই সংগঠন

কাৰ অতি আশাভন্ন

বোকাখানী ভৰা আলিবাট।

মটবত যোৱা টান

নাথাকে যাত্ৰা সন্মান

সভাশূন্য সোমা নাই তা ॥

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is an admitted fact that Assam is an agricultural province and 90 per cent. of its population are agriculturists. The welfare of the province is intimately connected with the welfare of the agriculturists and therefore the importance of this Department cannot be denied. But what we find from the present Agricultural Department? We find that there is no lack of officers in this Department. We have a Director of Agriculture, Deputy Directors of Agriculture, Inspectors of Agriculture, Superintendents of Agriculture, an Economic Botanist and what not; but the poor peasants are still struggling with old implements for their very existence. It is rather a high time that this Department should be re-shuffled. Firstly, it is suffering from top-heaviness; there are too many heads with a few arms; and it is the duty of the Government to increase the arms—the Demonstrators, so that there may be one Demonstrator for each thana. (*Hear! hear!*)

(2) As regards the marketing problem, I must say that the Marketing Officer is doing very little in this respect. The Agricultural Department is keeping itself engaged in doing experimental works at Jorhat and Sylhet, but the poor *raiya*s are being kept absolutely in the dark in this respect.

(3) I suggest that the Inspectors and Demonstrators of Agriculture should come in close touch with the poor *raiya*s and persuade them to use modern implements and to cultivate various kinds of crops in a year.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: On a point of order, Sir. Is this the right time for giving suggestions? I think he must either support the motion or oppose it.

A voice:—We are discussing the general policy of the Department.

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: I have full right to give suggestions. I am criticising the policy of this Department and at the same time giving suggestions to the Government.

Sir, we all know that this province is suffering for want of an agricultural institution, and it is up to the Government to see that an agricultural school is established in this province very soon (*Hear! hear!*) and in the

meantime Sir, Government should increase the number of agricultural scholarships so that our boys may go to other provinces to get training in this line to improve the lot of the people of this province.

Rev. L. GATPHOH: Mr. Speaker, Sir. The motion before the House is a very important one. If the hon. member who moved the motion wants to criticise the Government, and thereby is offering suggestions to Government if that be the case, I would like to join him in offering some suggestions to Government. The Agriculture Department is a very important department; we know that the salvation of the province depends largely on this Department. If the country is to be saved from poverty it is through this Department, and I would like to make some suggestions to meet the needs and conditions of my subdivision; but before I do so I should like some light thrown on this matter. I see in the budget, at page 147 that there are a number of Agricultural Inspectors; their number is 22 altogether; the number of the districts in the province is 12, and the number of subdivisions is 25; if Nowgong and the Garo Hills, which have no subdivision, are added to the number; then the total will be 27. Evidently it appears that every subdivision excepting three or four has one Agricultural Inspector. I want to know from the Government on what basis or principle the Inspectors or Demonstrators are posted to each subdivision of the district. I do not claim that the subdivision from which I come should also have one Inspector simply because it is a subdivision; but I would urge on the attention of the Government the cause of the subdivision because it has a special advantage. This subdivision is not only an agricultural but pastoral country also, it may be aptly called a land flowing with milk and honey. I can visualise the time when it will be really a land flowing with milk and honey and *ghee*. I think at present the people of the plains in their heart of hearts are cursing the rivers of these Hills which cause floods in the valleys in the rainy season, but if the Government would give attention to this district as it deserves, I think, a time will come when the people of the plains will bless these Hills, for the valleys of the Surma and the Brahmaputra will then be flooded with butter and milk. Therefore, Sir, I press the Government to give due attention to this subdivision. And by giving the people of the subdivision an Agricultural Inspector they will be encouraging them to develop the resources of the country. Another suggestion I would like to make is that the Government should make better use of Experimental Farm in Shillong and elsewhere by providing accommodation like hostels attached to these Experimental Farms where educated young men could undergo training. Personally I would sooner give scholarships to students who are willing to undergo training in the Farm than taking a general course.

I would personally give preference to teachers who have had some training in carpentry or agriculture to those who had simply gone through a general course. Our friends on the other side advocate at one time on the floor of this House for a demonstrator in every village. If we have teachers trained in the agricultural farms, then the time will come when it will be possible for a teacher to do demonstration work in nearly every village in this province. I think the hon. members, if they come forward with such suggestions—different according to the local conditions of the district—the Government would be very much helped in looking carefully into these practical suggestions.

With these words, I resume my seat.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: I am going to discuss the point about model village schemes. The term 'model village' is very charming to hear. Do Government want to restore the old village self-Government?

The village wherein lies the strength of the State has been ruined by a century of exploitation. There is to be found malaria, *kala-azar* and starvation. The village grazing reserves, the village fuel reserves and the village thatch and cane reserves are all gone. Even the drift wood are not allowed to be caught. The fuel grown in their *patta* lands are not allowed to be sold. The indebtedness is appalling. The illiteracy is a gift granted to us by the benign Government. (*Hear! hear!*) The drunkenness in the open street during Bijaya days on King's highways are a testimony of the civilised Government. (*Hear! hear!*) The bug bear of smuggling, illicit distillation and growing of wild *bhang* is leading the Government to increased drunkenness and smoking of more *ganja* and also to keep the opium addicts to the irreducible minimum. The Agriculture, Industries, Co-operative Credit, Veterinary, Live Stock, Education, the so-called nation building departments are managed by experts. The Ministry is powerless to override expert opinion. Medical experts say that without opium a man will succumb; hence our Minister allows him a pass to use opium to save his life. The excise experts say that there is smuggling in the hills and valleys in the distant regions where no human soul can enter. No use of prohibition. The agricultural expert says that we are making experiments and researches. The educational experts say we are out to wipe out illiteracy. The Public Health and Medical experts say that they are making surveys of all diseases and are trying to find out the germs and keep them in their hospitals (*laughter*). Naturally our model village will be treated by all these experts and hence a sum of Rs.25,000 for any number of villages is not too small considering the services and help that are placed at the disposal of so many experts. It is, therefore, quite in the fitness of things that the scheme for model village must be made by an expert specially appointed. If these officers tour round the country and consume more than the allotted sum no objection should be made because not a single rupee will go out of the allotted sum. The scheme made by such an expert will certainly go a great way to satisfy the public, no matter whether the scheme is actually worked or not. The scheme will be published and the people will have the advantage of working it out. Such an expert was appointed before to draft a comprehensive scheme of compulsory Primary Education following the passing of the Compulsory Primary Education Act of 1926. The officer went round the country. He spent several months on special duty and drew up a scheme which never saw the light of day. The Education Act is there, the scheme is there and it is only the people that are to blame for its failure. We have a plethora of experts and let God save us from these experts. Let the Ministry guide them to abandon their old track. The Government of India gave us five lakhs of rupees four years ago for rural uplift and half of this sum is still being carried over from year to year as there is no scheme for spending the money. But Government of India by a sudden telegram stopped the export of opium worth about 9½ crores. They did not wait for expert opinion whether China will succumb for want of opium. This is only one instance where the Government of India did the right thing at the right moment for the Chinese people. Our Ministry must take a new leaf and start doing things independent of these experts.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member is not criticising the agricultural policy of Government.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: I was criticising the Model Village Scheme. I was saying that if the grant to that scheme is going to be entrusted to these experts the fate of the scheme will be similar as we have found happening in the case of the others that have come through experts' hands.

With these few words, I support the motion.

Mr. F. W. HOCKENHULL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a subject in which this group has taken keen interest. In my budget speech, I pointed out that circumstances had precluded our offering schemes and advice to Government. The first, that you have a new Agricultural Minister who, I think in all fairness, should be given a chance; and second, that I have visited Mymensinghia's district where we have seen on the ground the best demonstration of agriculture that this province or any other province is likely to get from those who are really interested in the subject (*Hear, hear*). My hon. friend the mover of this motion perhaps wants to know whether I am opposing or supporting him. If in so far as criticisms of Government and the methods of the Agricultural Department are concerned I am critical then I am critical. But if the hon. mover of the motion proposes to handicap the Department by reducing the meagre sum which is already given to it by Rs.100, I really cannot see how it is going to help in the solution of the problem. There is a feeling, and a wide-spread feeling, that this Department is top heavy. On the face of it, it is not untenable. (*Hear! hear!*) But the solution of that predicament is not decapitation. That as a rule results in death. What we want to see is more life in the Department; and that means the development of that need of the Department which gets down to the practical problems of agriculture in the villages. Without the head, without the brains, without the guidance and without the expert knowledge above, all money spent down below is liable to be wasted. Much as the hon. mover has said, if we except the flattering reference to our group, we are in agreement with. We cannot fail to feel that it is useless to have research, improved seed and improved methods, unless we can convey them to the people who can make use of that knowledge. And as a practical suggestion may I offer to the Agriculture Minister the experience that I have come across in one district where a district officer was particularly interested in the work of agricultural demonstrators? We have always found that, where some one will take an interest in another man's work, there is more zest, there is more interest in it to himself; and if only district officers could be persuaded to believe that the demonstrators who are trying to help the agriculturists could collaborate with them so that under some organised scheme these demonstrations could take place rather than in a hole and corner manner, as I know is apt to be the case, I feel quite confident that with some organisation of that description greater benefit will be obtained from the work of the demonstrators. We are not proposing at present to make any particular suggestions to the department and these are only a few reflections in passing.

Just one or two other points have occurred to me during the debate. One of my friends over there (Congress Party side) speaks about the depression in the sugar industry and that something should be done in the way of protection. Of course he knows perfectly well that it is impossible as things stand. The answer to that is not to seek for protection. After all, whether you can sell your produce or not ultimately depends on the price at which you can offer it. Now the trouble with the sugar industry in this country is that it is suffering from over production and the price is falling to a figure at which there is no profit to the Assam cultivator, because the larger cultivators in Bihar and Bengal are able to produce their sugar and send it here at a cost with which we cannot compete. If you are going to compete with them, you must have a more intensive form of cultivation and be able to produce your article at a price which is cheaper than it is now sold. That is a suggestion, though in that it applies to a far more important ingredient in our house holds than sugar—I refer to rice.

It will be known to many hon. members of this House that in an agricultural province such as is this it is a great reflection on us that to-day we are still importing very large quantities of Burma rice. Surely this is something which needs our immediate attention, because that means that we are not producing or that we are not distributing the food-stuffs which we are able to produce within our own boundaries.

In conclusion, Sir, I would say one other word just to remind the members of this House that we are still importing large quantities of butter and *ghee*—commodities which we ought to be able to provide for ourselves—and that something profitable might be done in that direction. With these reflections, Sir, I will leave the matter to the Agriculture Department.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, I want to speak a few words on this motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, but you should be brief.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, the Government experimental garden at Tura (*laughter*) was only opened during last January (1938) and one demonstrator is fully occupied for that garden. It grows a few items of vegetables like a few plants of tomatoes, cabbages and so on. There are in all about a hundred plants or so only. About November or December of last year Dr. Mitra, the Director of Agriculture, visited that place and he disapproved of the garden. The Deputy Commissioner abandoned the old Government experimental garden and also the new one. Dr. Mitra advised the Deputy Commissioner not to abandon the old one. But the Deputy Commissioner did not approve of that suggestion. Then after some time Mr. Barthakur, Deputy Director of Agriculture, went there and he also had the same opinion. In the Garo Hills we cannot make any improvement in agriculture, as the Deputy Commissioner is standing in the way. He is not an expert in agriculture. (Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali: who is the Deputy Commissioner?) I think the hon. member knows that. (*Laughter*). There are two demonstrators now there, one of whom is a newly appointed man. The latter has been trained in the Government Experimental Farm, Shillong, for a year. The former did nothing practical, but we expect him to do something now. The Director of Agriculture advised me to ask for two more demonstrators and one Inspector and one Instructor for the Garo Hills. The demonstrators by themselves would not suffice, because in cultivation and in everything we are far above the experience of these demonstrators. We want one Inspector or one Instructor at least for the present.

As regards the general condition of the cultivation in the Hills it is very much appalling. Mr Cunningham, the Director of Public Instruction some years ago, wrote a note on education in the Garo Hills including the state of cultivation there. He said that the people in the Garo Hills cannot in future continue to live in the Hills on the *jhum* cultivation alone. They must have some sort of better and improved cultivation in the Garo Hills, otherwise they cannot expect to enjoy a better financial condition in future. (*A voice*:—Was it the Director of Public Instruction). Yes. (*Laughter*).

Now, Sir, I come to the market prices. We the Garos do not know the market prices. So we are being cheated by the middle-men who get the market prices by wire from Calcutta. So we want a Marketing Officer to advise the Garos on this thing. The present Marketing Officer has not been doing this so far as the Garo Hills are concerned.

As regards the variety of cultivation in the Garo Hills, no kind of new experiment has been demonstrated there. The rice cultivation sometimes fails there. So we should have some sorts of varieties in cultivation.

Now about the fruit garden in the Garo Hills, Sir, Mr. C. Allen, the then Commissioner, Assam Valley Districts, came there some years ago and I had a long talk with him on the subject. He said that plantations of orange trees can be carried on in a large scale in the Garo Hills. My reply was that for want of communication, as the orange gardens will be in the interior, it would not be a paying proposition. But Mr. Allen's reply was that the communications would be costly and would mean money. So we cannot carry on the orange plantation in a large scale.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member has exceeded his time.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: I am just finishing, Sir. The betel nut and cocoanut plantations in the Garo Hills are most important and we can do it on a large scale and for that purpose I would request the Government to give us a man of experience, namely an Inspector or Instructor. With these words I beg to resume my seat.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir: Just like Robert Bruce I tried seven times and I have got my chance after the seventh attempt.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I should remind the hon. member that the time limit will be reached at 12-40 a.m. So the hon. member will try to finish his speech as quickly as possible.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Last year I said "if there was any culture in the province of Assam, it was agriculture and agriculture alone" and I repeat the same this year also. As in last year this year too, the budget reveals no appreciable figure under the head "Agriculture" and what is given there, does not go towards the economic improvement of cultivators. As I have said elaborately in my budget speech that the provision mainly aims at maintaining the officers of the Department.

Sir, agriculture is the only Department that proposes to improve the condition of the cultivators from whom Government get their revenue. If this agriculture department is to improve, Government should see that money is spent in improving the economic condition of the Agriculturists. I find in the programme of the Muslim League Party in the Assam Legislative Assembly an item which runs thus:—"To make an agricultural survey of the province with a view to improvement of agricultural lands by constructing bunds, excavating *khals* and by other means and also with a view to crop planning cultivation of suitable money crops." It is a pleasure to us that the President of the Muslim League is holding the portfolio of agriculture and still more is the pleasure that the leader of the party is the Premier of the province. May I hope that the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture will take this item to action from the very next year.

I have said in my budget speech that in my subdivision—the subdivision of Sunamganj—the flood is a menace to *Buro* crops. Almost every year in the early part of Baisak, *i.e.*, in last part of April, floods come and damage the entire *Buro* cultivation. If the Agriculture Department come forward with some money to protect the crop, I believe, the economic condition of the people will be much improved. May I hope that the Ministry will make a beginning in my constituency?

Sir, demonstrators are the backbone of the Department, but I am sorry to say that the number of demonstrators that we have at present are very few. My constituency extends over three Thanas but there is not a single demonstrator though there is ample scope for demonstration there.

Last year the Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture gave us an assurance that Government would open an agricultural institute, but that assurance has not yet been materialised. May I draw the attention of the present Minister of Agriculture to this ?

Sir, an officer has recently been appointed for rural reconstruction. I do not know what he has done up till now. I found him touring in various parts of Surma Valley ; his motor car ran after the Minister of Agriculture visiting places where there was road facility and where they could go by motor. I think, this procedure should be abandoned. If any improvement is to be made the officers should certainly visit and take up the most backward areas. If they cannot do so, I do not think this department deserves any credit. Taking up already improved villages is nothing but carrying coal to New Castle.

Cattle is the main wealth of the cultivators. But I am sorry that Government have not paid adequate attention for the protection of cattle and for their improvement. Government are spending much money on cattle farms, but, as I have said in my budget speech, it is nothing but a huge waste of money. They could spend this money for the improvement of cattle of the agriculturists. Unless and until Government spend money for the improvement of village cattle, the condition of the agriculturists will not be improved. Only by farming and maintaining officers in the farms will not do any good to the farmers.

(Here the Hon'ble the Speaker having declared that the time limit has been reached, the member resumed his seat.)

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in discussing the motion I shall not reiterate the arguments which have been advanced by the hon. mover of the motion and other hon. members who have spoken on the subject. But I shall confine my arguments, Sir, mainly on the top-heavy character of the Department. It has been argued by hon. Mr. Hockenull that he also finds there is no life in the Department ; but still he says that this Department should be maintained. Sir, I do not quite follow the logic of his argument. If there are no activities, if there is no work for this Department then why should we maintain the top-heavy character of this Department.

Sir, we create commodity before necessity has arisen. Of course it may be said that sometimes commodity creates necessity. But my point is this: In that it becomes more a luxury than a real thing.

Now, Sir, we have seen that we have got the Director of Agriculture, the Deputy Directors of Agriculture, the Superintendent of Agriculture, the Inspectors of Agriculture and so on and so forth. But may I ask the Government whether they could give sufficient work for these gentlemen. I want to know the nature of the work done by the Deputy Directors of Agriculture and Superintendent of Agriculture. I shall tell you Sir, a story I have heard which is funny indeed. Demonstrators as you know are placed in outlying areas and the Deputy Director generally goes out on tour to see the work of the demonstrator. I have heard that one Deputy Director wanted to see the work of a demonstrator in the district of Cachar, where he was told by that demonstrator that through his exertion he has been able to grow good water melons. He was told that these were very nice water melons. The Deputy Director asked the demonstrator to show the water melons when he would be in the Railway station. Sir, it was a fact, and the demonstrator had to go to Brahmanbaria and purchase two or three water melons (*laughter*) and show them to the Deputy Director, who was pleased to see that kind of water melon being grown in that part of the

village. This is the character of supervision, Sir. That is why we say that before we have given them work, no sane Government should maintain this Department.

