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Proceedings of the Seventh 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 Monday, the 26th February, 1940

PRESENT

The Hon'ble Mr. Basanta Kumar Das, Speaker, in the Chair, the ten Hon'ble Ministers and 90 members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Holding of Supplementary Examination at Goalpara Government High School

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI asked :

*71. Will Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) Whether it is a fact that Srijut Indreswar Barthakore, Headmaster, Goalpara Government High School, held a Supplementary Examination, only for one boy, *i.e.*, for his own son, as the boy failed to appear in one subject in the last Annual Examination ?

(*b*) Whether it is a fact that the said Headmaster promoted the boy to the next higher class on the results of the said Supplementary Examination ?

(*c*) Whether such Supplementary Examination was ever held by him at Goalpara Government High School in case of any other boy ?

(*d*) If so, for whom ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

71. (*a*)—No Supplementary Examination was held. The boy was examined in one subject in which he failed to appear at the Annual Examination for a sudden attack of malaria.

(*b*)—Yes, when the Examiner and the Headmaster were satisfied with his result.

(*c*)—The Headmaster does not remember to have come across any such exceptional case at Goalpara.

(*d*)—Does not arise.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is there any provision or rule for such Supplementary Examinations for plucked boys in the school ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I require notice of the question. As my Hon'ble Colleague is engaged in the Upper House, I have not got the file with me and cannot give a prompt reply.

Re use of the word "Muslim" in place of "Muhammadan" in all official correspondence

†**Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI** asked :

*72. Will Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) Whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the article ' 'মোহামেডান' শব্দ ব্যবহার নিষিদ্ধ, সংশ্লিষ্টদের 'মুছলিম' ব্যবহারের জন্য বোম্বাই সরকারের নির্দেশ " published in the daily *Azad* (Muffasil Edition) dated the 12th *Kartik* Sunday, the 29th October 1939 ?

(*b*) Whether the Government of Assam propose henceforth to use the word "Muslim" in place of "Muhammadan" in all official correspondence like the Government of Bombay ?

(*c*) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

72. (*a*)—Yes.

(*b*)—Yes.

(*c*)—Does not arise.

Babu DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURY: May I know the difference between the two words—Muslim and Muhammadan ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Does it require any reply, Sir ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Of course it does not. But if the Hon'ble Minister is prepared to reply, he may do so.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I may reply by way of courtesy.

Sir, the religion promulgated by our holy prophet is termed Islam in our Holy Book—the Quoran, and any one professing that religion is to be called the Muslim, the plural of which is Mussalman. It was through misunderstanding of the position, some European writers started to call the followers of holy Muhammad the Muhammadans. But we do not worship Muhammad and our religion is Islam. Therefore, we want to be called Muslims.

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†Questions were put by Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury on authorisation.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(to which answers were laid on the table)

Tenders for the construction or repairing works of the Sylhet Alia Madrassa

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY asked:

66. Will Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) Whether the construction or repairing works of the Sylhet Alia Madrassa are given to the contractors after calling public tenders ?

(*b*) Whether the Madrassa constructions are done by the Education Department or by the Public Works Department ?

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied:

66. (*a*)—Yes.

(*b*)—Departmentally.

Gauhati Intermediate Girls' College

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked:

67. (*a*) Is the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Education aware that a good number of parents in the Assam Valley are against co-education and are therefore reluctant to send their daughters to the existing colleges in the province and have to send them to Girls' Colleges outside the province ?

(*b*) If the answer to the above question is in the affirmative, do Government propose to start a Girls' College in the V lley ?

68. (*a*) Are Government aware that Srijukta Rajabala Das, B.A., Head Mistress, Pan Bazar Girls' High English School, Gauhati, in co-operation with some citizens of the place has started at Gauhati an institution, called "The Gauhati Intermediate Girls' College", under the control of a Committee of Management, where I. A. Classes are regularly being held ?

(*b*) If so, do Government propose to help the College by making adequate provisions of recurring and non-recurring grants for it in the next Budget ?

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI replied:

67. (*a*)—The answer to the first part of the question is in the affirmative. As to the second part of the question, Government have no information.

There are Girls' Colleges in the Province.

(*b*)—Under the present financial position of the province the establishment of a Government Girls' College is out of the question.

68. (*a*)—Yes.

(*b*)—The hon. member will find from a perusal of page 99 of the Memorandum on the Budget Estimates for 1940-41 that necessary provision has been made. The question of granting further aid will be considered in due course.

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: Are Government aware that a Girls' College has also been started at Sylhet ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have not heard of any, Sir, as yet. Probably my Hon'ble Colleague who is in charge may have been in a position to say about it but he is now engaged in the Upper House.

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: When was the Gauhati Girls' College started ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Last year. The current session is going on.