Now, Sir, with regard to the scheme for which funds have been placed in the Budget, I want to say a few words. What is the scheme that we find in the Budget ? It is the Deep Water paddy farm. I think, Sir, this does not belong to this province. It is being maintained from a grant from the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. So it is not a provincial concern.

Next, Sir, we find the scheme for agricultural market. What this is, we could not follow. What is agricultural marketing ? We are maintaining servants for that. I think this is more a central subject than of a provincial character. We know we cannot control the import and export of agricultural produce of this province. So I think this is not a provincial one.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member is exceeding his time limit. He should finish soon.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Very well, Sir. Then, Sir, with regard to the real scheme for agricultural improvement of this province, nothing has up till now been done. As I have already pointed out before the House, we have got in this province not less than 3 million acres of waste lands which can profitably be thrown open to the public for cultivation, but that has not been done.

With these few words, I commend this motion to the acceptance of the House.

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: এদেশে সহর বাজারের বাসিন্দা ছাড়া প্রায় সকলেই কৃষিজীবী। জমী চাষ করিয়া উৎপন্ন শস্য দ্বারাই তাহারা জীবন যাপন করে। এবং উহাই তাহাদের জীবিকা-নির্ভরতার একমাত্র সম্বল। বর্তমানে জমীর উর্বরতা শক্তি কম হওয়ায় এবং শস্যের মূল্য কম হওয়ায় কৃষকের অবস্থা খারাপ হইয়াছে এবং তাহারা অত্যন্ত গরিব হইয়া পড়িয়াছে। এই অবস্থা খারাপ হওয়ার জন্ত তাহারা জমিদার বা রাজার খাজনা দিতে পারে না—এবং নিজেদের অভাব পূর্ণ করিবার জন্য জমী বন্ধক রাখা এবং অগ্রিম শস্য মহাভনের নিকট বিক্রয় ও বন্ধক দিয়া টাকা আনে। এই টাকা শেষ করিতে না পারায় তাহাদের ঘর, বাড়ী, জমী, জমা সব নীলামে বিক্রি হইয়া যায়। এই কৃষকদের উন্নতির জন্তই গভর্ণমেন্ট কৃষি বিভাগ করিয়াছেন কিন্তু এই কৃষি বিভাগ থেকে আমাদের কৃষকদের কোন প্রকার সাহায্য হয় নাই এবং হইতেছে না। এই কৃষি বিভাগের উপরস্থ কর্মচারী বা বড় বড় বাবু দিগকে কখনও আমরা স্বপ্নেও দেখি না। যে দুই একজন Demonstrator আছেন তাহারা সুবিধা বুঝিয়া হস্ত সহরে বা বাজারে বা বড় কেন্দ্রে কোন আরামের স্থানে থাকেন। তাহারা তাহাদের খাতিরের বা ভালবাসার লোকের সঙ্গে আলাপ বা অত্যাচার প্রকার কার্যে ব্যস্ত থাকিবার শুধু কাগজ কলমে কাজ দেখাইয়া আসান্তে মাহিনা লইয়া থাকে। এই Demonstrator দের কার্য দেখিবার জন্ত তাহারা আছেন তাহারা বৎসরের মধ্যে ১২ বার ধুমকেতু রূপে উপস্থিত হন। তাহারা মফঃস্বলে আসিলে মটরে আসেন এবং যে রাস্তায় মটর চলে সেই রাস্তায় চলিয়া যান আমার মনে হয় পল্লিবাসী কৃষকের অবস্থা দেখিতে বা তাহাদের সাহায্য করিতে তাহারা যান না—তাহারা যান গোটা মাহিনার চাকরী বজায় রাখিতে এবং নিজের allowance

লাভ করিতে কাজেই পল্লিবাসী উক্ত ধরনের কৃষি বিষয় সম্বন্ধে ভাবিত পারে না। পল্লিতে যেখানে রাস্তা নাই,—যেখানে গাড়ী চলে না, সেখানে এই কর্মচারীরা যান না; শুধু allowance এর জন্যই তারা মফঃস্বলে যান। কাজেই এইসে বিভাগ আছে বর্তমান ইহার দ্বারা আমাদের কোন উপকার হইতেছে না। শুধু কতিপয় শিক্ষিত বাবুদের ভূমি পূজা-নামে গভর্ণমেন্টের কতক টাকা অর্জন করিতে হইতেছে। কাজেই, এই বিভাগের কার্য-কলাপ—পরিবর্তন—ও পরিবর্তন কার্য গভর্ণমেন্ট হইতে অপৌর্ণে তাঁক দৃষ্টি নিষ্ক্ষেপ করতঃ সূচনামাত্রই না করিলে আমাদের কোন উপকার হইবে না। যে কৃষক দেশের নেরদণ্ড দেশের মূল জাতি, তাহাদের দ্বারা বাবুদের কাণ্ডগোল, জমিদারের জমিদারী বা বড় লোকের বাহাদুরী, বাহারা এই কৃষি কার্য দ্বারা জমিদার শাসনের আহার্য জিনিষ উৎপন্ন করিতেছে বাহারা রাজার সিংহাসন কাঁধে করিয়া বহন করিতেছে,— তাহারা আজ দীন, হীন, গিরন, পাথের ভিখারী—সেই কৃষকের অবস্থা পুনরায় যদি ভাল করিবার সুব্যবস্থা করা না হয় তাহা হইলে বোধ হয় দেশের অবস্থা পুনরায় আরও খারাপ ছাড়া ভালর দিকে বাইতে পারে না। গভর্ণমেন্ট বর্তমানে যে ভাবে কৃষি বিভাগ পরিচালনা করিতেছেন উহা একেবারে পরিবর্তন করা দরকার। বেঙ্গল কেন্দ্রে ৩৭ টা গ্রাম মিলাইয়া—সেখানকার কৃষকদের মধ্যে হইতে উপযুক্ত লোককে Demonstrator নিযুক্ত করা দরকার এবং তাহাদের শিক্ষা দিয়া তাহাদের দ্বারা এই স্থানে কোম্পান কোম্পান কোন Season এ কি কি শস্য বোনা দরকার এবং কি কি বীজ সেখানে বুনিলে কি ভাবে শস্য উৎপন্ন হইতে পারে তাহার ব্যবস্থা এবং কোন কোন জায়গায় জল আবদ্ধ হইয়া থাকে এবং কি প্রকারে সেই জল বাহির করা যায় তাহার ব্যবস্থা করা এবং যে যে জায়গায় জলের দরকার সেখানে জল আনিবার ব্যবস্থা করা এবং ভূমিকম্পে যে সমস্ত জমি নষ্ট হইয়াছে—উচু নীচু হইয়াছে—সেই সমস্ত সমান করা এবং সেই জমির উর্বরতা শক্তি বৃদ্ধি করা এবং অতিরিক্ত বৃষ্টি বা অনাবৃষ্টিতে ক্ষতিতে শস্য নষ্ট হইতে না পারে তাহার উপায় করা এবং কচুরী পানা ধ্বংস করার ব্যবস্থা করা দরকার। পল্লীর কৃষকদের কাঁচা শস্যাদি উপযুক্ত মূল্যে বিক্রয় করিতে পারে, গরুগুলি বাঁচিতে পারে, কর্ণ বস্ত্রের অভাব না হয় এই সমস্ত বিষয়ে কৃষকদের শিক্ষা দেওয়া সাহায্য করা উচিত। বাহিরের বড় বড় বাবুদের পল্লীর কৃষকদের দুঃখ দূরবস্থা দূর করিবার জন্য রাখা মানে কৃষকদের শোষণ করিয়া তাহাদের পোষন করার ব্যবস্থা বর্তমানে করা হইয়াছে। কাজেই এই বিভাগের Deputy Director ইত্যাদি কতিপয় বাবুর পদ উঠাইয়া দিয়া ঐ টাকা দ্বারা এবং গভর্ণমেন্ট হইতে আরও টাকা খরচে আরও বেশী পরিমাণ Demonstrator নিযুক্ত ক্রমে কার্যের সুবিধার জন্য এক নীতির পরিবর্তন করার বিশেষ দরকার। বাহাতে কৃষকদের মধ্যে উপযুক্ত লোক কৃষি সম্বন্ধে শিক্ষা পায় তাহার জন্য এই বিভাগের উপযুক্ত লোক দিয়া কেন্দ্রে ২ শিক্ষা দেওয়া উচিত এবং গভর্ণমেন্টের এই শিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা করা নিতান্ত দরকার। এই বাবুদের দ্বারা কৃষকদের কোন উপকারই হইবে না। তাঁরা কিছুই দেখেন না কেবল স্ট্রের টুপি মফঃস্বল করেন। এই বাবুদের একজনের কথা আমি বলিবেছি। বহু

সাপ্ত মাসের পর এবার আসান তেনীর Deputy Director আমাদের অঞ্চলে গিয়াছিলেন। আমাদের জ্ঞান হইয়াছিল এবং আমিও গিয়াছিলাম। কৃষকেরা বেলা ১২ টা পর্যন্ত গাল বায়। এদিকে সেই বাবু কি নাহেব তাঁহার বাগানের নিদৃষ্ট সময় না জাণ-টাই—তিনি সেখানে ১০ টার সময় উপস্থিত হন। তখন তপস্ব মকলকে—উপস্থিত না দেখিয়া তিনি রাগিয়াই অস্থির এবং লোক দিগের প্রতি অনারন অভ্যাস রাখা তৎপোরণ কথিত আরম্ভ করিলেন। কিছুক্ষণ পর বহুলোক তপস্ব উপস্থিত হইল, ঐ সময়ের মধ্যে মৌনভী, ডাক্তার, নাট্যকার, জোড়ার ইত্যাদি উপযুক্ত ও শিক্ষিত বহু লোক থাক সঙ্কেত শুধু “তুম” “তোমর” “তোমাদের” ইত্যাদি ছাড়া তিনি কাহারও সহিত “আপনি” “আপনার” বলিয়া সম্বোধন পর্যন্তও করেন নাই। (shame, shame)। কথিত স্বর্গের প্রথম শোপান শিলং শৈলমঞ্চ বাসী উক্ত—শিক্ষিত ভদ্র লোকের মধ্যেও যে এত অভদ্রতা পূর্ণ অশিক্ষিত চাষার মত ব্যবহার থাকিতে পারে সেটা আমি ভাবিতেই পারি নাই। ইহাতে আমার মনে হইল যে কেবল যে অশিক্ষিত লোকেই ভদ্রতা জানেন তাহা নয় শিক্ষিত লোকের মধ্যেও এমন অভদ্র লোক আছেন। সেইজন্য আমি বলি যে এইসব বাবুদের দ্বারা কৃষকদের কোন উপকার হইবে না। কৃষকদের মধ্যে হইতে উপযুক্ত লোক ক ও শিক্ষা দিয়া উপযুক্ত করিয়া কেন্দ্রে ২ তাহাদের শিক্ষার কৃষি সম্বন্ধে কৃষি বিভাগে—নিযুক্ত করা দরকার। বড় লোকের দরকার নাই।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: আপনার সময় শেষ হয়ে আসছে।

Maulavi MATIUR RAHMAN MIA: মোহলেম লীগের প্রেসিডেন্ট আমাদের বর্তমান মাননীয় কৃষি মন্ত্রী মহোদয় তিন বৎসর লীগের কার্যে বিভিন্ন স্থানে ভ্রমণ করিয়া পল্লীর কৃষকের অসংখ্য দুঃখ প্রত্যক্ষ করিয়া আনিয়াছেন। আমি আশা করি তিনি এই বিষয়ে অগৌণে তাঁহার তৎক্ষণ দৃষ্টি নিষ্ক্ষেপ করতঃ এই সমস্যার সমাধান করিবেন।

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: May I know up to what time this demand will continue?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: As we have got sometime from the question hour I propose to continue up to 1 o'clock so far as this demand is concerned.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Very well.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a fact that most people are not getting as much service from the agricultural department as they should have got. Complaints have been received against the agricultural department for its failure to acquaint the masses in the advanced methods of agriculture. Sir, we have no agricultural school or college in this province. Government are remaining satisfied with granting only a number of stipends to the students for agricultural education, and making provision for two Agricultural Inspectors to give agricultural training to the middle class educated unemployed youths of the province. The arrangement is absolutely inadequate to cope with the situation. I think, Sir, unless a sort of general education can be imparted to the whole peasantry,

no appreciable advancement is possible to be achieved by this department within a reasonable period of time. So I suggest that a sort of general agricultural course should be introduced in the primary and the middle schools of the province. Sir, agricultural course is said to have been taught in the primary schools in France, Germany, Sweden, Norway and many other European countries. I think, Sir, there is no reason why it should not be possible and useful, even as an experiment, to introduce agricultural course in our primary and middle schools also. If agricultural subjects are taught in our schools, I think, much of the vast wastage in the primary and the middle schools can perhaps be avoided and it may go to solve the unemployment question also to a certain degree. Complaints have been levelled against the agricultural farms and demonstration. Agricultural farms have been a failure in Assam because they are always being run at a loss, and unless Government is able to run them, at-least their commercial side at a profit these farms will have no attraction for the ordinary cultivators. So I urge upon the Government to see how to make it possible for these farms to be run at a profit so as to be able to inspire confidence of the ordinary ryots. The real problem is to increase the yield with the minimum of cost leaving a fair margin for the producer and not the method of growing 13 ft. long jute plant or 3 ft. long cucumber.

As regards demonstration, Sir, we do not know where, when and how these demonstrations are held. I think, there should be frequent demonstrations in every locality in the mufusil areas. There should also be public meetings held by the Demonstrators, and the Agricultural Inspectors specially in the interior areas for propaganda purposes. I should also suggest that agricultural associations be formed at-least one in every subdivision. So that with the help and co-operation of these associations, the demonstrators and inspectors are expected to be able to carry to the villagers the up-to-date informations about the better methods of agriculture. As regards the results of research and experiments, I should like to suggest that Government should publish bulletins containing these results and other suitable informations about agriculture in vernacular and distribute them among the public if not free of charge, at a nominal price to cover the cost of printing only.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member will try to finish now.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Yes, Sir, I am finishing. At present some demonstrations are said to have been held at times of festivals. I don't know how these demonstrations can be taken advantage of by the people at the time of festivals. The people go to festivals to enjoy and they generally give no serious attention to the demonstrations at such a time. Instead of this demonstrations should be held in villages or village fields with full notices to the public given previously. With these observations, Sir, I support the motion.

Srijut LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: Sir, I tabled a cut motion which comes under No.12. I think this motion can conveniently be discussed with the present motion.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I take this opportunity to ventilate one of the grievances of the thousands of men and women labourers working in the tea gardens of Assam.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: On a point of order, Sir. Is the speech of the hon. member relevant to the present motion?

Srijut LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: Yes, Sir. My motion is under the head Supervision—Agriculture. Extreme poverty and helplessness of these thousands of people compelled them to cast their lot with the handful of persons representing the capitalists and as such is only fit and proper for the hon. members of this House to do a bare act of humanity to relieve their grievances. Sir, I have the painful duty to say that the wages given to these people are far from satisfactory. The long catalogue of reported strikes that the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture gave a day or two ago in answer to the question of my hon. friend Mr. Chanda lends support to my view, and the hon. members will be struck with horror when they will learn that these labourers are deprived of the little earning that they make by working at the tea gardens. Sir, plucking of tea leaves is one of the occupations in which the women labourers are engaged in the tea gardens. They bring in their daily collection of leaves to the office for weighing, but the weighing instrument, I submit, Sir, is not intelligible to men of average intelligence—not to speak of these poor labourers. My information is that Saltus Scale or spring balance is used for weighing the leaves and the hand pointing at a particular English figure in the dial indicates the weight of the thing weighed. It generally happens that a little tightening of the screw may affect the correct weight, i.e., the hand may be made to indicate a figure in the dial lower than the actual weight-figure of the thing weighed and to suit, shall I say, of the requirement of the employee or his servant.

Sir, the poor labourers finding their daily collections weighed in that unintelligible manner complain to their masters but their complaints go unheeded. Sir, exasperated by the systematic process of exploitation and exasperated also by the wrongs unredressed, out came in last July, hundreds of coolie women from a tea garden named Barbari which is situated within a mile or two of Dibrugarh Court and Deputy Commissioner's Bungalow.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: All these points will come under discussion of the Grant—"Industries".

Srijut LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: I think, Sir the Department of Industry is in charge of Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: But tea is both agriculture and industry. The hon. member should try to finish. The Hon'ble Minister will have to reply.

Srijut LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: I will try to finish Sir. As I was saying Sir, those coolie women came out from the garden with their basket-load of tea leaves and with two of those unintelligible weighing instruments seeing the unused sight I with some of my friends went there to see what was the matter. The Darojo was of course there. One of the women begged of the Darojo to weigh a basket-load of leaves on those instruments. The Darojo weighed in each of the two instruments and members will be surprised to learn that one scale indicated the weight as 12 lb. and the other 15 lb. The poor woman asserted that the weight would be much more and prayed to the Darojo to weigh in an ordinary *palla* and on such weighing the leaves weighed 18 lb.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Some bricks must have been put on it.

Srijut LAKHESVAR BOROOAH: Sir, I would leave to the hon. members of the House to imagine how the thousands of helpless labourers mostly women, are being cheated in the numerous tea gardens of Assam.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. The Hon'ble Chief Minister will speak now.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of Government I would like to reply about the shortness of time for the cut motions in spite of the assurance given in the last budget session, and why we were compelled to call this session as early as the 15th February and why we have been compelled to utilise the intervening period between the Muharram and the Idauzzuha holidays for it. Sir, Government thought that the Local Board election would be postponed and to that effect a Bill was placed before this House in December last but a majority of members indicated that they would not like a postponement; the Bill was withdrawn. The Government have been compelled under the Act in force to hold the Local Board election between the 19th and the 29th March, and as many of the hon. members of this House will stand as candidates for election and would like to have time for canvassing the Session had to be advanced. There are two days' holidays on account of Doljatra in the middle of March and 5 days for Moslems from the 9th March to 13th and from 11th to 13th of March for Mohurram. So we have been compelled to call the session immediately after the Idudzuha holidays on the 12th and 13th February and break off before the Mohurram holidays and no body is more sorry than myself that the hon. members have been inconvenienced by the shortness of time which should have been allowed for discussion of cut motions. You, Sir, took up the cause of the non-officials on the file and after the explanation I gave, you were pleased to agree that Government have done the best that could be done under the circumstances. My hon. friend has got a very keen memory, and related to the House about my bringing off a surprise by producing a pair of giant pineapples last Budget Session. He will be surprised to learn that those pineapples were suffering from heart rot and nobody could taste even a slice of it.....

A Voice :—Was it thrown away?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, it had to be thrown away.

One hon member from the bench opposite spoke about doing away with the Fruit Garden in Shillong. For the edification of the House, I may inform them that the said Farm was started with a view to naturalising English fruits, or naturalisation of fruits growing in cold climates to the hills in Assam, and it has served its purpose to a great extent, and hon. members must have noticed the amount of fruits such as green oranges, peaches, pears, apples and plums that are available in Shillong.

A Voice :—Are these available now?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, in the summer season.

I have a scheme of introducing a cheap cottage industry for canning these fruits. It may be perhaps news to my hon. friends that a Missionary Society with headquarters at Lucknow annually comes to Shillong with a very small machinery costing about Rs.2,000; they can the fruit and sell it in the open market; they call it pure food products. I have gone very thoroughly into this matter, and it is my intention to introduce this cottage industry of canning fruit in the province. Therefore the necessity for this garden is obvious, and this Fruit Garden is bound to issue thousands of grafts to people outside the hills, as well as to the people of Haflong, Lushai Hills and the Garo Hills, where they can be planted.

A Voice :—Are they sold?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, they are supplied free.

This brings me to the story of water melons related by my hon. friend Khan Sahib Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri. Of course this is a story and a lot of imagination has crept in, but I can tell him—nay I can challenge him—that the Agriculture Department did make an experiment in growing water melons in the sand-laden soil of Cachar immediately after the disastrous floods of 19 9 when the soil of that place was so covered with sand—that nothing else could be grown on it. My hon. friends from Cachar will bear me out in this. I have myself seen these water melons and I had the opportunity of presenting some to the then Governor to show what the Agricultural Department was doing.

Maulavi Muhammad AMJAD ALI: On a point of information, Sir. Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma has thrown out a suggestion that a sugar farm may be started. The hon. member ought to have brought out this question before.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I have called up on the Hon'ble Minister to reply.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, from the trend of criticisms made by the hon. mover of the motion and by some other speakers like Maulavi Matior Rahman, Srijut Kameswar Das and others, it was made to appear that the Department was not doing much useful service to the public. A criticism has also been made that it is a top-heavy Department and that it does not contribute towards the agricultural progress of the country. In so far as this criticism indicates a protest against the slowness of progress of this Department I have every sympathy with the criticism, but I wish hon. members to realise that in a country like ours where the cultivators are steeped in ignorance any progress in agriculture must naturally be slow process and, Sir, one of the main difficulties that we have to contend with is the difficulty of the paucity of the staff, particularly in the lower grade. There is no lack of enthusiasm or zeal on the part of the staff to improve agricultural methods, but we are handicapped for want of officers, particularly field-workers and demonstrators. There is a great demand for demonstrators from various parts of the province. That shows the growing appreciation of the service that is being rendered by the demonstrators. If we have more demonstrators naturally we must have more officers to supervise and to impart technical instruction.....

Mr. BAIDYA NATH MOOKERJEE: If we have 20 masters we have one head master, but if we have 40 masters we shall require two headmasters.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I find that my hon. friends do not dispute the fact that we require more demonstrators, but if we have more demonstrators we must have more officers to supervise their work. They do not dispute that we must have more Inspectors. As to the Deputy Directors, that question is being decided by the Retrenchment Committee, and the members will have the opportunity of discussing whether the Deputy Directors that we have are sufficient for our province's requirements, and particularly in view of the development that we wish to have in this Department in the near future.

With regard to the criticism that the Department is not doing much for the agricultural progress of the country, there is no time to deal with the question at length, but I would ask hon. members that if they go carefully through the Reports of the Agriculture Department they will find the work that is being done. Our demonstrators are giving demonstration of improved variety of paddy, potato, sugarcane and introduction of improved implements. The Department is concerned with improving breed of cattle,

supply of seeds and experiment and research. The Department is doing its best with the resources at its disposal.

My hon. friend Mr. Aditya said that the demonstrators worked without a programme. They do work with a definite programme. Their main duty is to demonstrate about different varieties of potatoes, paddy and sugarcane to the cultivators. They also try to introduce new crops like ground-nuts and new agricultural implements. The most successful demonstration given by the Department is the introduction of a pump for *buru* cultivation. That experiment was first made in 1934 at Habiganj. Just at present there are 17 pumps working throughout the province, but for want of funds we have not been able to supply more. Recently we have purchased 3 more pumps. My hon. friend Srijut Krishna Nath Sarma referred to another matter. That is the work of experiment and research and it is being carried on in Jorhat farms and in Karimganj farm and also I think in Titabar farm.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: I am not speaking of that. I am speaking of the insect pests, the insects that kill the crop.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: There is a Micological Assistant in the Jorhat farm who is investigating into these matters and the result of his experiment is carried to the masses through the demonstrators.

Mr. BAIDYA NATH MOOKERJEE: On a point of information, Sir, has that officer ever seen any of the farms in the Surma Valley?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, Sir, many times.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Our Live Stock Department is doing, I think, very valuable service for the improvement of the breed of cattle in the rural areas. My hon. friend Mr. Ashrafuddin Chaudhury thinks that the agricultural farms are giving no benefit to the people in rural areas. That they are located near towns. We have got several groups of bulls kept in the villages under the charge of stock men for the improvement of the breed of cattle and the work of our Live Stock Department was complimented by the Live Stock Conference at Simla who gave credit to the Assam Government and the Assam Live Stock Department for the useful work that they have been doing in this connection.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I be permitted to let the Hon'ble Minister know that generally these bulls are kept in the houses of Khan Bahadurs and Rai Bahadurs?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: These bulls are given to the charge of those who are willing to maintain them and let them for public use.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: But there is a grant from the Government.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Reference had been made to the starting of Agricultural Institute for which an assurance has been given by my predecessor. I may mention that my predecessor has taken a good deal of interest in this matter. And because

plans could not be prepared in time the scheme could not be included in last year's budget. The plan is in course of preparation and, if funds permit, we may find it possible to make provision for an Agricultural Institute on a small scale in this province.

My hon. friend Mr. Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury referred to the survey of agricultural lands in the province, with a view to their improvements. It has been included in the programme of the Moslem League. My hon. friend Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya, when he made his budget speech, particularly referred to his agricultural survey of the province, to find out whether lands can be improved either by excavating canals or by constructing bunds. I intend to undertake a survey of the possibilities of the improvement of agricultural land throughout the province which can be done either by constructing embankments or by small irrigation work.

Srijut DEBESWAR SARMAH: And to bring in more immigrants?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Why do you grudge that?

Maulavi Muhammad MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: What is the harm?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: About fodder, Sir, I think our agricultural demonstrators and those who are the stock-men are trying to introduce Guinea grass and Napier grass and the cultivation of those fodder plantations are even very much encouraged by our demonstrators and stock-men in different localities.

Babu HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: May I know in what parts these fodder crops are encouraged?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: By the supply of grass roots for plantation; the demonstrators show the utility of this fodder to the villagers.

Babu HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Where?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: There are various places where it is being done.

Babu HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Will you mention one for instance?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I am told that there are about 19 places where the fodder growing had been started last year. I cannot give the names of places off hand.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I know whether my cry will be taken into consideration for the establishment of a sugarcane farm particularly in Habiganj subdivision?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister will try to reply only to the points raised in the debate. He may not take note of these interruptions.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Constant interruptions are coming in, and I am trying to satisfy every one.

Sir, I can say this much that with the limited resources at our disposal our department is doing all that it can under the circumstances. With regard to the improvement of agriculture there is no difference of opinion between the Congress programme and the League programme or the programme of any political party in India for the matter of that.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: May I know if the League programme is accepted by the Ministry?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: If it will satisfy my hon. friends, I can say that so far as the Agricultural Department is concerned I am prepared to adopt the Wardha programme and in this matter there is no difference of opinion. And I hope I will have the hearty co-operation of my friends in our attempts to further the well-being of the agriculturists, and in carrying out this programme.

The motion of Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya that the provision of Rs.22,726 under Grant No. 19, Major head—40.—Agriculture, Minor head—A.—Direction, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Clerks, at page 147 of the budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.5,93,500 do stand reduced by Rs. 100 was then put to the House and lost.

The original motion that a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,93,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment

The Assembly then adjourned for lunch till 2-10. p.m.

After adjournment

The Assembly re-assembled after lunch at 2 10 p.m. with the Deputy Speaker in the Chair.

GRANT NO. 22

(43.—INDUSTRIES)

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,31,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the "Industries Department."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved before the House is—that a sum not exceeding Rs.2,31,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the "Industries Department".

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: I beg to move, Sir, that the provision of Rs.28,176 under Grant No. 22, Major head—43.—Industries, Minor head—A.—Director of Industries, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Clerks, at page 165 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.2,31,000 do stand reduced by Rs. 100. By this motion, Sir, I want to criticise the policy of the Department.

Sir, in every country the policy of *laissez faire* in the matter of industrial advancement has been abandoned. In Europe we find that a tremendous fillip has been given to industries, especially in those countries where democracies have been replaced by dictatorships, during the last decade. Everywhere we find that no longer the sacred theory of the sanctity of contract is regarded as such in the field of industry. So long the move of the world was from status to contract, but now-a-days we find that the move is from contract to status. (One hon. member: question) Those who shut up their eyes, do not see anything.

In our country, Sir, what is the Government doing to improve our industrial resources? Speaking of Assam I should submit that industrially it is most backward. This Government has up till now done nothing by way of giving financial and other assistance to the industries so as to help them in their regeneration. There are two technical schools, Sir, in this province

whose object is to give training in carpentry, mechanical engineering, etc. But what do we find with regard to the students who come out of those schools? They are rotting for want of employment. The teaching which they receive in these industrial schools cannot be used in practical life, because they have not acquired that business side of the practical industries to which they are trained. Some of the boys of the Technical Schools at Jorhat and Sylhet started some small industries, and we know that most of them had to wound up their concerns, because they could not manage them as tradesmen should do. I think our industrial schools should be converted more into factories than theoretical classes for giving book education. The industrial schools should be run on business lines so that they may not put pressure on the Government finances, and may set an example of how the industrial schools can be self-supporting while at the same time they afford facilities for practical training in the art of business to the boys who get their lessons there.

This leads us, Sir, to the question of industrial finance. The other day I read in the newspaper that the Director of Industries had remarked that capital is shy in this province. Well, Sir, Indian capital is proverbially shy. The Industrial Commission, the Banking Enquiry Committees and all other commissions have universally advocated the establishment of industrial banks in every province. These industrial banks require some assistance from the Government. Government could either guarantee an interest to the share-holders or give a guarantee of interest to the debenture holders. These or other guarantees, if forthcoming from the Government, would necessarily attract the investors to deposit money in such banks. Sir, in some other provinces some schemes on these lines are already on foot, but in Assam nothing has been done for the development of industrial banks. Now it is high time, Sir, that such banks were started in this province. If Government wants to raise a loan, they can easily do so for crores of rupees in half a minute (*laughter*). Yes, Sir, I say even less than half a minute, the subscription list is closed. Government can raise the capital and the interest they will have to pay will not exceed more than 3 or 3½ per cent. Sir, the delay and hesitation that this Government is making will perhaps see that the market is turned in an unfavourable manner. Because there is already some tendency of interest going higher up, and if our Government make further delay in the matter, I am afraid they shall have to pay higher interest in order to raise loans to find out necessary working capital for the bank. Sir, we know in Germany the banks take care of the needs of industries from the very beginning and they help them through thick and thin. But in India the activities of banks are under the Amended Companies' Act purely confined to banking. They cannot encourage directly any trade or commerce. So for the purpose of financing our trade and industry it is all the more necessary that an industrial bank should be floated in no time. We know that in Japan the industrial bank was floated in 1902 and since then there has been tremendous progress of Japan in the domain of industry. In France the *Benque d' Affairs* is financing the industries of that country. So also the case with other countries in Europe and Asia where they have got some industrial advancement. It is the State in many countries who are financing the bank and who are always ready to help the infant industries of those countries.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member is exceeding his time limit.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: So, Sir, I am encroaching upon the time of other members. With these words, I strongly urge upon the Government for the starting of an industrial bank in this province.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the provision of Rs.28,176 under Grant No. 22, Major head—43.—Industries, Minor head—A.—Director of Industries, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Clerks, at page 165 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.2,31,000 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

I find there are other cut motions standing in the names of some other hon. members. These motions are almost similar though not identical. Therefore, I think it would be advisable to allow other hon. members also to speak on this cut motion which relates to the general industrial policy of Government.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMAH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is estimated that there are over 4 lakhs of handlooms in Assam in which our village people produce about 22½ million yards of cloths. Due to the introduction of cheap mill yarn, these cloths, about three-fourth of them, are of mill yarn. The question is to replace mill yarn by hand spun yarn in which case the entire profit will go to the spinner and weaver. Mr. V. G. Desai after visiting Assam in 1934 during Gandhiji's visit to Assam wrote as follows—under heading "Glory of Assam"—"Assam appears to have fully realised Gandhiji's ideal throughout the ages and this enviable state of things has continued practically up to the present day. Spinning and weaving are still regarded as the usual thing in an Assamese household". Instead of spending Rs.33,510 for weaving parties a substantial sum say Rs.10,000 a year may be utilised in stocking cotton in some village centres. The cotton will be sold on cash to villagers and the village worker will be paid a bounty of annas 2 per yard of production. During 1926, I could manage to produce about 30 thousand yards of good *khadi* in Nowgong to prepare the huge Congress Pandel simply by supplying cotton to spinners. Mahatmaji was so much pleased that he said that the Congress session had surpassed in this matter all other previous sessions. I have been working two centres at Jorhat where 100 to 200 yards are being produced per month. Last year the Chief Minister assured me that he is ready to help such cottage industries provided there are workers to do so. This is the best way of reviving one of the best cottage industries of our province. I remind our Chief Minister of his assurance and expect that he will now agree to allot some money for this purpose. It is said that fly shuttle looms produce more cloth but this theory though appears sound elsewhere is not so in our province for the following reasons:—(1) it is costly, (2) not suitable for women and (3) weaving of mill spun yarn in hand looms give little margin of profit.

With these few words I draw the attention of the Government to encourage the handloom industry in the way I have suggested.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Sir, I have an identical motion in my name, namely, motion No. 2 and I want to make a few observations on this subject.

Important as it is the establishment of industrial banks, the question of developing small industries on their manufacturing side so far as manufactured goods are concerned seems to me to be no less important. Sir, in a province like Assam with its vast resources it may not be altogether impossible to check however slowly for the present, the flow of manufactured articles from outside. If to-day the world peace is disturbed, it is due to the existence of countries like India and China which are the standing temptations to the manufacturing countries, and Assam being an integral part of India, it is but just that it should try to be as self-sufficient as it is possible for it to be. I therefore urge upon the Government that they should take

up the problem of helping the small industries of the province in right earnest. I appreciate that the Department is doing some work in the way of manufacturing soap. They are giving training to a number of educated youths to manufacture soap. But having given this necessary training, I think, they should also see that they are established in that business. I suggest that where necessary Government should liberally give industrial loans to the educated youths who are willing to start industries. I further suggest that Government should even subsidise deserving small industries where necessary and that there should be greater provision for industrial loans. If Assam is to make sufficient progress in the matter of industrial development, as in agriculture, there should be general education in the matter of industries also and to have a general industrial education in the country, a general course of industry is to be introduced in the secondary schools in Assam. I, therefore, suggest that Government would examine this problem with a view to see the feasibility of introducing an industrial course in the high schools.

One more thing I would like to suggest is that those youths who are given training in industrial matters should also be given sufficient facility for the advantage and access to the results of the researches which are being conducted under the control and guidance of the department.

Another suggestion I should like to make is that Government should make it a point to order for their requirements from the small industrial concerns started by educated young men of this country and should not be always fastidious about the quality of the produce. I think it is by following a liberal policy as suggested that the Government can help small industries the growth of industrial development.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member is exceeding his time limit.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: I would urge one thing more and I finish. Hence forward the Government should try to give the general education an industrial bias and try to give liberal or increased grants to those institutions the main aims of which are to create a spirit of self-help and industry.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this cut motion is to criticise the general working policy of the Department, *i.e.*, the Industries Department, and not directly the Government.