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: Has the Gauhati Girls' College been affiliated ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I want notice of that question.

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: Do Government recognise the principle of co-education ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, Sir, Government recognise the principle of co-education, as enrolment in Government Colleges will show.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Will the Hon'ble Premier please enquire of the Hon'ble Education Minister whether Government have received any petition from the Governing Body of the Sylhet Women's College ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I will enquire from him, Sir.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister let us know how many students have been enrolled in the Gauhati Girls' College ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I want notice of that question.

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: The Hon'ble Premier may take it from me that there is a women's college at Sylhet. Will Government consider the question of giving grant to the Sylhet Women's College ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: That is a new question, Sir.

Number of documents registered and appointment of an independent Sub-Registrar at Nalbari Registration Office

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked :

69. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Registration Department be pleased to state—

(*a*) The number of documents registered at Nalbari Registration Office since the starting of the office up to March 31, 1939, and the total income obtained therefrom during the said period ?

(*b*) The number of documents registered at the Gauhati Registration Office and the total income received therefrom during the period covered by question No.69(*a*) above ?

(*c*) The reasons for not appointing an independent Sub-Registrar at Nalbari ?

(*d*) Whether Government propose to provide the Nalbari Office with a Sub-Registrar solely for registration of documents ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

69.(*a*) and (*b*)—

	Nalbari	Gauhati
Documents	2,731	2,086
Income	3,780	4,979

(*c*) and (*d*)—A whole-time Sub-Registrar has already been placed in charge of the Nalbari Office.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR : May I know, Sir, whether the jurisdictions of Gauhati and Nalbari Registration Offices have been separated ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I am in some difficulty The Hon'ble Minister in charge has gone to the Upper House to give replies to some questions. Speaking from memory the jurisdiction has been left concurrent but the idea is to have separate jurisdictions for the two offices.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR : Do I understand that the jurisdictions will be soon separated ?

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

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR : May I know whether the number of documents shown under Gauhati Registration Office includes documents coming from the areas falling under the Nalbari Office ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Some cases might have come from Nalbari.

Provision of one Doctor and two Compounders to combat malaria in Srimangal thana

Babu DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI asked :

70.(*a*) Are Government aware that on a malarial survey undertaken in 1938 more than 50 per cent. of the population of Srimangal thana were found to be affected with malaria ?

(*b*) If so, do Government propose to post, on temporary basis, every year during malaria season one Doctor and two Compounders with sufficient quantity of quinine in that area ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

70.(*a*)—There was no survey in 1938. The preliminary survey undertaken in some parganas during the year 1939 revealed that the incidence of malaria was not very high except in a few villages.

(*b*)—A sum of Rs. 2,000 has been provided in next year's budget for distribution of quinine, staff and survey in the area.

Babu DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : Have Government prepared any scheme for utilising the sum ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Yes, Sir, Government are thinking how to utilise the amount.

Babu DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: My question is whether there is any scheme for utilising the sum.

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: I cannot say, Sir, anything about the scheme. I think it does not require any scheme.

Re-distribution of portfolios of Hon'ble Ministers

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA asked:

71. Will Government be pleased to state—

(*a*) Why the portfolio of Excise was taken away from the Hon'ble Maulavi Munawwar Ali and given to the Hon'ble Dr. Mahendranath Saikia?

(*b*) On what basis the portfolios were distributed amongst the Ministers?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

71.(*a*)—The portfolios were finally re-distributed on the enlargement of the Ministry.

(*b*)—The question is not understood; the hon. member is referred to the provisions of section 59 of the Government of India Act, 1935.

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Is it a fact that the Hon'ble Dr. Saikia was very keen to take the Medical portfolio but on account of the objection raised by the Inspector-General of Civil Hospitals, he could not get it?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I cannot allow this question.

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: How the portfolios were distributed, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: When it was announced that the portfolios had been allotted to Ministers in a certain way and when they have again been redistributed among them altering the previous allotment, I thought that there might have been some change of policy, and therefore, I admitted the main question. Otherwise, I would not have admitted it.

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: Is the opinion of the Ministers taken when distributing the portfolios?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, the advice of the Ministers is taken.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have already stated that distribution of portfolios was done in a Cabinet meeting in consultation with His Excellency, and by mutual arrangement among the Ministers, the portfolios have been distributed.