Sir, I think all the plains constituencies at any rate are having some share or some smell of Industry. But in the Hill districts, like my constituency, there is nothing of the kind in the way of industry. For example, in the Garo Hills there is no kind of industry at all. We used to make our own clothes at home some years back, but for some reasons—I think, good reasons—these home industries have been put to an end, because the plains men who brought clothes to our markets near by our district, used to distribute small pieces of clothes free, so that people might wear these clothes coming from outside the district, which they found cheaper. They thus gradually gave up their home industry. This shows that the Industries Department did not take care how to preserve home industries there. There was a weaving institution at Tura. That institution was given as a token for the good services rendered by the 69th and 84th Companies of the Garo Labour Corps. Then the Deputy Commissioner said that he is deadly against industry (*laughter*). He did not, therefore, want any kind of Industry amongst the Garos. (*Voice from the Congress Bench*—Who is the Deputy Commissioner?) If I am pressed, I may give out the name. He is Mr. G. D. Walker. He said that he is deadly against industry in the Garo Hills, and for that reason, that institution was abolished. That has been a great loss to us, because late Sir Beatson Bell made a

promise expressing something like this. He said—"I do realise that it will cost money to improve industrial education and for all other improvements in the Garo Hills. But, I do not grudge the money because the Garos played so well in the Great War". That was the promise and we were getting a sum of Rs.7,500 as a recurring grant annually including stipends and the Weaving Master's pay, the pay of the Chaukidar for the upkeep of the building and so on. Now, Sir, we are not given anything in exchange for that institution. I asked the Hon'ble Minister in charge, in my last Budget speech that this may be looked into and that that institution may be reopened at Tura for the Garos. As a result of having that institution there are weaving machines in every home in Tura town. There were weaving courses and what little the people of Tura had learnt during that short period of the existence of the institution have now been forgotten by them. I do not want to spend the valuable time of this House and would request the present Government to go into this matter, so that, if possible, the institution may again be established, so that we may have benefit of this industry. There are a good deal of raw materials in the Garo Hills and I hope Government will try to introduce the cotton spinning. Cotton is being only the agricultural produce which go out from the Garo Hills and we should see that this can be of some benefit to the people of the Garo Hills.

Sir, as regards carpentry and village industry, I should say that the Garos are very apt or rather very much fond of becoming carpenters. Materials are available in the Garo Hills because as you know, Sir, Garo Hills is a forest country and have got many valuable timber trees. All the raw materials are quite easily available in any part of the district and so this carpentry industry should be introduced. The following places or localities are suitable for the purpose on the southern slopes of the district, i.e., in the villages Bagmara, Dalu, etc.; on the northern slopes Bajingdoba, Karkutta, Rongjang, and Royrangiri, etc., are also very promising. Sir, I need not take up much time of the hon. House. I resume my seat.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Sir, I want a ruling from the Chair that when the Deputy Speaker is on the Chair whether he should be called Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir or Mr. Speaker, Sir. (*Laughter.*)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I should like to be addressed as Mr. Deputy Speaker so as not to confuse myself with the Hon'ble Speaker (*Loud laughter.*)

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: When I have got the ruling from the Chair, I address as Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I think, there is no use crying over the matter or criticising the policy of the Government particularly with regard to the industrial development of the province. Last year, we had discussed this subject threadbare and gave many suggestions but I would ask the hon. House to tell me whether any of the suggestions has been looked into and given effect to. (*A voice:—none.*) I think, this Government have no policy or programme with regard to the industrial development of the province. This is most probably due to their apathy and weakness in making a programme and following it. Sir, last time, if I remember aright, many hon. members of this House suggested to Government for looking into the possibilities of establishing sugarcane factories within the province but we have not heard anything whether Government have made any inquiry as to the possibilities or

otherwise of starting sugarcane factories. In other provinces and foreign countries, we find that Government see the necessity of establishing and maintaining factories for the benefit of their provinces and the countries. They generally pay a subsidy for that industry or purchase shares so that an industry may be established, within the country or the province as the case may be, but what do we see here Sir? Government is very callous about it. Sir, I do not know whether Government have taken any statistics whether sugar or *gur* that is produced within the province are sufficient to supply the demands of the people of this province. So far as my knowledge goes, *gur* and sugar are being indented from the neighbouring provinces to this province of Assam.

Then, Sir, another point to which I want to draw the attention of the Government is that in the budget we find that there are Jute Inspectors and demonstrators for village propaganda work but I do not know what is their business and what they do. I would ask the Hon'ble Chief Minister to go to the country side and enquire of the people whether they have either seen these inspectors or Demonstrators. I say, Sir, that nothing can be expected from a Government which has no programme and which is so weak that it passes watchful days and wakeful nights in canvassing support for their very existence. With these few words, Sir, I support the motion.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMAH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had a motion with regard to giving of grants-in-aid to some of the industrial schools of this province and I think it will be quite in the fitness of things to discuss the matter in connection with the motion moved by my hon. friend. Now, Sir, from the budget itself we find that there is a provision of Rs.170 as contribution to the many industrial schools of the province. Last year we had a list of these industrial schools placed on our table by the Hon'ble Minister. In spite of our repeated requests from this side as well as from the other side of the House to make some grants-in-aid to some such rural institutions so that they may grow and thrive, we find that there has been a provision of only a paltry sum of Rs.170. In my district alone there has been started one such industrial school by the Local Board and it is at the cost and sacrifice of certain primary schools under the Board. It is really very painful to remark that Government have been very apathetic all throughout towards these institutions. Now, Sir, there is one other technical school in my district at Silghat which has prayed to Government for a long time for some money but it has not been granted anything. Sir, there is one technical school started at Jorhat which is not sufficient to accommodate all the students that go in there for industrial education. Now, Sir, I don't know particularly of other districts regarding the number of such schools in those districts, but I think unless Government come to their rescue and help these institutions there is no use of this Department Industrial education should be imparted not only through these schools but through every institution—even through the primary schools—so that the local people—the villagers—may also have the idea of the benefit of modern scientific industries. Therefore, I support the motion and I hope Government will try to do what they can in this direction.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the Hon'ble Minister in charge may reply.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Sir, the last speaker—Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma—criticised Government for not giving grants-in-aid to many industrial schools and said that only Rs.170

has been provided for in the budget. I find, Sir, that a non-recurring provision of Rs.2,000 has been made in the budget under Major head—43.—Industries—for contribution to local bodies for the development of industries. The grants-in-aid to the industrial schools are generally given after the institutions have been inspected by the Director of Industries and recommended for such grants. I understand that the Director of Industries visited the Nowgong Technical School and, so far as I am aware, he was favourably impressed with it. The matter will receive sympathetic consideration of Government.

My hon. friend Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri has raised the question that this department has no policy and no programme. This is the usual charge that is being levelled against us. We in this department are not concerned so much with big industries, but our policy and programme are to help the development of small cottage industries. As in the previous years, we have been following the same policy in this year also. My hon. friends Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya and Srijut Kameswar Das have raised the question of industrial financing. Our policy is to grant industrial loans in deserving cases where the necessary guarantee for security is forthcoming and Government have been following a very liberal policy in this matter.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: How many hundreds of rupees were spent as industrial loans?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: It is not the business of Government to throw away Government money when sufficient guarantee of security is not forthcoming.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Will Government give sympathetic consideration to deserving cases?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Deserving cases will always receive sympathetic consideration of Government. My hon. friend Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya said that an assurance was given last year by Government but that assurance has not been acted upon. But unfortunately he could not realise the position of Government. It is not the function of Government to start industries. When industries are started by private persons, it is the business of Government to give them all necessary facilities, that is in the power of the Government to make.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Will Government supply with sufficient materials if a factory is started by private persons?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: It is not the function of Government to supply raw materials.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: What is the function of Government, Sir?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: The function of the Government is to help an industrial institution when started. Then my hon. friend Srijut Krishna Nath Sarma raised the question of hand loom industry. I think this is an industry on which Government has concentrated its attention and our Weaving Parties are giving demonstrations, introducing new designs of cloth and new appliances throughout the province.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Is it for the interest of the millionaires, that is, the capitalists?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I think, Sir, it will be recognised that cottage industry is not for the interest of the capitalists. It is for the interest of the poor masses of the country and our demonstrators are doing very useful work in this connection. At least so far as I know in Sylhet the demonstration party have introduced many designs of different kinds of cloth.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Will they help the Khadi organisations?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I know that in Bidyasram they are doing many useful works for the spread of Khadi at Beanibazar. I think if they need any help, Government should be prepared to help them in every possible way.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Will the Government help the Khadi industry in Nowgong?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I cannot give that assurance unless I see it.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Can you give the assurance after your inspection?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Yes.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: What is the standard of the inspection?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: My hon. friend Mr. Jobang D. Marak said that we are not taking any interest in industrial development in the hills. I may point out that at Kohima there is a technical school for the industrial education of the hill boys. He has raised the question of re-opening the Technical School of the Garo Hills. Government will re-examine the question.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: May I know what number of students and what amount of money are necessary for re-opening the school?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I am not aware of the details. I shall look into the matter.

Sir, these are the main points that have been raised, and let me tell them this much that it will be our endeavour to expand the usefulness of this Department as far as we possibly can. We have got a Development Board, and some hon. members of this House also sit on that Board. Various suggestions for the development of the province are received by the Board and considered, and, if possible, given effect to. Our intention is to expand the activities of this Board as far as possible.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: On a point of information, Sir. Is it the policy of the Government to grant subsidies to deserving persons opening cottage industries?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: We give industrial loans.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: I think Government have got a fixed policy. May we have a copy of it, if it is not confidential?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: The Government policy is well known. Through the Administration Reports of the various Departments you will know what policy is adopted.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: I am satisfied, Sir. That is the policy.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: On a point of information, Sir. May I know the name of any Cottage Industry where the people are getting Government assistance?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: You read the Administration Report and you will get a reply.

(A voice: This is not question time, but I would inform the hon. member that it is the poorer classes which get help from the Government.)

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: On a point of information, Sir. Has this Government nothing particular to improve the policy initiated by the previous Government before the Reforms were initiated?

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I did not suggest that the Government should start a Sugar Factory. I suggested that they should either subsidise or purchase shares so that Sugar Factories may be set up.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: I am surprised that my hon friend does not know that it is due to the protection afforded by the Sugar Protection Act which was passed in the Central Assembly that the sugar factories are flourishing in India.

The motion of Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya that the provision of Rs.28,176 under Grant No 22, Major head—43.—Industries, Minor head—A.—Director of Industries, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Clerks, at page 165 of the budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the whole grant of Rs.2,31,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100 was then put and lost.

The original motion that a sum not exceeding Rs.2,31,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the "Industries Department" was then put and agreed to.

GRANT No.11

(28.—JAILS AND CONVICT SETTLEMENTS)

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.4,65,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "28.—Jails and Convict Settlements".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved is that a sum not exceeding Rs.4,65,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1939 for the administration of the head "28.—Jails and Convict Settlements".

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. I beg to move that the provision of Rs.4,03,101 under Grant No.11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails (total), at page 85 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.3,101, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.4,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs.3,101.

(To criticise Government for not taking steps for not bringing the Jail Schools under the control of the Director of Public Instruction.)

It is known to all the hon. members of this House, specially those who have jail experience, that adolescent and juvenile prisoners are allowed to remain in jails of Assam with other prisoners. Once a boy had enjoyed the privilege of being admitted into a jail and to mix with his elders, who became his instructors in theft, burglary, etc., it is very difficult for him to remain outside for a long time.....

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: A privilege indeed.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: I think no one can contradict me if I say that there exists inside the jails a university to give lessons to young students in burglary, theft and in other heinous crimes. I can cite many instances of a boy prisoner getting old in jails by committing repeated crimes both within or outside the jail. In the year 1932-33 there was a prisoner named Jagat Goala in the Gauhati Jail. His age was then 55. He told us that he had courted jail for 17 terms, and he was a rich person who could maintain his family from inside the jail. (Laughter.)

Whenever he was released he supplied large sums to his family through burglaries and thefts. Last time when I visited the Sylhet Jail I found similar persons as the Goala there. Now, therefore, Government must take drastic steps to check such contamination.

It is of course gratifying that schools have been started to have the boy prisoners properly educated. I was entrusted with the duties of teaching boy-prisoners while I was in Gauhati jail in 1932-33. Nothing could be done to impart moral education and to remove the illiteracy of the boys unless proper facilities are allowed by Government to the teachers. I understand at present that systematic schools have been established in Gauhati, Sylhet and Tezpur jails. I can boldly say that until and unless the schools are brought under the control of the Education Department nothing substantial can be achieved. The jail officers never allow teachers to get on peacefully with their work. Last time, while I visited Sylhet Jail, one boy complained to me that rice which was given to them was coarse and vegetables were uneatable. That very same boy who has now come out told me that he was punished next day and he was removed from the school and was given hard work to do because he mentioned that matter to me. To avoid interference on the part of the officials I should suggest that the jail schools should be brought under the education department.

With these words I commend my motion to the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the provision of Rs.4,03,101 under Grant No.11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails (total), at page 85 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.3,101, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.4,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs.3,101.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: On a point of information, Sir, may I know whether *ghani* labour is abolished in the jails of Assam?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I disallow this question as it is not the interpellation time.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: I have to make a speech, Sir.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member is at liberty to speak.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I have got no reply, I take it for granted that the *ghani* labour is there in our jails.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: On a point of order, Sir, *ghani* labour does not come under this motion.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: If I am not allowed then I may sit down.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon member is at full liberty to speak and not question.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: But it must be relevant to the subject matter of the motion before the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Sir, it is a form of labour in which the health of the prisoner is broken down.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: This subject is irrelevant. It comes under motion No. 2.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: I have got the permission of the chair and I have a right to speak with reference to this motion. The other motion may not come.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon member is requested to speak only with reference to the motion in question and ton beyond.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: This motion is with reference to the jail schools. So, Sir, if this *ghani* labour is abolished and the time taken by this labour is utilised in giving instructions in schools, I say that it will be much better (*laughter*). *Ghani* labour is very hard labour.....

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. member is trying to introduce something wide of the mark (*Hear! hear!*)

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: As a matter of fact we have experience of this *ghani* labour. Outside the jails this labour is done by bullocks and these bullocks are being blindfolded and they are allowed to draw the *ghani* for hours together. It breaks the nerves of the prisoners and so, Sir, it is a brutal form of punishment that is being awarded.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not understand the hon. member. In spite of my repeated exhortations the hon. member is persisting in his own way of speaking on an extraneous matter having no bearing with the motion in question (*Hear! hear!*)

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: I draw the pointed attention of the Government to abolish this system of labour and substitute reading and writing (*laughter*).

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Sir, I have other motions which can be dealt with equally under this motion No.1, because, Sir, from our point of view we think the Jail should be treated as a residential school. As such it does come under the purview of this motion and so I will deal with it in the way it best comes under it.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think motion No.2 relates to the general administration of the Jail. And it is simply waste of time to allow the hon. members to speak on the different cut motions almost all, of which equally though not identically relate to the same subject. I think, any discussion in relation to motion No.2 will be more welcome than with respect to motion No.1. The hon. member now taking seat will have the chance to move his motion. If he speaks with relation to the motion now before the House (motion No.1) he must have to speak with reference to that motion only.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: We are much obliged to your ruling, Sir.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: If I have a chance of moving No.2, of course I can wait till then. But I wanted to bring the whole jail administration as under Industries in No.1.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Any more discussion under motion No.1?

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA:

(Proceeds to speak in Assamese.)

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You should speak in English.

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA: I shall be obliged if I am allowed to speak in Assamese, because the other day the Hon'ble Revenue Minister was allowed to speak in Assamese.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No, that is giving too much of indulgence.

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. members of this House must have had experience of the labour in reading and writing when they were in schools. To us that was a very hard labour. Now in jails we have *ghani* as hard labour. So, Sir, *ghani* labour can be substituted by reading and writing—which is also a hard labour—one form of hard labour can be substituted by another form. With these words I support the motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister will now reply.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my hon. friend Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy has brought the question of bringing the jails schools under the Director of Public Instruction. As a matter of fact there is no regular school in jails. But what we have got is that we have instructors to give literary education to the convicts. We have got such instructors in different jails in the province. I do not see, Sir, what particular advantage there will be in bringing this matter under the control of the Director of Public Instruction. In that case what I fear is that it will interfere with discipline. I, therefore, hope that my hon. friend will realise the difficulties of the position and not press his motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion before the House is—that the provision of Rs.4,03,101 under Grant No.11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails (total), at page 85 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.3,101, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.4,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs.3,101.

The motion was lost.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.62,236 under Grant No.11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails, Sub-Head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Jailors and Assistant Jailors, at page 84 of the budget, be reduced by Rs.10, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.4,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs.10.

Sir, in bringing this motion I would refer back to the Hon'ble Minister to the statement I made on the last Budget session while discussing a similar motion about the jails of the province. On that occasion I laid great stress on the point that the outlook of the Government should be entirely changed, namely, that the idea of punishment should be reformatory rather than vindictive. There are other things also to which I made reference on the last occasion and one of these is that the prisoners should be kept segregated from each other as far as possible.

Now, Sir, as regards the incident which occurred in last October, to which reference has been made on several occasions in this House and over which an enquiry committee was sitting for some days to give a report, the report was prepared long ago but has not yet been placed on the table of the House for the information of hon. members. Having been a member of that committee myself, I know that certain facts came to our notice during the enquiry, which I think will be fit and proper to be mentioned before the House. At least, Sir, there is no gainsaying the fact that there was an unhappy incident which resulted in an enquiry and the report thereon would show to the hon. members of this House how that unhappy incident took place. Even ab taking the best view of the matter, many of my friends in

the committee were of the opinion that the force feeding of the convict, however justifiable, was done in a manner in which it should not have been done.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY : On a point of order, Sir. When the report of that committee has not yet been placed on the table of the House, is the hon member entitled to comment on the report ?

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : We have submitted the report finally.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER : It should not be referred to.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : We know, Sir, that events are taking place inside the jails almost daily, which, if they only come to light would have amazed many and caused a good deal of anxiety in the minds of the friends and relations of the convicts concerned. Sir, there have been so many breaches of the rules promulgated by the Government, which the officers concerned have evaded with impunity. Of course there is yet time to see what action is proposed to be taken or what action has been taken by the Government against the officers concerned in that incident in the Nowgong Jail.

Now, Sir, many of such incidents could have been avoided by a suitable change of the rules, which I have always been asking Government to do since the last session. What is required is a stringent enforcement of such rules on the officers supervised by the Jail visitors appointed by the Government to look into these matters. We know instances, Sir, where, when complaints are made by prisoners, punishment is awarded to them, and in this particular case I have referred to Mr. Ajit Kumar Chakravarti, who was given to understand, some time after he made a statement before the enquiry committee, that he would be punished. For what ? On a suspicion that he gave information about the jail incident to some outsiders from inside the jail. Sir, in these matters it is difficult to get evidence in the ordinary course of things. But nevertheless we have got always to trust the officer and it is very necessary at the present time that the outlook of these officers should be changed, and that can be done by the Government.

Sir, as regards the appointment of visitors, we often find that the District Officer generally recommends some Rai Bahadurs and Khan Bahadurs and such other members of the public who are known to have always sided with the Government or with the party of the Government. Now, Sir, there are many others in the town, in each subdivision who can possibly know the conditions inside the jail much better and can better inspect the administration than these Rai Bahadurs and Khan Bahadurs.

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : On a point of information, Sir, was not the hon. member a jail visitor for some time ?

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : Only on the last occasion. Sir, Government is very particular about the fact that they would not appoint such persons who can see with their eyes the state of affairs and have some ideas of the internal administration of the jails. I, therefore, commend this motion for the acceptance of the House so that the jail rules may be revised and Government would change the outlook of the officers who administer the jails in the province.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER : The motion moved is that the provision of Rs.62,236 under Grant No.11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Jailors and Assistant Jailors at page 84 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.10, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.4,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs.10.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I also tabled a motion with the object of criticising Government for worse condition of jails and indifferent attitude of the visitors. As I find that my motion may not have a chance to come up at all, I take this opportunity to join in the deliberation of the subject. Sir, it is my personal experience that the under-trials live in such bad condition that anybody having any consciousness cannot possibly pass by their side. Whenever they come out of jail, if anybody happens to be there, he will find that a very bad smell comes out from their cloths and person. Though they can manage to live with such dirtiness, as they are human beings this condition of dirtiness should be removed. Particularly, attention of the medical officer in charge of the jail should be drawn to the fact that these people may not be allowed to live in such a dirty condition. When they come out of the jail their cloths take a reddish colour. As for other convicts, of course, these people have the chance to go out for the purpose of taking labour outside the jail where they can get the chance of breathing a free air.

As for the visitors, as has been remarked by the hon. member generally such persons are appointed who have very little time to go and visit the jail. There are certain gentlemen to my knowledge who did not care to go to the jail-side and see personally how the convicts are passing their days there. With these words, I support the motion and I particularly draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge that the condition of the convicts inside the jail should be improved.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURI : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. Every body in this House knows that jail life is after all a punishment. I do not want to see that the jail should be made a father-in-laws' house (*laughter*). At the same time I do not say that the jail people should receive harsh or any brutal treatment. As for the Khan Bahadurs and Rai Bahadurs, I hold no brief for them, but I cannot go and say that all the Khan Bahadurs and Rai Bahadurs are without a heart for the jail people who are unfortunately detained there. The question is, whether these people are taking any interest in the life of these miserable creatures or not. My hon. friend over there has taken such interest in one Ajit Kumar Chakravarty. I remember that in this House full one day's debate was spent over the treatment in Nowgong jail. On that occasion with much restraint I had to sit down. It is fully known what his antecedent is. Sir, some sort of confidence we must have on the jail officers, otherwise if outsiders are allowed to interfere with the internal administration of the jail, then it would be a very bad day, I must say. At the same time if a suggestion is made to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails I think he will give due consideration to that. So long the Hon'ble Mr. Chaudhuri was in charge of that department we have information from the Sylhet Jail which is the biggest jail in the province that many people who happen to belong to the other group were given chance to give surprise visit to the jail. In the jail visitors book they make an encouraging note, but curiously enough, as soon as they leave the jail compound they send a report to the press which is contrary to what they said and recorded in the jail book. Sir, I do not know what is to believe and what is not to believe.

What I wish to suggest to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of prisons is this. I find that on many occasions under-trial prisoners when they are to attend the Court, are not given proper diet. Some times it so happens that they cannot reach the jail before sunset and by that time the night meal given in the jail is finished and these people have to go without food for that night. So I suggest that there should be proper attention paid to

this aspect of the thing. If these under-trials are long detained in the Court, arrangement should be made to give them some sort of breakfast. It is also found that the under-trial prisoners find practical difficulty to have consultation with their lawyers. I suggest that there should be separate arrangement made so that the under-trials may find opportunity to speak out their minds and confide any privileged statement to their lawyers. That should be done so that other officers of the jail may not hear that statement. There are various statements that are to be treated as privileged and these should not be allowed to be heard by outsiders.

The third point is that the moral atmosphere should be improved. It may be improved in various ways. That can be done if occasionally people having feeling for the improvement of these fallen people may be allowed to have free passes there—of course it must be with the consent of jail officials, and they may be allowed to advance them for their moral improvement. The question is how to improve their life. It is not by making these convicts myrters and extolling self-imposed hunger strike. We cannot improve them in that way.

I make these suggestions, and with these few words I take my seat.

Srijut MAHADEV SARMA: মহাকাব্যী সভাপতি ডাঃবীয়া, গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ জেল বিভাগৰ প্ৰতি সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ চোকা দৃষ্টি আৰু অসহনীয়তাৰ প্ৰবেশ কৰা আমাৰ প্ৰদেশত আজি অল্প দিনৰ কথা মাথোন। যেতিয়া জেলৰ ভাষণতা আৰু কঠোৰতা অবজ্ঞা কৰি মহাত্মা গান্ধীৰ আদেশত আমাৰ প্ৰদেশৰ হাজাৰ হাজাৰ ডেকা লৰা এই জেল বিলাকত সোমায়—তাৰ ভিতৰত সোমাই জেলৰ ভিতৰত থকা অন্যায়ে আৰু অপ্রীতিকৰ কাৰ্য্যৰ প্ৰতি দৃষ্টি পৰে আৰু সিবিলাক ওলাই অহাৰ পাছত যেতিয়া এই বিষয়ে বাহিৰত ব্যাপক ভাবে আলোচনা হ'ব ধৰিগৈ তেতিয়াই সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ দৃষ্টি এই বিভাগৰ প্ৰতি পৰিল। মোৰ ধাৰণা হয় তাৰ আগেয়ে আমাৰ দেশৰ মানুহে জেল বিভাগৰ সম্বন্ধে কোনো অজ্ঞান কৰা নাছিল। কিবা বিশেষ ধৰণৰ কথা নাছিল। দিভৰা মতৰেই সেই ভীষণতা আৰু আভ্যন্তৰিক আপত্তি ব্যৱস্থা লৈয়েই চলি আছিল। ৰাজ-হৰা মতামত প্ৰবল হোৱাত বৰ্তমান জেল বিভাগ সম্পৰ্কে গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট বি নীতি অবলম্বন কৰিছে তাত এইটো কথা অগ্নি ধৰি ললে ভুল নহ'ব যে সম্প্ৰতি জেলৰ কঠোৰতা বন্ধ কৰিও তাৰ ভীষণতা ৰাখিও গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে কয়েদী বিলাকক মানুহৰ নিছিনা ব্যৱহাৰ কৰি আৰু হুই এটা কাৰ্য্যৰে সি বিলাকক মনুষ্যত্ব দিলে অল্প চেষ্টা কৰিব খোজে, আমি গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ এনে নীতি সমৰ্থন কৰোঁ। গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ বাইকে ছটা কাৰ্য্য বা বিধানৰ পৰা আমি এনে সিদ্ধান্তলৈ আহিব পাৰোঁ। এটা কাৰ্য্য হৈছে এই যে—আমি দেখা পাওঁ যে সম্প্ৰতি গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে ৩০ বছৰৰ কম যি বিলাক ফাটেকিয়াল আছে, যি বিলাকৰ শিক্ষা দিবৰ এটা ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে আৰু দ্বিতীয়তে কিছুমান জেইলত ধৰ্মশিক্ষাৰ নিমিত্তে Religious Instructors নিয়োগ কৰিছে। এইটো কথাৰ পৰা বুজা যায় যে কয়েদী বিলাকক ঠিক অকল কয়েদীৰ নিছিনাকৈ নেবাখি সিবিলাকক সাধাৰণ মানুহ হিচাবে গঢ়ি তুলি পিচত বাহিৰলৈ ওলাই আহিবলৈ যোগ্য মানুহ হিচাবে বাস কৰিবৰ সুবিধা পায়। কিন্তু ৰাইজে যি ভাবে এই কাৰ্য্য হোৱাটো বিচাৰে সেই ভাবে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে দিব পৰা নাই। মই যিমানদূৰ জানো অৰু দেখা পাওঁ যে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে সকলো জেলতই

একভাৱে আৰু সমানে সাধাৰণ শিক্ষা দিবৰ নিমিত্ত স্কুল কিবা ধৰ্মশিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে Religious Instructors নিয়োগ কৰা নাই। কি কাৰণে কৰা নাই সেইটো নেজানো? মই পৰ পাইছোঁ যে অমৰ প্ৰদেশত ২২ জন জেইলত মাথোন ২১ জন Religious Instructors নিয়োগ কৰিছে তাৰে ভিতৰত ৯ জন হিন্দু আৰু ১২ জন মুসলমান আৰু তেওঁলো ৰ যাতায়াতৰ খৰচ লি বছৰি ২০০ টকা খৰচ কৰে। যদি গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে জেইলৰ কয়েদীৰ উন্নতি সচাসচিকৈ কাৰ্য্য কৰ তেনেহলে সকলো জেইলত Religious Instructors দিবৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা উচিত। School ৰ দৰে এতিয়ালৈকে কোন জেইলত কিমান খ কেনে ভাবে দিছে কৰ নোৱাৰে। কিন্তু মই আশা কৰোঁ যে মন্ত্ৰী ডাঃবীয়াই উত্তৰ দিওঁ এই বিষয়ে আমাক সকলো জানিবলৈ দিব। আৰু কি কাৰণে এই বিধান সকলো জেইলত হোৱা নাই সেইটোও জনাব। জেইল বিভাগ বিষয়ত গভৰ্ণমেণ্টেৰ যদি সচাসচিকৈ নীতিৰ পৰিৱৰ্ত্তন হৈছে তেনেহলে সকলো জেইলত ধৰ্ম শিক্ষা আৰু সাধাৰণ শিক্ষা দিবৰ কাৰণে ব্যৱস্থা কৰা দৰকাৰ।

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, I am not in a position to criticise or praise the jail administration of the province because I had no occasion to visit jails. In the Garo Hills, Sir, the visitors are only Government officers and one member of the public who is an illiterate man. When he visits the jail he simply signs blindly any remarks recorded by the jailor himself. From him we cannot expect to bring out any information about the actual condition of the jail. So my only one point is that one of the M. L. As. of the district should be allowed to visit the jail. But so far as I know, the jail in Tura is superior to any other jail in the province, as I have expressed my views in my cut motion speech on the jail administration last year. So I think, Sir, as far as jail administration is concerned in Tura it is quite satisfactory at present. But I cannot assure you that this is actually so. If there be any unsatisfactory condition or torturing or *jooloom* I have not heard from any visitors or any convicts.

With these few words, I think the criticism suggested in the cut motion is not desirable

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I drew attention last year to the system of engaging convicts in the work of sweepers and the Hon'ble Minister in charge of jails, who had experience of jail life, gave me an assurance that he would move in the matter; but I regret to say that Government have not abolished the system yet. From the speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister I find that the abolition of *ghani* labour in the jails has been engaging the attention of Government; but there is no mention of the abolition of the system of engaging convicts as sweepers. Government might say that it is not compulsory on the convicts to work as sweepers; it is mere permissive. But what I say is that there should not be any permission for convicts to work as sweepers. Sir, this does not help to improve the moral character of the prisoners. I would suggest that Government should abolish the system and engage the prisoners who are now working as sweepers in other works where they could learn some crafts that may help them when they are released from jails. Sir, it is a pleasure that the Jail department has got an hon. gentleman in charge who had the good fortune of enjoying the hospitality of Government for complete 12 months I mean Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhury. He knows, Sir, how the prisoners are treated by the officers in jails. (*A voice from the Congress bench:* He has now forgotten it.)

It may be said that they are generally put to jails for undergoing punishment because they commit crimes but the arguments put forward on the floor of the House have shown that the hon. members are already sympathetic towards the unfortunate prisoners. They may be pests of the society they may be hated people, but after all they are our country men. They cannot be denied good treatment.

Then, Sir, as regards the food I should say that worst possible food is supplied to the convicts. Our *Ex-Minister* of the Jail Department says that it is not a fact but I say, Sir, that it is a fact. The food which is given to the convicts cannot be styled as good. There is a provision for supply of fish to the convicts but I can inform the House that it is supplied in such a way that it can be styled as homeopathic dose.

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: On a point of information, Sir. When did the hon. member visit the Jail for the last time?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: I enjoyed the hospitality of the benign Government for complete 24 months.

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: May I know how many years ago?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: It was from 1921 to 1923. I may inform the House that things have not yet changed very appreciably. I simply want to draw the attention of the Government to the fact that they should try to do something towards the improvement of the food in jails.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, last year I had occasions to discuss on the floor of this House about the inhuman system of *ghani* labour. This was pointed out by almost all the hon. members of the House. Now we find, Sir, that it is after a course of three months only that the matter is engaging the attention of the Government. May I leave a word of protest that Government have deliberately retained the system of *ghani* labour in jails? Last year there were many suggestions and I say that no time should have been lost to translate all these into action. There is a line in Hon'ble Finance Minister's opening address that the work of the *ghani* labour in Jails should be done by bullocks if the House votes funds for this purpose. For this purpose, Sir, funds must be voted by the House. When I see Sir, that the House agrees that there should not be any system of *ghani* labour, there cannot be any question of not voting any amount for the purchase of bullocks, mustard seeds, etc. There is another point to which I want to draw the attention of the Government is that our prisoners have to be segregated. My hon. friend Mr. Sarma has pointed out that not only the juvenile but the new-comers in the jails below the age of 30 ought to be segregated.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURI: On a point of information Sir. What my hon. friend would suggest if these prisoners are sentenced under section 302?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: They will have to be segregated better still? Sir, one fact which I mentioned on the last occasion is about the daily prayer among the Mussalmans. I have heard that certain Instructors in jails have been appointed. I believe the attention of the Government has been drawn to this system of daily prayer. I hope Government will see that even if the prisoners are unwilling to say their prayers it should be done by force just to improve the moral tone of the prisoners by this system.

Then, Sir, as regards the burial of the dead bodies of the Muslim convicts, I should say, that nothing has been done yet. This matter has been raised on many occasions in newspapers and on public platforms. This should engage the attention of the Government and some provision should be made for the burial of the dead bodies of the Muslim convicts. It is not only a question of sentiment but it is a religious question also. With these few words Sir, I resume my seat.

Rev. L. GATPHOH: Sir, my experience of jail administration is limited to a few visits to jails and one of those visits was the visit paid to the jail at Gauhati during the last session one day when the House was not sitting. That day was a Sunday and when I entered the jail compound I found all the convicts quite clean. Then I went to the den where I spent more than an hour. I talked with the man I wanted to see and I put several questions to him asking how he liked the place, what kind of food was supplied to him and what sort of treatment he received from the jail staff. (*A voice:—let us go there*). He had nothing but good words to speak about the Jailor and the Assistant Jailors. In fact I never expected to hear a good account of the conduct and behaviour of the officers in charge of the jail. One hon. member has mentioned about the burial of the prisoners. I am pleased that he has mentioned it. For I had the opportunity when I went to Gauhati to speak to a Missionary there to see and arrange for the burial of prisoner who had but a few days to live. I heard afterwards that he was given a very decent burial.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister should reply now.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MAJID CHAUDHURY: Sir, my hon. friend the mover of the cut motion has said that it should be the policy of Government to reform the prisoners and not merely to punish them. Government is not unconscious of this aspect of the question and, to try to reform the prisoners is one of the policies of the Government. Hon. members are aware that in this House the Good Conduct Prisoners' Probationary Release Bill has recently been introduced and it has passed the Select Committee stage. When that Bill is passed, I think, it will ensure better conduct of the prisoners inside the jail and also help them in turning a new leaf in their life and becoming good citizens outside. There is also a proposal under consideration of Government as the Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out in his budget speech, to keep separate the juvenile prisoners from the habitual and confirmed criminals. When that is done it will be another step in that direction of jail reforms. Besides, Sir, a reference has been made in this debate that though there is provision in our jails for the education of the prisoners but no opportunity is afforded to give religious instructions to the prisoners. My hon. friend Srijut Mahadev Sarma wanted to know why religious instructors are not appointed in all the jails. I think, Sir, educational instructor and religious instructor are two different things. There are obvious difficulties in appointing a religious instructor on account of the fact that the prisoners belong to different caste, creed and religion and an instructor of one religion cannot suit all the prisoners, but any suitable person who wants to give religious instructions to the prisoners is welcomed to do so in the jails. My hon. friend Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma has also referred to the breach of Jail Rules taking place inside the jail and my hon. friend Maulavi Abdur Rahman said that the condition of the jails should be improved. Sir, it is very difficult to answer a general criticism like this but if any specific instance is brought to our notice, we will certainly look into it. My hon. friend Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma made a reference about Ajit Kumar Chakravarty. Last time, Sir, when I visited Nowgong, I saw Ajit Kumar Chakravarty and asked him if

he had any complaints to make. He said "I have nothing to complain." (*Hear ! hear !*). Then my hon. friend Maulavi Md. Maqbul Hussain Chaudhuri suggested the abolition of sweeper system in the jails, and said that the Hon'ble Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri had given an assurance that the matter would be looked into by Government. I may tell my hon. friend that the matter is being looked into and is receiving the attention of Government. But at the same time I may point out to him that this involves some extra expenditure and, besides, in the work of the sweeper there is no compulsion on the prisoners. Only those people who volunteer to do the work are engaged in it and are given certain concession. My hon. friend Mr. Jobang D. Marak said that in Garo Hills an illiterate person has been appointed jail visitor. I shall look into the matter and if any unsuitable person has been selected, we shall take step to replace him. Then my hon. friends—Maulavi Md. Amjad Ali and Srijut Krishna Nath Sarma referred to the question of abolition of *ghani* labour in the jail. Government is taking every step to expedite the matter and the Hon'ble Chief Minister pointed out in his budget speech that the human labour will be replaced by bullocks and as soon as funds are voted by this House, steps will be taken to abolish *ghani* labour by prisoners inside the jail.