General discussion on the Budget for 1940-41 and discussion on charged expenditure

Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity of joining the general discussion of the Budget of our Government for the year 1940-41. It is customary to compare the budget of a particular year with that of the previous year, but I like to make a departure from the practice. A member is expected to express his views as to whether he supports or opposes the budget and his views are influenced by two important factors—the party he belongs to and the benefit his constituency is expected to receive under the provisions in the Budget. I cherish great doubt as to whether a member of a particular party has got the right to discuss outside the party the questions whether the different problems of the country have been fully grasped or not by the Government, whether the energies and resources of the Government have or have not been misdirected and misused and whether the measures proposed to be taken by them towards the solution of the different problems are or are not really efficacious and conducive towards the general progress of the country. Conscious of my rights and privileges as a member of the Assembly and equally conscious of my responsibility as a member of the party pledged to support the present Government, I find myself in a difficult position to-day. With reasons and without reasons, the Opposition is bent upon advancing most drastic and destructive criticisms of the Budget. May I ask them simply to compare this year's budget with that of theirs of the last year (Opposition—We have compared). Will not last year's budget remain a memorable document of promises broken and promises unfulfilled? To our Government, again, I like to ask one question — Have they departed an inch from the old beaten track of pre-reformed days?

Unpleasant as these questions might be to all concerned, I do not like to proceed further in the direction. Let me now come to the Budget proper. It is not my desire, however, to discuss it in detail. I will confine myself with discussing only a very few heads of income and expenditure.

By opening the very first page of the Detailed Estimates and Demands for Grants, I find an estimate of Trs.13,68 under the head "Customs". This heavy amount we get as jute duty. For this amount we have not got to spend anything. The jute growers of the province cultivate about 11 lakhs of *bighas* of land with jute and for that we get this amount. This shows that for every *bigha* of such land, we get some Re.1-4 in addition to the ordinary land revenue. Now, who are these jute growers in Assam? If we have the sincerity to admit a truth, we shall have to admit that they are the immigrants in Assam Valley and some cultivators of Surma Valley. Well, these illiterate people even do not know that they pay us so much. They do not know how to demand a share in this their money. Laws and rules are against them, because a portion of this sum cannot be earmarked for them. But for all that, have not the Government any duty towards these jute growers as such? Government have entirely failed in their duty towards these dumb producers and had I had the power, I would have charged the Hon'ble Finance Minister with criminal breach of trust. Every one knows that Malaria and Dysentery take their heaviest toll from amongst these wretched jute growers, but the Government have not been able to see their way to grant a special sum to any local board with instructions to open any dispensary in the jute growing areas. Even a subsidised dispensary has

not been opened in any such area. These poor people are again, most backward in point of education, but yet the Government have not opened even primary schools in such areas. No Local Board has even been requested to see to their miserable plight So far as communication is concerned, jute growing areas have not even been connected with the local markets. Poor illiterate jute growers — they die in hundreds without a drop of medicine and yet we are blind to them. Rashiks and Rashids were lying in their death beds. Some villager waded up to Barpeta, doctor was called, but he could not reach the village for want of communication and they succumbed to death. Then after some time, went a Sahib officer in the locality ; people gathered round him, placed their grievances before him and he, most probably on behalf of Government gave them assurance with the following words " হ: ·তামা ে কর কারণ আ. ব ে বর মৌকা ে অতি সে ে ে এটা পানা ক'ব দিয়া হব।" Such being the case, allow me, Sir, to congratulate the Ministry on behalf of the jute growers of my province.

Now, Sir, I come to land revenue. Here, in the very outset, I like to make it clear that I do not believe in the efficacy of land revenue reduction as a measure of solving the economic problems of the country. Barring the *Faringati* and *Jalatak* land, the average revenue should be raised to a rupee per bigha for land to be settled in future. If this is done, the land will pass to the hands of actual agriculturists and land speculators will not be able to hold vast area of land. This will go a great way towards the solution of the problem and the Government will get a fairly big amount to spend for the different nation-building departments.

Supporters of the Karachi declaration of fundamental rights — hypocrite preachers of Hindu-Muslim unity—the politicians who want us to believe that all Indians form but one nation have spoken on the Line system. Their speeches have proved beyond the least shadow of doubt that their principles and professions are but poles apart. I do not like to discuss this hackneyed question any further. They have deliberately remained silent about the miserable plight of the landless population of the province. They are very particular about providing land to the tigers, rhinos, buffaloes and other wild beasts to roam in but they won't give a single *bighas* of land to a landless immigrant to live upon. These gentlemen want thousands of immigrants to die of starvation. For ½ lakh buffaloes, some 20 lakh *bighas* of land have been kept as grazing reserve on the other hand, one lakh of human souls are going to be perished for want of food, clothings and shelter. If their miseries do not soften their hearts, I doubt whether these gentlemen are after all human beings. They must be superhuman ! My brother Mr. Matior Rahman will place before the House the miserable plight of the immigrants so I do not like to proceed further on the line.