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMA: There are lots of oil mills outside. So instead of purchasing bullocks, the work of pressing oil inside the jail can be abolished at once.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: The *ghani* labour will be automatically abolished in the jail from the 1st April next. My hon. friend—Maulavi Md. Amjad Ali—referred to the burial of dead bodies of the Muslim prisoners. I am not aware of anything.....

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: He is a gentleman and if you give him an assurance, he will be satisfied.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURY: If my hon. friend please refer to any particular difficulty in this matter, I shall certainly look into it.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: May I know from the late Hon'ble Judicial Minister what was the result of the enquiry about the burial of a Moslem who died inside the jail?

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: As soon as I heard of the instance, I issued orders calling for a report, and have nothing to add.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion before the House is that the provision of Rs.62,236 under Grant No.11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails, Sub-head—2.—Pay of establishment, Detailed head—Jailors and Assistant Jailors, at page 84 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.10, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.4,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs.10.

The motion was lost.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now the original motion before the House is that a sum not exceeding Rs.4,65,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "28.—Jails and Convict Settlements".

The motion was agreed to.

GRANT No. 24

[50.—CIVIL WORKS—(EXCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT AND TOOLS AND PLANT CHARGES)]

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.29,41,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "50.—Civil Works"—(excluding Establishment and Tools and Plant charges).

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved is that a sum not exceeding Rs.29,41,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1939, for the administration of the head "50.—Civil Works"—(excluding Establishment and Tools and Plant charges).

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: I beg to move, Sir, that the provision of Rs.1,90,000 under grant No. 24, Major head—50.—Civil Works, Minor head—A.—Original Works—(b)—Communications (total), at page 176 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.90,000, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.29,41,800 do stand reduced by Rs.90,000 (to censure Government for not inviting tender for Gauhati-Shillong-Pandu Motor Service as the present lease will expire this year).

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to a point of order. According to the note that has been submitted by my hon. friend, this motion is out of order, as all matters connected with motor transport have been transferred from the Public Works Department to the Police Department and this motion cannot come under this head. Moreover this matter has already been discussed in the House during these few days and I have given an assurance that before June 1938 tenders will be called for.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion is ruled out of order. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy may move his next motion.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: I do not wish to move this motion.*
Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.10,000 under Grant No.24, Major head—50.—Civil Works, Minor head—A.—Original Works, Sub-head—(b)—Communications, Detailed head—1.—Ordinary roads, at page 176 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.29,41,800 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, my intention in tabling this motion is to urge upon the Government the necessity to connect the Pathsala Railway Station and the North Trunk Road with a gravelled road. Sir, it is well known that this portion of the road forms an outlet for the people of a vast area covering over 6 to 7 mauzas with a population over 70,000 people. The earth is so very bad that during the rains it becomes muddy and people often find it impossible to pass on without getting themselves held up in calf-deep of mud. It passes through an area with several Oil and Rice Mills, Schools and bazaars. The length is a short one about half a mile. According to the strict principles of the Communication Board it is a fit case to form a scheme in its list. but I was told by an hon. member of the Communication Board, and also by the

* That the provision of Rs.2,94,500 under Grant No. 24, Major head—50.—Civil Works, Minor head—A.—Original Works (total), at page 176 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.500, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.29,41,800 do stand reduced by Rs.500. (To raise a discussion for the sale of residential buildings).

Hon'ble Minister in charge of Public Works Department that as the length of the road was small the Communication Board did not like to include it in the list of schemes and thereby increase their number by one. So it was left out being disqualified for its shortness. Sir, the road is so important that once the Local Board of Barpeta prepared an estimate with a view to gravel it, but as it came up to Rs.2,000, and as the fund of the Local Board was insufficient for the purpose the project fell through. I, therefore, urge again upon the Government that they will see their way to make sufficient provision for gravelling this road at an early date. With these remarks I commend my motion for consideration of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the provision of Rs.10,000 under grant No.24, Major head—50.—Civil Works, Minor head—A.—Original works, Sub-head—(b)—Communications, Detailed head—1.—Ordinary roads, at page 176 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.29,41,800 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the fact that no other hon. member is participating in this cut motion indicates that this matter is of a purely local importance. This little bit of road, about half a mile in length, belongs not to the Public Works Department but to the Local Board, and any improvement to it ought to be done by the Local Board. An estimate was made at one time, and it was found that a sum of Rs.500 would suffice for that small portion.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Rupees 1,500.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Well, according to the Public Works Department specification, the Chief Engineer was of opinion that the road could be shingled within an expenditure of Rs.500.

It is up to the Local Board, if the road is of such vital importance to 6 or 7 mauzas inhabited by about 70,000 people, to improve it. The inclusion of this small bit of road in our Road Programme was pressed by our friend Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, and on the recorded proceedings, I find that Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed wanted the road to be included in the Road Board Programme, but the general opinion was against taking up this small road in our programme. All our schemes have to go to the Central Road Board, and if such small schemes costing only about Rs.500 are included in our main arterial system what will they think? However, on behalf of the Department, the Chief Engineer promised that if there were any savings from the estimates of the completed projects these short feeder roads up to a length of 1½ mile will be improved out of them. So I will request my hon. friend to wait till the neighbouring feeder roads are taken up.

In this connection, I am sorry to inform the House that although the total cost of improving our roads amounted to 25 lakhs of class I projects we have received intimation that only 3 lakhs of rupees have been granted to Assam. This, Sir, is the position. I will again give the assurance that should there be any money saved from our annual repairs grant even, I will see that this bit of road is improved.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: In view of this assurance. I beg leave to withdraw my motion.

The motion was with the leave of the House, withdrawn.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, may I make one submission through you to the hon. members of this House who have tabled motions? I have got a cut motion No. 22 and I request for indulgence of the House so that I may move the motion, and I hope they will allow me to do so. That is a short cut motion and

I will not be long over it. My appeal to them is based in consideration of the fact that the district Bar Library has received rather discourteous treatment in the hands of the district Engineer of Sylhet and I wish they will give me an opportunity to speak on that.

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: By way of drawing your attention, Sir, may I point out that motion No.19 is of a general character and when that motion is taken up every member will have an opportunity of speaking their grievances on the subject. I hope, Sir, that you will ask that motion to be moved.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think, this motion relates to a general discussion of all possible items in relation to this department. Therefore, in the fitness of things, I hope, and I think, this motion should be discussed in preference to others. The motion stands in the name of Srijut Kameswar Das who may move it.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.29,41,800 under Grant No.24, Major head—50.—Civil Works, at page 175 of the budget, be reduced by Rs.100. (To criticise Government for their Civil Works Policy).

Sir, in this connection, I want to say that the general policy of the Public Works Department has been to confine itself to the few roads now existing under its jurisdiction in the province of Assam. The activities of the Public Works Department are now seen confined largely in areas where there are advanced people and vested interests. The policy of the department has not been to go much into the interior for the benefit of the mass people—the villagers. If we go through the mileage of roads maintained by the Local Boards all over the province and the mileage of roads maintained by the Public Works Department and compare the expenditure over each it will be seen that the expenditure incurred in the Public Works Department roads exceeds many times the expenditure on the Local Board roads per mile. Yet, nobody can deny that the roads maintained by the Local Boards are mostly for the benefit of the village people and that very little benefit accrue to them from the roads maintained by the Public Works Department. In the matter of making grants to the local bodies also, the Government is following a policy of niggardliness. Yet with the increase of population and general awakening of the mass people demands are increasing on these bodies for better and greater communication facilities and they have been compelled to widen the field of their activities. In the matter of contracts the Government policy is said to be to give contracts to the indigenous people. But in fact what do we find? Only the other day to a question put by my hon. friend Srijut Mahadev Sarma the Hon'ble the Chief Minister replied that owing to dearth of experienced indigenous contractors they were compelled to give contracts to Braithwaite and Co., for a number of screw piles bridges. Sir, it is well known that our people are not given contracts outside this province. And if the Government follow the policy to give contracts only to the experienced contractors, no matter wherefrom they come, then the indigenous men will get very little scope to get themselves experienced and it will be a very long long period indeed before which we cannot expect any sufficient number of experienced men in Assam to take contract from the Public Works Department. If the Government are determined not to give contract to the indigenous people on the plea that they are inexperienced wherefrom will they gather experience? I would urge therefore, that they

should adopt a bold and definite policy and by way of encouragement give contracts to the indigenous people even though they may not be as experienced as outside contractors.

Sir, the Local Board roads are increasing by hundreds of miles every year. The population is expanding and undeveloped areas are being developed by new settlers. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that Government should see their way to increase the communication grants to the local bodies. With these words I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the total provision of Rs.29,41,800 under Grant No. 24, Major head—50.—Civil Works, at page 175 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100.

Adjournment

(The Assembly then adjourned for 15 minutes).

After adjournment

The Hon'ble the Speaker now resumed the Chair.

Re receipt of an anonymous letter by a member threatening his life

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Before we proceed to the next item of business, may I bring to your notice, Sir, a very serious matter? After the recess period, I was a little late to enter the Chamber when a letter was made over to me by my hon. friend Maulavi Ashrafuddin Md. Chaudhury. In that letter I find that I have been threatened that I shall not be able to leave Shillong with my life. (*Cries of shame*). The letter bears the date and time 3rd March, 1 p.m. It was posted in Shillong and I received it at about 2-30 p.m. Perhaps we can legitimately claim the protection of the Government and I request you, Sir, to refer the matter to the Hon'ble Chief Minister. I also want the protection of the Chair. May I make over the letter, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: What protection can the Chair give in this matter? He need not read out the letter. But the hon. member can state the substance of the letter.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: The letter is written in Bengali, Sir. It is stated that the writers are helpers of the Muslims. It goes on—there are many Abdur Rashids here who will be glad to embrace death by killing me. Further it states that the Maulvies have decided in a *fatwa* that if I be killed, the man who kills will be hailed as a martyr.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: Sir, to-day several letters were received by me and along with them this letter of Maulavi Abdur Rahman was also received.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It is of course regrettable that an hon. member should have received a threatening letter like this. But I can assure the hon. member that every member of this House will co-operate with him in giving him protection against this threat being translated into action. I do not know what is the idea of the man, who has not disclosed his identity, to send such a letter to the hon. member. I am not also aware how he is displeased with him. But this is a matter which is quite immaterial to me. As I have said, the hon. member can be sure of the support of every hon. member of this House in the matter of protection against this threat being executed. I may advise the hon. member to make over the letter to the police, so that the man may be traced out and properly dealt with.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have heard the statement on this matter with pain. I am sorry to see that my hon. friend has received a letter of a threatening kind. But, Sir, to a public man the receipt of such a letter is a matter of daily routine. I may inform my hon. friend that almost weekly, I get letters threatening my life. I made three of them over to the Police, but up to now none of the authors of those letters have been traced. I strongly condemn the mentality of the man who sent the letter to my hon. friend and I assure him that it is not the outcome of any instigation or any threat from either the Ministers or the Ministerial party, and along with the Chair I am ready to give, as the head of the Police Department, all the protection that is possible.

Demands for grant—contd.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this motion I want to discuss a few roads of my district of Goalpara. Sir, every member of this House, including the Hon'ble Minister in charge, knows that the communications in the Goalpara district are of the worst kind. Motorable roads in that district are very few. It would be evident from the number of motor cars in the district, which are very few. Some money has been allotted to the Lower Assam Division, and Government has begun its work, not in the district of Goalpara, but in the district of Kamrup, from which the Hon'ble Minister in charge comes. I think, Sir, the money that has been allotted for the Lower Assam Division will be spent in improving the roads of that district to the detriment of our district, and probably at the end we will find that no money is left for the improvement of the roads of the Goalpara district. I would, therefore, request the Hon'ble Minister in charge to begin the work from the other end—I mean from the district of Goalpara—and end it in the district of Kamrup.

Again, Sir, one important road, which the Hon'ble Minister admitted in some of our questions during this session, is the Gauripur-Raha Road. This road was the old Assam Trunk Road and some portion of it had been taken by the Government in the year 1929 I think. But, Sir, to our utter disappointment, this road which was taken in 1929 was abandoned. Sir, it is admitted that this road is connecting with the two subdivisions of the district of Goalpara and also with the Barpeta subdivision. Sir, I should like to mention here that as the road from Goalpara to Gauhati is a metalled one, if there be a ferry from Jogighopa to Goalpara, this road will be connected with the subdivision of Gauhati. Sir, at present the road from Goalpara to Gauhati is motorable throughout the year and if the Gauripur-Raha road is taken over by the Public Works Department, I think, we can have motor communication throughout the year from Dhubri up to Shillong, the capital of Assam.

Another thing that I should like to point out is the Haripani bridge on the Jogighopa-Chapagari road. Sir, without this bridge the road is becoming useless. There is a motor service on that road but the difficulty of crossing the Haripani river by mar boat has hampered the communication very much. I hope the Hon'ble Minister in charge will be kind enough to give us some money for the construction of this bridge so that the difficulty of our communication may be avoided.

Sir, I do not like to take much time of the House. With these words I would request that the Hon'ble Minister in charge will look to the communication of the Goalpara district which is the worst, as compared with other districts in the province.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have got three cut motions under this grant, but I did not move any one of them and preferred to wait and speak on this motion which has been moved by my hon. friend Mr. Kameswar Das and which has a wider scope.

Sir, I would draw the attention of the House to the state of roads in my subdivision. The headquarters station of my subdivision is placed in such a plight that one cannot go from the subdivisional headquarters to the district headquarters without passing through the headquarters of another district. It takes two days to go from North Lakhimpur to Dibrugarh. The road which connects North Lakhimpur with Dibrugarh on the north bank is in such a deplorable condition that it is not fit for wheeled traffic even now—beyond Bardoloni. On the 23rd mile to the east of North Lakhimpur and about 30 miles away from the town of Dibrugarh the Public Works Department road stops at Chaldhoaghat of the Subansiri and the portion of the road from this river right up to Sonarighat opposite to Dibrugarh is in such a bad condition that not to speak of motor vehicles even bullock carts cannot pass by that road. The so-called North Trunk Road which ought to have led up to Dibrugarh which is a commercial centre and railway headquarters stops, all on a sudden, at Chaldhoa and it is practically a blind road leading nowhere. Sir, this so-called North Trunk Road which is partly managed by the Local Boards of Dibrugarh and North Lakhimpur and partly by the Public Works Department passes through a country which is highly undeveloped and if the development of the North Bank area between North Lakhimpur and Dibrugarh is to be effected, this portion of the road should be opened and made motorable as early as possible. I drew the attention of Government to this fact when the recommendations of the Communication Board were under discussion in this House. Now I would request the members of the Communication Board as well as Government to take up this matter at least in the next meeting of the Communication Board.

The other important Public Works Department road in the subdivision namely that between North Lakhimpur and Jorhat is also in a highly unsatisfactory condition. There are five ferries over this road. One is on the Brahmaputra, one is on the Subansiri (which of course must remain as a ferry for ever), one is on the Tuni, one is on the Kharjan and one is on the Khaboli river. On the latter three rivers there are marts to cross the traffic. But these three ferries do not bring any revenue to the Government. They are maintained free. Still Government do not think it worthwhile to bridge these small rivers. If they are bridged, communication between North Lakhimpur and Jorhat will be very much improved and the time that is taken from Kamalabari to North Lakhimpur will be very much shortened.

I also draw the attention of the Hon'ble Chief Minister to the south-eastern portion of North Lakhimpur subdivision. There are no roads worth the name and people of that area have hardly seen even a bullock cart not to speak of motor cars. No trace can be found of these roads during the rainy season and in the winter they can hardly be called roads. They are no better than foot tracks. If Government do not give substantial help to the Local Board of North Lakhimpur, these roads will remain in that condition forever and the country will remain undeveloped.

I also draw the attention of Government to the necessity of improving the Jagi and Dhing roads in the Nowgong district. When I went to Nowgong in connection with the Line Committee, I saw the condition of the Dhing road. It is a very bad road and there are so many breaches and the road is so uneven that one can hardly take a motor vehicle with any sense of safety and security. These two roads—Jagi and Dhing—were former Public Works Department roads, but now they have been made over to the

Local Board. For the improvement of these roads I do not see why they should not be taken over by the Public Works Department again.

Lastly I draw the attention of Government to the Drranga-Tamulpur road in the district of Kamrup which also badly requires improvement.

With these words I beg to resume my seat.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURI: Sir, I want to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Chief Minister a trifling matter of little importance so far as the House is concerned; but the underlying principle of bringing in a discussion over a matter like this has got a wider aim. I want to mention the conduct of some of our district officers as regards the protection of the rights of the people. I shall confine myself now to a matter relating to motion No.22 raising a discussion for curving a motorable bridge into a non-motorable one leading to the District Bar Association building at Sylhet. Sir this is a matter in which I should say, if the District Engineer would have been graciously pleased to move from his headquarters and just have a peep into the Bar Library, he would have realised the demand that was made about the construction of the former wooden bridge and replacing it by a *pucca* one of 10 feet. It was in existence for the last 20 years and at least so far as the last 13 years are concerned, I have personally seen motors passing over that bridge. Not only cars, but recently after the construction of the stupendous building, the Record Room of the District Registrar, big lorries have also passed over that bridge. One fine morning the order came that this 10 feet should be cut down and curtailed to 5 feet. Then there was a series of correspondence between the Secretary, Bar Association and the District Engineer, Sylhet. Then it was said that if this be allowed to remain 10 feet then the instrument checking pillars might be damaged. But as I have just said during the construction of this stupendous building of the record room of the District Registrar, Sylhet many lorries have passed over this bridge and there was no damage and I should say for the last 13 years we have seen people using car over this bridge. My duty is to expose the mentality of these people. If they can show such affront to the members of a learned profession the treatment they mete out to other people may be imagined. It is a painful matter that the District Bar Association had to bring the matter to the notice of the Chief Engineer. But the same reply came. Should an educated and responsible body like the Bar Association of Sylhet be coming up with begging bowls in its hand and beg for a privilege like this? The *zid* of the department must be maintained even at the costs of convenience and comfort of the people. The District Bar Association received scant courtesy at their hands. That is the mentality. The public officers should shake off their pride and arrogance if they desire to serve the country. (*Voices*—who was the District Engineer). If such be the behaviour of District Engineer, I do not know where we can get our grievances remedied. I wish that the Chief Minister who is in charge of the Public Works Department would be good enough to see to this and see that the grievance is remedied at once and that there be no repetition of this sort of treatment. With these words I take my seat.

Babu SHIBENDRA CHANDRA BISWAS: Sir, as I do not expect to get time to move the motion tabled by me, I wish to speak a few words in support of this motion.

It was brought to the notice of Government several times that the boat communication of Baniyachong, Nabiganj and Ajmiriganj with the subdivisional headquarters at Habiganj was cut off as the mouth of the Khowai river where it falls into the Barak has been blocked up. Sir, for the last 5 or 6 years the people of North Habiganj are labouring under this disadvantage; but unfortunately for themselves they cannot draw the attention of the

popular Government to their said grievance. In this advanced stage of civilization, if the people of this vast area do not get the facility for reaching their subdivisional headquarters by boat not in dry season only but in the first and last part of the rainy season also, how can they feel that they live under a civilized Government.

The Khowai river is the only river through which the people of the locality are to get their necessary articles. Timber, bamboos, *san* and other articles also pass through it and if almost the whole year the water communication is stopped, then how are the people to get these articles. Sir, moreover it seems to us that if the Government mind to remove this inconvenience, it will not cost very much.

Sir, I think with these few words I have been able to convince this House about the utter negligence of the Government in this matter.

Srijut PARAMANANDA DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to speak a few words regarding urgent necessity of a bridge at Haripani, leading from Jogighopa to Chapaguri. This road is a most important one as the Goalpara mail passes through this road. We are agitating about this bridge within this House and outside this House, but the Government are paying no attention to this. I don't know the reason for this. Again in my constituency, namely Lakripur thana, half the area is inhabited by tribal people, Rabhas and Bodos. There is not a single road in this locality and the Goalpara Local Board is showing no inclination to open any road in this area. I should therefore, like to bring to the notice of the Government about providing communication there.

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: সভাপতি ডাক্তার, নগাঁওত এতিয়া কপিৰ ওপৰত যিখন দৰং হৈছে তাত টল্ নগাঁও বুলি জনিছে। তাৰ বাইৰে বিন কৰোতে কৈছিল যে খেতিয়ক বিলাকৰ ওপৰত যেন টল্ নগাঁওত এই বুলি আৰ্জি জনাবলৈ কৈছিল যে খেতিয়ক বিলাকৰ ওপৰত যেন টল্ বহুয়া নহয়। মই এই বিষয়ত গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিছোঁ। সিং আৰু জাগিৰোড বাস্তাৰ সম্বন্ধে ত্ৰীকুট বৰুৱা ডাক্তাৰীয়াৰ আগলৈ কৈছে। এই বিষয়ে মই প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী ডাক্তাৰীয়াৰ লৈ চিঠিও দিছিলোঁ। মই আশা কৰা তেওঁ ইয়াৰ এটা বিধান কৰিব। আৰু যদি গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে সন্তুষ্টি P. W. D. ডিপাৰ্টমেণ্টৰ হাতলৈ নিব নোৱাৰে তেন্তে লোকেল বোৰ্ডকে এই চুটা বাস্তাৰ নিমিত্তে একোটা গ্ৰেণ্ট Ear-mark কৰি দিয়া যেন—এয়ে মোৰ কথা। পুনৰ কওঁ কপিৰদলত খেতিয়কৰ ওপৰত যেন গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে টল্ নবহুয়া আৰু সিং জাগিৰোড বাস্তাৰ ফালে যেন তেওঁলোকে দৃষ্টি দি বাইৰৰ দুখ নিবাৰণ কৰে।

সভাপতি ডাক্তাৰীয়া, যিটো grant এতিয়া দাঙ্গি ধৰা হৈছে এই grant ৰ পৰা Shillong-Gauhati Road ত টকা খৰচ কৰা হব নে?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The time for this cut motion will be over at 5-25 I think.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes. The hon. member will please try to finish his speech soon because we want to finish this grant at 5-25.

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: মই জানিব খোজোঁ, এই যে grant দাঙ্গি ধৰা হৈছে এই grant ৰ পৰা Shillong-Gauhati Road ত টকা খৰচ কৰা হব নে?

Are we not entitled to know this information, Sir?

Srijut SANKAR CHANDRA BARUA: সভাপতি মহাশয়:—মোৰ নামত ১৫ নং মোশনটো আছিল, সেই টাৰ উদ্দেশ্য আছিল গাৰলীয়া বাস্তা বিলাকৰ বিষয়ে একেবাৰেই আওকান কৰা হৈছে তাৰ বাবে কিছু ধন বেছিকৈ দিয়া, বৰ্তমানে ধান, চাউল, মাহ, শৰিয়হ, গুৰ, আদৰদান একেবাৰেই কাম যোগাত গাৰলীয়া বাইৰৰ অৱস্থা অতি শোচনীয় হৈ পৰিছে, তাৰ ওপৰত বাস্তা ঘাটৰ অস্থবিধাৰ বাবে বেহা-বেপাৰ কৰিব নোৱাৰাত তেওঁলোকৰ অৱস্থা আৰু শোচনীয় হৈছে, তাৰ প্ৰমান স্বৰূপে গোলাঘাটৰ শালিকী হাট আলিটোৱেদি ৩১টা মৌজাৰ মানুহে বেহা বেপাৰ কৰে আৰু ঘলধাৰা, আঠগাও, ও কচাৰ হাট মৌজাৰ এইটোৱেই মাত্ৰ বাস্তা ঘিটাৱেদি শিবসাগৰ জিলাৰ ভিতৰতে ডাঙ্গৰ দক্ষিণ হেঙ্গুৰা বুলি যি ধন হাট আছে সেই হাটত বাইৰে বেহা বেপাৰ কৰে। যোৰহাটৰ পৰাও বহু মানুহ সেই হাটত বেহা বেপাৰ কৰিবলৈ আহে। কিন্তু এই বাস্তাটো একেবাৰে আওকান কৰা হৈছে। এই বাস্তাৰ বিষয়ে যোৱা বাৰ বাজেত অধিবেশনত কোৱা হৈছিল কিন্তু তাৰ কোনো প্ৰতিক্ৰমা নহল। লোকেল বৰ্ডক জনালে ধনৰ নাটনী বুলি কয়। এই বাস্তাৰ ধোদৰ আলিৰ পৰা চক্ৰিয়াল গাৰলৈকে বান পানীয়ে তল নিয়াই ছ আৰু প্ৰায় ৩ মাইল বাত চিঙ্গি টুকুৰা টুকুৰ কৰে এতিয়াও এডখৰ চিঙ্গি আছে এই দৰেই গাৰলীয়া বাস্তাৰ ফালে বিশেষ চকু নিদিয়াত বাইৰৰ বেহা বেপাৰত ভিৰণ ব্যাঘাত হৈছে। বাইৰ এনেয়ে দুখীয়া এই বোৰ অস্থবিধাত আৰু বেচি হুগীয়া হব লাগিছে। গোলাঘাটৰ মৰঙ্গি আলিৰ অৱস্থাও অতি শোচনীয়, বাইৰৰ ইয়াৰ অৱস্থা বৰ্ণাতিত হয়। কিছু দিনৰ আগতে খবৰ পোৱা গৈছিল মৰঙ্গি আৰু দৰিয়া আলি দুটা P. W. D. ক দিবৰ কাৰণ লেখা লেখি চলিছে কিন্তু আজি লৈকে তাৰ কোনো খবৰ পোৱা নাই। উপৰোক্ত শালিকী, মৰঙ্গি, দৰিয়া আলি ৩টা P. W. D. য়ে লবৰ কাৰণে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰে। ইয়াৰ লগতে পটিয়া পটাৰ আলিটোৰ বিষয়ে কবলৈ পাহৰি গৈছে। পটিয়া পটাৰ গাওঁখন চাৰিও ফালে বাগানে বেৰি আছে—এই গাওঁ খনৰ ওলাব সোমাবলৈ কোনো বাস্তা নাই যিটো বাস্তা আগে পৰা আছিল বাগানে অধিকাৰ কৰাত উক্ত গাওঁৰ বাইৰক গৰালত সোমোৱাৰ দৰে হৈছে—এই বাবে বাস্তাটো অতি শিঘ্ৰে খুলি দিবলৈ অনুৰোধ জনাও। শেষত গোলাঘাট মিউনিচিপালিটিৰ ভিতৰত P. W. D. যি কেডোখৰ বাস্তা আছে তাত স্থবিধা মতে ড্ৰেইন নথকাত বিশেষকৈ বাৰিষাকোনো কোনো যন্ত পানী সোমায়—ও অল্প বৰষুণ বহু অস্থবিধা হয়। স্থানীয় মিউনিচিপেল বৰ্ডে ২৩ বাৰ representation দিয়া স্বত্বেও P. W. D. য়ে কোনো খবৰ পোৱা নাই এই বিষয়ে বিশেষ চকু দিবলৈ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ মনযোগ আকৰ্ষণ কৰিলো।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Chief Minister will reply now.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, I have got only one or two words to say.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: No. The Hon'ble Chief Minister will reply now.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are dealing with cut motion No.19 which has been tabled by my hon. friend Srijut Kameswar Das to criticise Government for their civil works policy. The hon. member has raised three different issues. All the other speeches have been directed to press home to Government the needs of particular localities. I will reply to that batch of critics that funds permitting we will do our level best to meet each of the local needs.

Sir, we are concerned here with policy. The first charge that has been levelled by my friend Srijut Kameswar Das is as regards the improvement of roads. The second issue that he raised was that Government is not increasing their grants to Local Boards for communication. As you know, perfectly well Sir, this issue comes under different heading entirely and cannot be discussed here; thirdly, he has raised the very important question regarding the grant of contracts to local people. I will, therefore, take up only those two issues which are relevant to this particular demand. The hon. members are perhaps aware that the present Government or the past Government of Assam had very little money to spend on communication from their own revenues. They were dependent upon the Central Government for all the money that they could spend on roads and bridges. On an average, 2 or 2½ lakhs were received during the last five years from the Central Government as Assam's share from the extra excise duty on petrol. Government also received a big share from the reserve fund, that lies with the Government of India, I happened to be a Member-in-charge of the Public Works Department at the time when rules were framed as to the purpose of utilisation and method of distribution of this money. There was a conference at Delhi and it was my good fortune to preside over the deliberations of the Sub-Committee that framed these rules. Therefore, I am more than competent to discuss this subject here. It was laid down in the rules that this money should be preferably spent on inter-provincial roads, next to roads connecting two divisions in the same province, and thirdly on roads leading from one district to another. Therefore, from the very inception, the sums that were available from this fund had to be used for major arterial road and so local needs were not looked into. I should inform the House that we had gone a little out of the rules that were laid down and later on the feeder roads connecting the two different kinds of transport, the Railway Station or the Steamer service ghat were included in the category of roads to be improved from this petrol fund and a large number of feeder roads was taken and improved. Therefore, Sir, we are not in a position to help my friends in the matter of meeting the local needs of the people.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: On a point of information, Sir. Does the Hon'ble Chief Minister classify the road between North Lakhimpur to Dibrugarh as a local road or provincial road?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am coming to that Sir. My hon. friend ought not to have taken half a minute of my short time. The North Trunk Road means inter-provincial road; if not inter-provincial, atleast it means inter-district road. Therefore, the road mentioned by my hon. friend has been included in our Road Board Programme. It is item No. 24 and its length is 34 miles, and will cost 9 lakhs to improve it. We have sent this scheme to Central Government for their approval. (Questions from some members of the Congress Party). Sir, many times I have requested my friends not to put any interjection during the course of my speech because in that case I lose my line of thought. I am not as subtle speaker as my friends opposite.

Sir, I will just touch very briefly upon the policy of Government about granting contracts to local people. I have read the recent circular on it two days ago and need not reiterate the instructions given there. Therefore, the choice of my hon. friend to level his charge against Government by citing the contracts of the North Lakhimpur bridges is not a very happy one for him. In reply to the question put by Srijut Mahadev Sarma I pointed out that although the local Assamese contractors had no experience of building bridges, the Public Works Department gave them as many as 8 bridges to erect just to encourage them and to acquire experience. Three local contractors were given contracts out of eleven who submitted their tenders but none of them had any previous experience. Those rejected had no financial backing behind them. Those that were given contract in March 1937 were to complete their works by May 1937 and the result is that they have not yet been able to complete the bridge although we are now in March 1938. This shows that we are trying our level best to give contracts to the local people consistent with the public duty and service to the general tax-payers. The other contractor to whom 22 bridges were given has finished construction of all the 22 bridges by June 1937. I can assure my hon. friend that I have kept a very strict watch over the distribution of contracts between the indigenous and non-natives of the province—I hope my hon. friend will not object to my using the term "native" wherever possible, I preferred the local people over the outsiders. I hope I have been able to satisfy my hon. friend as regards this charge levelled against the Government.

As regards the question raised by my hon. friend Maulavi Ashrafuddin Md. Chaudhury regarding the bridge leading to the District Bar Association building at Sylhet, I can inform him that not only the Executive Engineer but also the Superintending Engineer and the Chief Engineer have visited the locality last month and gone into the question. The difficulty is that the plot of land before the Bar Association building is too small to allow motors to park and very delicate instruments have been erected on the spot. I propose in my next visit to Sylhet to see if the inconvenience mentioned could be removed. I understand that the distance between the culvert and the Bar building is only 30 yards and this small inconvenience cannot be so serious as to censure Government.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: I could not follow the Hon'ble Chief Minister as regards the Government policy to give grants to the Local Boards.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: My point is that it is not the Public Works Department but the Local Self-Government Department who dictate the policy as regards what grants should be given to the Local Boards. The Public Works Department are only a spending department, in erecting buildings, roads etc., required by other departments.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The motion before the House is—that the total provision of Rs. 29,41,800 under Grant No. 24, Major head—50.—Civil Works at page 175 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100.

The motion was lost.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The original motion before the House will be now put. The question is that a sum not exceeding Rs.29,41,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "50.—Civil Works"—(excluding Establishment and Tools and Plant charges).

The motion was agreed to.

GRANT NO. 31

(Loans and Advances bearing and not bearing interest)

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.5,78,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "Loans and Advances."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The motion moved is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,78,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "Loans and Advances."

There are 7 cut motions. The first one stands in the name of Srijut Kameswar Das.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: I don't propose to move either of the two motions that stand in my name.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: I also do not like to move mine.

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: I propose to withdraw my motion.

Srijut OMEO KUMAR DAS: I am not pressing my motion.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi MAHMUD ALI: I will not move my motion, Sir.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: I beg, Sir, to move that the total provision of Rs.5,78,500 under Grant No.31, Major head—Loans and Advances, etc., at page 199 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 101.

Sir, I have tabled this motion to criticise Government for not writing off the outstanding agricultural loans. Sir, these loans are long outstanding. The frantic efforts made by Government have been proved unsuccessful. What does this point to? If it points to anything, more than any other thing, it is this — the utter incapacity of the people to pay. Sir, from the reply given by Government to a question put by my hon. friend—Maulavi Muzarraf Ali Laskar—in the last budget session of the Assembly it is evident that the cost of realisation of these agricultural loans is out of all proportion in comparison with the amount realised. Then, Sir, why are they still dragging on with these loans? You may harass the people in any way you like but wherefrom they will pay when they have got nothing to pay. Sir, then comes the question of joint liability. Sir, it is so very harassing that those persons who are not at all concerned with the outstanding loans are also forced to pay. Is it a business proposition at all? Sir, it would be not only business like but humanitarian as well on the part of Government to give up the pursuit. I do not wish to speak more on this motion but I want to mention that this motion is purely meant for the poor and I appeal to the hon. members of the House to relieve the poor people by supporting my motion, unhesitatingly. With these few words, I beg to commend my motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the total provision of Rs.5,78,500 under Grant No. 31, Major head—Loans and Advances etc., at page 199 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.101.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi MAHMUD ALI: Sir, in supporting the motion I wish to say that those who have capacity to pay loans have already paid their dues and those who are not capable to pay are not paying.

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: What district the hon. member is referring to?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi MAHMUD ALI: The motion is for the whole province, but I am speaking about the district of Sylhet.

Sir, some of the people have left their places; they have deserted their houses; they have gone to Tipperah and Nowgong; and some have died without any heir or successor, and even if they have left any heir or successor they are not in a position to pay. And, again, there are some people who are actually beggars. Sir, when this money was distributed, *i.e.*, when the loans were granted one point was not explained to them, that they were taking the money on joint responsibility. The poor illiterate people thought that it would benefit them, but now they find that they are in a very miserable position and cannot pay. Sir, these officers are harassing them; those who are able to pay, they have paid once, twice, three times, and four times, but still they are not safe; they cannot buy cattle for their ploughs because as soon as they buy them they are attached. So I say that this demand is now becoming detrimental to the progress of cultivation. Sir, the floods of 1929 have carried away the financial capacity of the people, and now they are worse off than before. If the Government will make an enquiry to find out their financial capacity they will find that they have none; that now they are not in a position to pay. And hence this motion.