Sir, you will be surprised to hear that a new problem has arisen in my Subdivision. Very recently we have been given to understand that a new Line has been created in village Jania. This is unlike all others — a Hindu-Moslem Line. Hindu immigrants from Bengal have been allowed to live in the village while the Muslim immigrants are going to be deprived of their possessions. The Muslims are being asked either to give up their land or to give up their religion. The situation therefore has become the gravest one and I earnestly request the Government to enquire into the matter without delay and to pass such necessary orders as they deem fit. If this seed of Hindu-Muslim friction is allowed to germinate, I have reasons to fear that the consequences will be most disastrous for the Province.

Line ROUF

I now like to raise a question of principle. In the year 1938, the then Hon'ble Revenue Minister Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri gave us to understand on the floor of this House that the domiciled people stood on the same footing with the bonafide sons of the soil. In my Subdivision one Maulavi Shah Md. Bilayet Hussain — a domicile certificate holder has been refused settlement in closed areas during the regime of the Congress-Coalition Ministry. This refers to Subdivisional Officer, Barpeta's order, dated the 1st September 1939 on petition No.2019 of Barnagar Circle. I refer to this case as specimen of how the previous Ministry has dealt with the immigrants. Further instructions have been issued to the Deputy Commissioners by the Commissioner not to grant domicile certificate to immigrant cultivators. The significance of such instruction is most probably clear to y u all. Then again, Sir, the immigrants were never debarred from bidding in the revenue sale of periodic *patta* lands of closed areas but recently the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup, has issued orders not to allow the immigrants to bid in such sales. Do the Government like to keep the immigrants handicapped on all sides ? The immigrants say—

"মিনতি করিয়া বলি বন্ধু খোল খোল দ্বার,

আজানী আজান পড়িয়াছে প্রাণে,

মোর বন্ধী রবনা আর।"

I earnestly request the Government to declare in clear and unmistakable terms their policy in these matters.

The immigrants of the colonisation areas are going to pay us one lakh of rupees this year. May I ask the Government what provision has been made in the budget for education, sanitation and communication in the colonisation area ? I like to inform the Government that the immigrants in every district do now demand a legitimate share in the posts of Mouzadars, Kanungoes and Mandals. If their demand is not satisfied, the Government cannot legitimately demand their support.

Before I finish this topic, I like to assure my Assamese friends in general and my tribal friends in particular that the immigrants do not want to quarrel with anyone. They are always prepared to come to an honourable and amicable settlement. The Line system question has been harped upon by the Opposition to win over our tribal friends but I like to assure them that even the immigrant members will assist them in securing adequate protection. But if they require protection, they require it against all the non-tribals.

As a representative of the agriculturists I will now speak a few words on Agricultural Budget. That this department under one of the ablest of our Ministers will do a great service to the country is almost a certainty. But during the appointment of Rural Uplift Organizers we have seen that my subdivision has been totally ignored. In the selection of rural centres I have been pained to see the partiality of the department. In my subdivision I understand only two villages will be selected and though I have pressed for a village in my constituency, I fear the department will not do justice to me. Most probably both the villages will be Assamese villages and immigrants will be kept deprived. If that is done, I fear the immigrants shall have to reconsider their position. In this connection I like to inform the Government that immigrants by this time form just 50 per cent. of the

population of my subdivision. A defect of the Agriculture Department is this that they cannot supply seeds in time. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will kindly see to it in future. I like to bring it to the notice of the Government that the immigrants of my constituency do most earnestly demand a model village amongst them.

In the Education Department, the Hon'ble Minister is going to perform simply miracles. He must have Allauddin's wonderful Lamp in his possession. No Government can ever dream of advancing so far in so short a time. But if I find that Tarabari Middle English, Majgaon Middle English and four Madrassas including the Vella Junior Madrassa in my subdivision and Rakhaldubi and Chakla Madrassa of Goalpara do not get adequate help, I shall have to believe that the Hon'ble Mr. Chaudhuri treats the children of immigrants as co-wife's children. Much money is going to be spent for higher education but if the educated youngmen and ladies choose to remain bachelors, widowers and misses they are practically of no use to human society and I hold that the money spent for them is money wasted. I further like to bring to the notice of the Government that Barpeta Local Board requires to take up some fifty more venture schools but for want of funds the Board has remained handicapped. I hope Barpeta Local Board will receive special consideration at the hand of our Government.

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

Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: How many minutes more Sir, you can allow me ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I will allow the hon. member two minutes more.

Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: Turning to the Public Health Department I like to place some facts before the House. Cholera, Pox and *Kala azar* are not the only diseases which are deteriorating public health. Look to the mobs surrounding the medicine canvassers in *hats*, bazars and Court compounds. See the *Baithak khanas* of village quacks and peep through the windows of Ayurvedic and Hekimi dispensaries and try to ascertain what kind of diseases are eating into the vitals of our nation. Open the page of any newspaper and see what are the medicines mostly advertised. I am sure all my friends will be shocked to find that venereal diseases are ruining the health of the nation. Look to the faces and eyes of our boys in the Schools and Colleges and consult privately the physicians who have had some opportunity of examining their health and come to your own conclusion as to where and how our future hopes stand so far as their health is concerned. Government must devise some means to combat the moral evils. Some special doctors should be engaged to thoroughly examine the health of every member of the nation and to prescribe remedy and at the same time some kind of religious education should be imparted to our boys so that Cupid may not find any place in their minds and hearts.

The Public Works Departments under Hon'ble Mr. Abdul Matin Chaudhury badly requires a copy of "Shishu Shikha Bhugalpath" so that the Department and the Hon'ble Minister may learn that there is a place like Barpeta in the province of Assam. I like to request the Hon'ble Minister to have a pleasant drive from Barpeta to Tarabari because that is the most beautiful of Public Works Department roads in the province.

Hon'ble Minister of Local "Selfish" Government is earnestly requested to become a bit less selfish by bestowing his favours upon Barpeta Local Board.

Appointment of a permanent Kazi at the Tarabari Kazi Office and opening of a new Kazi Office at Sorbhog are prayers which I place most respectfully and humbly before Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn and if these are not granted I am simply done for.

Sir, if it is a fact that for some five thousand opium addicts we are going to sustain a loss of some 4½ lacs of rupees annually, people outside may ask us whether or not our Hon'ble Minister of Excise is labouring under the influence of some drugs of his department. What answer shall we give ?

Sir, as I fear to enter the "Forest" I now like to retire but before doing so I congratulate the Ministry for the most satisfactory budget they have placed before the House and I lend my whole-hearted support to it.

Babu DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker Sir, when Great Britain and France declared war against Germany on the fateful day of 3rd September, British Statesmen broadcasted all throughout the world that the Allies were fighting for Democracy, for the freedom of the world, for civilisation against Nazism, for freedom of smaller nations. The Indian National Congress naturally wanted a clear enunciation and application of those principles to India. India was the acid test of the sincerity of those pronouncements. Those high sounding words have no value to India, so long as she remained tied to the charriot wheel of British Imperialism, so long as her right to frame her own constitution was denied to her. British statesmen failed, and failed hopelessly, to rise to the occasion and the whole character of the war stands unmasked today. Refusal to give India the right to frame her own constitution, without British interference, has taken away the moral background of the Allies' cause. Naturally the Congress could not form part of an administration which denied India's birth-right. As a result Congress Ministries in seven Provinces resigned, as also the Congress-Coalition Ministry of Assam. I would ask the House to realise the issue involved in these resignations. The issue is clear and unambiguous--the issue is the issue of India's independence. It was not on a minor issue, not on any particular measure, not on any communal or class consideration, but on the clear and definite issue of India's freedom that the Congress Ministries resigned. In all the seven provinces, nobody or party was found to play to the tune of British imperialism. Naturally it was expected that no self-respecting individual or groups would come there to help the British Imperialists on the issue of India's independence. But in the benighted Province of ours from the vacuum so created emerged Sir Md. Saadulla as the Premier of the Province, not backed by a majority but under the inspiration of White Hall and Simla and under direct patronage and tutleage of Messers. Griffith and Company when all hopes to gamble with the destiny of the province was dashed to pieces, the resignation came as a god-send blessing and as if by the touch of a magic wand, came the third rejuvenation of Sir Muhammad as Assam's Premier. When he criticises us on this side of the House for our sins of omission and commission we accept all such criticism for all it is worth ; but his present invectives come from him with ill grace, considering the fact that it is the self-abrogation of the Congress Party which gives Sir Muhammad some sort of a *locus standi* in this House. But for that, he should have been today guiding his own destiny in the corridors of the Calcutta High Court rather than playing with the destiny of this province.

However, I congratulate him personally for his good furtune. I have another reason for congratulating him. His fertile brain and foresight have enabled him to introduce a soft, soothing feminine touch in the Cabinet, as poets have said when pain and sorrow wring the brow, a woman is a ministering angel.

Considering the circumstances which have ushered in the present Cabinet, one cannot possibly expect much from the budget they present.

I heard with rapt attention the long orations of the Premier resembling the Periclian funeral orations. I wondered, Sir, whether the Finance Minister was presenting the Budget for 1940-41 or he was delivering an impeachment against his predecessor in office. It seems that at every step the ghost of Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed haunts him, he seems to be completely possessed.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Why the ghost ? He is himself present here. (*Laughter.*)

Babu DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: I would advise the Hon'ble Minister to go to the nearest nursing home to be relieved of this malady. He assumed a patronising, bantering tone and began by self-advertisement. He spoke so much about his seven budgets. But he has forgotten that in the majority of these budgets he had to repeat his master's voice only. He owed his position to other quarters and necessarily those budgets have nothing to do with the present day financial policy of a province ; we are now supposed to live under Provincial autonomy. But has it changed him a bit, Sir ? This confession on his part supplies us with the evidence that the Finance Minister cannot forget his past even under the new dispensation. Experience has taught him to become more and more callous to the needs of the people, impervious to new ideas, thought and outlook and new approach to problems of the province, and we have only got the old wine in a new bottle. The Finance Minister has attacked his predecessor for land revenue reduction, he has found fault with our excise policy, and also the taxation measures. But, Sir, he himself has not given them up altogether. The *Ex*-Finance Minister has been taunted for referring to Federation. With one stroke of the pen he wants to serve his white masters as also himself. His old age might be responsible for delineating the range of his vision, but, Sir, any student of politics knows that the whole structure of bureaucracy is bound together by the steel frame of the Indian Civil Service and the Central Government cannot possibly evade responsibility for the hopeless condition of our provincial finances. Unless memory is short, I can remind him, Sir, that he imself, while presenting the budget in 1937, bitterly complained against Nimeyer's Award for not giving us the tax on Petrol. Moreover w on this side of the House do not believe in half-measures. The thought of the absence of a dinner cannot make the breakfast palatable. He clean orgets that no country can be built on a wrong and weak foundation. He has attacked the revenue reduction ; but has he given any alternative scheme to give relief to the peasants—one in vain looks to find any measure calculated to increase the productivity of land to which he refers in his speech. Why then carp at reduction as spoon feeding. Again in his speech he says that it is impossible to free completely the opium addicts from the drug. It is disbelieving in the higher nature of humanity. By giving up the Prohibition Bill, by his shameless declaration that owing to presence of 16 lakhs of tea labourers and 6 lakhs of hill population, prohibition of liquor is an impossible proposition. He has betrayed the people to represent whom, he is here.

Coming directly to the budget itself, Sir, what do we find ? We find no planned economy, no broad outlook, no attempt to tackle the problems of the Province, no bold approach. It is merely continuing the old policy of drift—merely going on, merely passing time—such a hopeless state of things would have shamed anybody out of office. But Sir Muhammad is too strong

for that, whereas people are dying by thousands from various preventible diseases, whereas bright youths have lost all charm for life, some of them committing suicide, whereas in spite of our clamours for the last three years, no statistics even of the unemployed youths have been prepared, not to speak of tackling the problem of unemployment. People are on the verge of starvation, floods recur every year, causing untold suffering, the Jagannath's Car of administration merrily goes on trampling the people underneath, the cost of administration increasing day by day. In vain one would look to the new Schemes to have Sir Muhammad's much vaunted breakfast. The Finance Minister has merely juggled with the destinies of about 10 millions of people. We only find grants for a school here, a subsidised dispensary there, a few scholarships to humour a group, just to hoodwink the general public into believing that the Cabinet will look to people's interest. In a Province where not more than 5 per cent. of the people have any knowledge of the three R's, the colossal sum of Rs. 12 thousand have been provided for removing illiteracy amongst the masses ; Rs.15 thousand have been provided to deal with floods ? Does it touch the fringe of any problem not to speak of solving any of them ? Are these anything but practical jokes ? What is the other side of the picture, Sir ? The number of Ministers is increasing more than the number of portfolios money has been provided for an additional Conservator of Forests, for creation of a post of Assistant Director of Public Instruction, for creating a Publicity Department, for Parliamentary Secretaries and Private Secretary to the Hon'ble Premier. If in a Province like Assam with a deficit budget, with an annual revenue almost equal to that of the Calcutta Corporation, we are to have ten Ministers and ten Secretaries, then people will long to be relieved of this pernicious provincial autonomy. It is autonomy with a vengeance. Ministers' Salaries and pay of the Premier are going to be increased on the plea of dignity, little remembering that dignity and self-respect are attributes, one is born with, and are not purchasable commodities. Again the dignity of the Hon'ble Ministers has been assessed at half that of the Premier What a tribute to the dignity and self respect, of the Hon'ble Ministers ! In a province like ours which is almost entirely agricultural, the stinting of the Budget under this head serves as a sad commentary on this Government's solicitude for the toiling masses. It is understood that Hon'ble Minister, Agriculture, is hatching a scheme but we are rather sceptical about his scheme because his great scheme of education has been relegated to the domain of oblivion, he himself being driven from post to pillar has obtained at last the portfolio of agriculture *via* Forest and Excise.

One feature of the budget under the head Industry is that the Hon'ble Minister has not forgotten her sex and that a woman's sanction is the kitchen, in spite of her ministerdom. That is why her budget holds out a prospect of a richer fair at home full of fish and ghee. But we hope that this scheme to provide fresh fish and ghee to our home does not dry up and we are to get with dried fish to live upon. It is well known that one of her principle is industrial education, although the joint touring of Hon'ble Minister, Education and the Hon'ble Minister Industry, created an impression that unprecedented results will come out of this collaboration but our regret is we find nothing of it reflected in the Budget

What is the actual position, Sir? We are in a vicious circle in an atmosphere which breathes and encourages jobbery, nepotism, bribery appeal to communal passion, gallary play and no clear cut scheme. When a

question is raised to adopt a scheme, the only reply is paucity of funds. In this connection I am tempted to quote the few thoughts from the Budget Speech of *Ex-*' inance Minister of Bengal.

"The ability to undertake and execute big comprehensive scheme calls not so much for money, but for efficiency much more than money. There must, in the first place, be a realisation of the problems which we have to tackle. In the second place solution for these problems will have to be resolved. And lastly solutions must be given practical shape, appropriate and efficient machinery will have to be devised for their execution and necessary funds provided for. To the extent to which these conditions will be fulfilled, to that extent alone can we expect result from the activities of the Government."

But under the prevailing conditions where nothing can be done, the natural query is—is it Self-Government—is it Provincial autonomy ? Not to speak of Self-Government, it is not even good Government. It is negation of Government.

Under the hopeless condition described above it come to this, Sir, while Sir Muhammad had made all provisions for his dinner table and that of his colleagues in the Cabinet, he has provided only stone for the breakfast table of his country men.

My friend, Mr. Mookerjee, has compared him to Robert Bruce. To my mind a more appropriate nomenclature will be Sir Muhammad the Sindabad of Assam Finance. He has ridden along enough on the shoulders of Assam Finances and is more than anybody else responsible for the present hopeless state of the provincial finances. Time has come when she should get rid of this sturdy rider on her Finances.

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, coming as I do from an easternmost corner of regulated India where the people are groaning under the ruthless administration of the Ordinance, I feel I shall be guilty of dereliction of duty if I do not seize this opportunity and ventilate the grievances of that unfortunate district.

I am sure that hon. members of this House are fully aware why the Ordinances were promulgated— put in a nut-shell, the Ordinances are measures of safeguards against enemy attacks on our country. But for the incidents that I am presently going to mention before you, the natural inference will be that the Ordinances have been utilised by this Government to put down first, the labour movement, second to hamper pursuit of ordinary occupation by the people and lastly to put down the Congress movement in this district.

Sir, it is, I presume, fresh in the minds of the hon. members of the House that the thousands of labourers working under the Assam Oil Company, with a view to protect their interest and with a view that they may not be exploited by capitalist employers, started a Labour Union which was duly registered. The legitimate grievances of the Union were submitted to the Company. The employer Company approached the outgoing Government to appoint a Committee of Enquiry under the Trade Disputes Act and this was acceded to by the Government. The personnel of the Committee consisted of (1) Mr. Higgins, the then Commissioner of Divisions, (2) the Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Sayidur Rahman and (3) Srijut Omeo Kumar Das, M.L.A. Sir, to be relevant to the subject that I am now discussing, I regretfully have to state that although the Committee unanimously recommended to the Government that every opportunity should be given to the labourers to build up a permanent Labour Union for protection of the interests of thousands of labourers working under the Assam Oil Company,

the Ordinances that were promulgated soon after, were utilised in stifling the Labour Union of Digboi—the office bearers, namely Srijut Jagannath Upadhay the President, Sardar Sadhu Singh the Vice-President and Maulavi M. A. Chaudhury of Sylhet the Secretary and other important members of the Union were externed within 24 hours notice. I cannot check the temptation of saying that more calumnious act of the freedom loving and democratically minded British people can never be imagined.

Sir, by a provision of one of the Ordinances, Digboi and Tinsukia were proclaimed to be protected areas. Although by a certain provision of the same Ordinance a clear direction was given to the local authorities not to interfere with the pursuit of normal occupations by the people living in and about the above mentioned places, the police dogged the local people such as merchants, agriculturists, pleaders and even members of the Assembly to their utter disgust. I regretfully and unwillingly have to express before this Assembly that myself and a number of pleader friends of Dibrugarh and my friend Srijut Bideshi Pan Tanti were victims of this annoying interference with their vocation of life. Many hon. members may know that I am an inhabitant of Dibrugarh and Tinsukia falls within my constituency. In my capacity as member of the Assembly and also in the capacity of a pleader I have often to go to Tinsukia . The local police authorities are, I am sure, perfectly aware of these facts. Still in going to and passing Tinsukia in pursuit of my ordinary occupation I was teased by vexatious questions about my movements until I was compelled to apply for a permit to go to Tinsukia which I received by waiting for several days.

My hon. friend Mr. Bideshi Pan Tanti is another victim of such harassments as I said already. Sir, Mr. Pan Tanti has been living in the Tinsukia circle for the last 36 years ; he has been coming to Tinsukia for all these years for marketing and other domestic purposes. Mr. Pan Tanti was living in a neighbouring garden of Tinsukia but after he joined the Congress-Coalition Party, be it said to the credit of my planting friends, he was gently asked to go out of the garden and hence a necessity arose for him to buy a suitable land in Tinsukia town to build his dwelling house, which he did on or before the 11th December last and was about to start construction of his house so that he may finish it and shift to it before leaving for Shillong to attend this Session. Mr. Pan Tanti was asked by the Police not to start construction of his house until he obtained a permit from the Superintendent of Police. Mr. Pan Tanti had to submit to this uncalled for interference of the Police and had to apply for a permit in December which he received on 16th of February last. The result for this annoying interference was that Mr. Pan Tanti could not complete his house and was compelled to leave his wife, children and property in an insecure place and he has now got to pass his days in anxiety. I put it to Sir Muhammad whether the department which he is in charge, should not be brought to book for making this shabby use of the Ordinance. Hindrances caused to the local inhabitants in pursuit of their normal occupation in the name of the Defence of India are matters of daily occurrence in the unfortunate subdivision of Dibrugarh.

Sir, as I already stated, another use of the Ordinance made by the Government through the agency of the local officers is to hamper the progress of the Congress movement in the Dibrugarh subdivision. Sir, it is very well-known to this Assembly that the Indian National Congress, the biggest national political organisation of India, the largest political organisation

in the world, having as it does under its banner the largest number of members, have enjoined upon thousands of its subordinate organisations to observe what is called the Independence Day. This sacred day had all along been celebrated in due solemnity for the last decade all over the country. The Dibrugarh District Congress Committee have also been observing this day for the last decade without any break

It pains me to inform the House that owing to the prevalence of one of the Ordinances which prevents meeting of any kind—social, political or economic—from being convened without sanction of the Deputy Commissioner obtained three days previous to the meeting, the District Congress Committee was compelled to ask for permission to hold the Independence Day on the 26th January last. Sir, as I understand, although the Central Government issued direction to the provinces not to interfere with the celebration of this sacred day, the local authority practically refused permission to perform this function as he imposed certain humiliating conditions under which no self-respecting Indian could observe the day. I painfully have to say that thousands of Congress members and many thousand others were deprived of the satisfaction of paying homage to the National Flag of India which is held dear and sacred by them. I pause for an answer, can a more outrageous violence to the moral susceptibilities on the Indians be imagined ? Will it be crying in the wilderness when I request my whilom teacher Sir Muhammad to shun the office of the administration which he adorns, in contempt, that admits of such abominable treatments towards its helpless subjects ?

Sir, I have probably taken much of your hard pressed time with these outpourings of my heart. I shall conclude my speech by making some remarks about the prohibition of opium that was introduced by the outgoing Government in my district. It has been admitted by all that opium has eaten into marrow of the Assamese people—particularly the peasantry—the backbone of the race. It is also admitted that any Assamese or an inhabitant of Assam should not consider any trouble too much, any expense too large and any sacrifice too great to save the race from the jaws of destruction. Sir, inspired by such a feeling, a forward move to eradicate this poison from Assam was taken by what is called 10 per cent. annual cut in the rations of addicts of and under the age of 50 years. This was done at the instance of the Swaraj party of the Assam Council of 1927-28 to which I had the honour to belong. The policy of gradual reduction was followed for 10 years after the expiry of which it transpired that this gradual reduction of rations of registered pattadars did not shut out the door for new addicts. It was found that the lessees were greatly responsible for keeping the door open for new addicts. Owing to the existence of opium shops and the mahaldars the Excise Preventive staff had to combat the mahaldars as well as the smugglers of opium. In order more effectively to check the illicit supply of opium, selling of opium through Government agency was stopped by the Congress-Coalition Government. This decision was based on the experience gained by working the gradual reduction policy for 10 years. The result of enquiry as to the success or otherwise of gradual reduction revealed that the number of unregistered addicts was double that of the registered ones. In face of these staggering facts, it is surprising to find that Sir Muhammad as a veteran administrator advocates a policy of proved failure. Sir Muhammad, it appears to me, in his speech expresses doubt as to the ultimate success of total prohibition of opium but the degree of success that we could achieve during this short period, considering

the magnitude of the task, is beyond expectation and I can say from my experience of moving constantly among the addicts these 10 months, without fear of contradiction that 6 months of work done both by officials and non-officials and if my planter friends pay more time and