I would again draw the attention of the Government to one point, and that is this, that these officers harass the people in such a way that it has become a great hardship, and this point was discussed in this House by my hon. friend Maulavi Munawwar Ali as to what happened in Sunamganj, and again in Maulvi Bazar and South Sylhet, and I do not think that even Cachar is excluded from it. Sir, what is going on in Nowgong? The people of that district are also poor—many of them are from my district, and their position is the same. So this motion is really for the good of the poor people, the cultivators, whom we represent here. The majority of the people are represented here so their case must be considered and they must be given an opportunity for cultivating their fields. But the trouble is that whenever they purchase bullocks for the plough they are taken away. Sir, at the time of the last harvest I had a talk with the Subdivisional Officer Mr. Abdul Hye Chaudhury—and the considerate Subdivisional Officer told me that the outturn of this year is worse than in the year before—it is not even 8 annas in the rupee in some parts. So the condition of the people is very bad. So I think, it will not be out of place if I say that this money should be remitted. And again, Sir, I do not understand why some people have been granted remission and some not, and why in some subdivisions remission has been granted fully while in others it has not been granted at the same proportion.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA:

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have got a technical objection to the wording of this motion. This motion is not in proper form. If you will please turn to page 200 of the Budget Estimates you will find the details of which this item of Rs.5,78,500 is made up—

	Rs.
A—Advances	1,21,000
B—Loans to Municipalities, etc.	1,50,000
Advances to Cultivators	25,000
Miscellaneous loans and advances	17,500
House building advances	2,00,000
Advances for purchase of motor cars	60,000
Advances for purchase of other conveyances	5,000
	5,78,500

So, in order to raise this particular point, my hon. friend should have confined his cut to that particular item of Rs.25,000—advances to cultivators. Now the point is that if you table a cut motion on the whole amount of the grant whether it will come out from the rest of the other items included in Rs.5,78,500. The amount for advances to cultivators is Rs.25,000 only and it was clearly explained at page 75 of the memorandum on the Budget Estimates. I, therefore, submit that this motion is not in proper form.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: He has not tabled a motion to omit any particular item, and I think he is entitled to table a censure motion on the entire amount of the grant. They can choose it in any way they like. They can move for a cut on the entire grant.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have to bow to your ruling, Sir, but as the amount for agricultural loans is only Rs.25,000 that ought to have been mentioned in the cut motion. The proper form of the censure motion would have been to reduce the amount of Rs.25,000 by Rs.101.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think, the House can table a cut motion on the entire grant as a censure motion.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Any way, I bow to your ruling, Sir.

Babu BALARAM SIRCAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to say a few words about this motion. The financial condition of the poor cultivators of the Sylhet district is by no means better than that of the Cachar district where the benign Government is kind enough to write off the whole arrears of the agricultural loans, while in the case of the people of Sylhet district 80 per cent. concession is granted. Sir, from the time of receipt of the loan from the Government the financial condition of the cultivators is getting worse day by day owing to the bad harvest of the country. Though it is apparently seen that more than three-fourths of the outstanding loans have been written off, and only a small amount will be realised, yet it is a heavy burden to the debtors to pay this small sum. Because the loan was not given anywhere separately but in every place it was given jointly, in a joint liability, to a considerable number of people, poor and rich. By rich I mean those who are earning their livelihood somehow or other, not by begging from door to door—and the sum which has been realised up to date has been realised only from those rich people in many cases twice or thrice, but not from the poor who are still passing their days sometimes with one meal and sometimes fasting. So, if the whole sum of the arrears in the Sylhet district is not written off the remainder will be realised only from those who have already paid first, and it will be a heavy burden to them at the loss of their bullocks and buffaloes.

So I hope that the Hon'ble Finance Minister will kindly give us an assurance of the remission of the whole arrears and save the poor debtors of the Sylhet district.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: As the Hon'ble Chief Minister has raised a point about the form of the motion, I think we can obviate the objection if the hon. member who has moved the motion would agree to amend the motion by altering the figure Rs.5,78,500 into Rs.25,000 and Rs.101 to Rs.100. The amended motion will stand thus:—

That the provision of Rs. 25,000 under Grant No. 31, Major head—Loans and Advances, etc., Minor head—B.—Loans and Advances by the Provincial Governments—Sub-head—Advances to Cultivators at page 200 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 5,78,500 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: I agree, Sir.

Srijut DEBESWAR SARMAH: I also beg to say in connection with this cut motion that the people in our district particularly in Majuli also are harassed in realisation of the agricultural loan. The same is the case in Golaghat and Nowgong.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member should rise in his seat and speak. He should make a speech.

Srijut DEBESWAR SARMAH: Yes, Sir, I have finished my speech and I wanted to bring it to the notice of Government that the people in our valley, particularly in Majuli, Nowgong and Golaghat are also harassed.

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is indeed very refreshing to find my hon. friend Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali bewailing the lot of the poor people on the floor of this House. Sir, instead of receiving commendation for what this Government has done in the matter of remission of agricultural loans, it is our misfortune to find our friends attempting to censure us for the generosity which we have shown; and the most unkindest part of it is that the motion should come from an hon. member who hails from the district of Sylhet. It is well known to this House that as soon as we assumed office in April last we issued orders at the request of some hon. friends from Cachar and Nowgong that realisation of agricultural loans should be stopped pending a very careful enquiry. As a matter of fact, Sir, the realisation of the agricultural loans was stayed till recently. After a very careful enquiry made by the local officers the Government, on receipt of recommendation from them, has issued orders wiping out entirely the outstanding loans from the district of Cachar and eighty per cent. of the outstandings in the district of Sylhet. I submit, Sir, that this 80 per cent. will benefit those persons about whom a pathetic description was given to this House by Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali and the balance as has been reported by the local officers, will be easily realised from persons who owe them. Sir, we have throughout followed, as we claim, a very sympathetic policy and even now we are watching the whole situation very carefully. The House may rest assured that no undue pressure will be put in realising agricultural loan from the agriculturists.

So far as other districts are concerned, the whole outstanding loan in Kamrup, Darrang and Lakhimpur have been written off; in Goalpara, Nowgong and Sibsagar only 50 per cent. of the outstanding loans have been remitted. Because these loans were issued only recently and the people have, as far as we understand, want to repay the loan gradually. As a matter of fact we had a report from Sibsagar that some persons came to repay part of the debt during the time the collection was under suspension. Sir, we should certainly be very sympathetic to the poor agriculturists in their distress. But at the same time we must be very careful to see that we do not counteract the feeling of sanctity which is attached to the obligation of debts. Debts must be repaid if the persons are in a position to pay back and no one should encourage them to think that they can safely avoid payment of their debt. That will be laying down a very bad example. Finally, Sir, I give this assurance to this House that Government will not go out of their way to realise the outstanding agricultural loans. They will carefully watch the whole situation and realise only that portion of the debt which debtors are in a position to pay.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: May I ask the Hon'ble Minister by whom the enquiries were made in the district of Nowgong?

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: By the Deputy Commissioner.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: Through the Mandals and Supervisor Kanungos most probably? Their existence and promotion depend upon the amount of collections?

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: The enquiry was supervised by the district officers. They have taken as many as nine months to complete the enquiry and I can very easily presume that a very careful enquiry was made. We have remitted 50 per cent. and the Government is watching the situation. If it is really found necessary to remit any further of this loan, Government, will certainly not hesitate to do so.

Sir, as regards the rule of the joint liability which Government is bound to follow, I wish my hon. friend Srijut Sarveswar Barua had moved his motion. Then we would have had an opportunity of discussing the matter. Personally, I am not quite satisfied with the existing rule and would have welcomed any suggestion that can be usefully made in this respect. The whole trouble is that we are guided by the Agricultural Loans Act of 1874 and certain statutory rules have been framed under its provision. I would refer to rule 21 which lays down the procedure in case of issue of agricultural loans in certain circumstances. If hon. members will refer to page 10 of the Assam Loans Manual they will find these special rules for the distribution of loans during a time of scarcity and when extensive distress is apprehended. Rule 18 says: "When extensive distress due to drought, floods or other calamity is imminent or is pressing, loans for the prevention or relief of distress, or for enabling the people to cultivate their lands shall be sanctioned and disbursed in the villages with the least possible delay". Rule 21 says: "The loans in the special rules contained in this part shall be granted only on the joint bond system to groups of co-villagers and the amounts granted to each group shall not ordinarily exceed Rs.500."

Sir, the idea probably was that it will be very difficult for the cultivators in a time of distress to find suitable security or to execute deeds or mortgage in order to get the loans. So to simplify matters and facilitate the grant of loans "with the least possible delay" this procedure was adopted of the joint bond system. By this it was supposed that repayment will be ensured. It is necessary to get back the loans so that we can help more people in greater distress in the future. If we exhaust our resources by writing off even recoverable loans we shall only be giving gratuitous relief. No Government however rich and prosperous it may be can afford to lose with equanimity the money which it gives out as loan.

As regards this particular question of joint liability, Government will welcome any suggestion made by any member of this House, so that the rules can be revised with advantage to the agriculturist debtors and with due regard to security for the payment of debt in cases where they are able to pay.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this cut motion has been moved, as has been stated by my hon. friend, on behalf of the poor agriculturists. That the Government came with a large amount of money to the rescue of the poor agriculturists affected by the disastrous floods of 1929 in the districts of Cachar and Sylhet is well known to the House. A very big sum of nearly 35 lakhs was issued at the time. Since then Government had given constant remissions, and after giving remissions for the last ten years, the outstandings, both principal and interest, stood, till final orders were passed by this Government, at

Rs. 4,32,936. Of this, 80 per cent. or four-fifths have been remitted by Government in view of the prevailing distress, and it is proposed to realise only a sum of Rs. 86,000. These figures tell their own tale and I need not make any special plea to show that Government has been very very magnanimous in this matter.

My hon. friend, Mr. Balam Sircar, gave another aspect to this question. He said that this outstanding is not going to be realised from the poor agriculturists, as my friend the mover of the cut motion believes. He says that it will come from the rich people, people who have already paid on account of the joint liability. The rules have just been mentioned by my Hon'ble Colleague, the Revenue Minister. As my hon. friend has already said, we are thinking of modifying that rule and we will welcome any suggestion from any quarter of this House. I hope hon. members will oblige us in that respect.

The next point that I want to bring before the House is this, that we are here as the representatives of the people and the Government, however it may be constituted at the time, is the trustee of the people's fund or the general tax-payers. It is up to the Government to see that money which is realised from the general taxpayer is not wantonly wasted. At the same time, it is up to the Government to see that no hardship ensues at the time of collection and every help is rendered at the time of distress. This policy is abundantly shown to have been followed by the present Government. Therefore, Sir, the present Government for what they have done do not deserve any condemnation or censure.

My hon. friend from Nowgong mentioned about the case of Nowgong where a remission of 50 per cent. has been ordered. But the loan to Nowgong was given as late as 1934. Those people who have not yet been able to recoup themselves from the effects of the disastrous flood of 1934 will get their chance. And, as my hon. friend the Revenue Minister, whose department is in charge of the collection of these loans, has given an assurance that he will keep a very strict watch and see that no hardship ensues to the poor cultivators at the time of realisation, I think my hon. friends ought to be satisfied with that assurance.

Lastly, Sir, we have made a very small provision of Rs. 25,000 for this purpose in our Budget. This poor provision has been made for two reasons. The first is the paucity of funds and the second is the policy of the present Government that wherever it is necessary, we will give more gratuitous relief than issue agricultural loan the realisation of which causes endless troubles which ultimately has to be wiped off thus causing loss of general taxpayers' money. It is on account of this fact that this small sum has been put in the Budget. It is up to the hon. members to see whether it will be to the interests of the poor agriculturists that this small sum should be further reduced by another one hundred rupees. I need not say anything more.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The amended motion is that the provision of Rs. 25,000 under Grant No. 31, Major head—Loans and Advances, etc., Minor head—B.—Loans and Advances by the Provincial Governments—Sub-head—Advances to cultivators at page 200 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100.

Does the hon. member want to press his motion?

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Yes, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question before the House is that the provision of Rs. 25,000 under Grant No. 31, Major head—Loans and Advances, etc., Minor head—B.—Loans and Advances by the Provincial Governments—Sub-head—Advances to cultivators at page 200 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100, that is to say, that the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 5,78,500 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

The motion was then pressed and a division taken with the following result.

Ayes—49

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| 1. Kumar Ajit Narayan Dev. | 25. Babu Lalit Mohon Kar. |
| 2. Mr. Arun Kumar Chanda. | 26. Srijut Mahadev Sarma. |
| 3. Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee. | 27. Srijut Mahi Chandra Bora. |
| 4. Srijut Beliram Das. | 28. Srijut Omeo Kumar Das. |
| 5. Srijut Bhuban Chandra Gogoi. | 29. Srijut Paramananda Das. |
| 6. Babu Bipin Behari Das. | 30. Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutt. |
| 7. Srijut Bepin Chandra Medhi. | 31. Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma. |
| 8. Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri. | 32. Srijut Rajani Kanta Barooah. |
| 9. Srijut Debeswar Sarmah. | 33. Srijut Rajendra Nath Barua. |
| 10. Srijut Ghanashyam Das. | 34. Srijut Ram Nath Das. |
| 11. Srijut Gaurikanta Talukdar. | 35. Srijut Sankar Chandra Barua. |
| 12. Srijut Gopinath Bardoloi. | 36. Srijut Sarveswar Barua. |
| 13. Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan. | 37. Babu Shibendra Chandra Biswas. |
| 14. Babu Harendra Narayan Chaudhuri. | 38. Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma. |
| 15. Babu Hirendra Chandra Chakravarty. | 39. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan. |
| 16. Srijut Jadav Prosad Chaliha. | 40. Maulavi Abdur Rahman. |
| 17. Srijut Jogendra Chandra Nath. | 41. Maulavi Md. Abdus Salam. |
| 18. Srijut Jogeschandra Gohain. | 42. Maulavi Muhammad Amiruddin. |
| 19. Srijut Kameswar Das. | 43. Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. |
| 20. Babu Kamini Kumar Sen. | 44. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali. |
| 21. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy. | 45. Maulavi Mabarak Ali. |
| 22. Srijut Krishna Nath Sarma. | 46. Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri. |
| 23. Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya. | 47. Shams-ul-Ulama Maulana Abu Nasr Md. Waheed. |
| 24. Srijut Lakshesvar Borooh. | 48. Srijut Bideshi Pan Tanti. |
| | 49. Srijut Binode Kumar J. Sarwan. |

Noes—51

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| 1. The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhammad Saadulla. | 24. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali. |
| 2. The Hon'ble Maulavi Munawwar Ali. | 25. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbu Hussain Chaudhury. |
| 3. The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. Nichols-Roy. | 26. Maulavi Matior Rahman Mia. |
| 4. The Hon'ble Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri. | 27. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mufizur Rahman. |
| 5. The Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhury. | 28. Maulavi Muzarrof Ali Laskar. |
| 6. The Hon'ble Babu Akshay Kumar Das. | 29. Maulavi Namwar Ali Barbhuiya. |
| 7. Babu Balaram Sircar. | 30. Maulavi Naziruddin Ahmed. |
| 8. Srijut Jogendra Narayan Mandal. | 31. Maulavi Sheikh Osman Ali Sadagar. |
| 9. Babu Kalachand Roy. | 32. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur Rahman. |
| 10. Dr. Mahendra Nath Saikia. | 33. Col. A. B. Beddow. |
| 11. Mr. Naba Kumar Dutta. | 34. Mr. A. F. Bendall. |
| 12. Srijut Purandar Sarma. | 35. Mr. J. R. Clayton. |
| 13. Srijut Santosh Kumar Barua. | 36. Mr. W. R. Faull. |
| 14. Maulavi Abdul Aziz. | 37. Mr. W. Fleming. |
| 15. Maulavi Abdul Bari Choudhury. | 38. Mr. B. I. Barry. |
| 16. Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf. | 39. Mr. F. W. Hockenhull. |
| 17. Maulavi Dewan Muhammad Ahab Choudhury. | 40. Mr. D. B. H. Moore. |
| 18. Maulavi Dewan Ali Raja. | 41. Mr. R. A. Palmer. |
| 19. Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali. | 42. Miss Mavis Dunn. |
| 20. Maulavi Ashrafuddin Md. Chaudhury. | 43. Mr. Benjamin Ch. Momin. |
| 21. Maulavi Badaruddin Ahmed. | 44. Srijut Bhairab Chandra Das. |
| 22. Maulavi Ghyasuddin Ahmed. | 45. Srijut Dhirsingh Deuri. |
| 23. Maulavi Jahanuddin Ahmed. | 46. Rev. L. Gatphoh. |
| | 47. Mr. C. Goldsmith. |
| | 48. Mr. Jobang D. Marak. |
| | 49. Srijut Khorsing Terang. |
| | 50. Srijut Rabi Chandra Kachari. |
| | 51. Srijut Rupnath Brahma. |

(Before the announcement of the result of the division)

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: May I rise on a point of order, Sir? The remission that we have granted of the outstanding agricultural loans was granted in accordance with the decision of the Government as a whole and with the concurrence of my two quondam colleagues. I hope they have not voted against this motion. But should they have voted, can their votes be counted? (*Voices—why not*).

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Oh, yes, they will be counted.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Were not the votes of the Hon'ble Ministers counted on the no-confidence motion?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: I think there cannot be any objection to any member censuring himself as has been done by the two *ex*-Ministers.

The Ayes being 49 and the Noes 51, the motion was lost.

The original motion that a sum not exceeding Rs.5,78,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1939, for the administration of the head "Loans and Advances" was then put and agreed to.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 2 p.m. on Friday, the 4th March 1938.

*Shillong,
The 28th April, 1938.*

A. K. BARUA,
Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly.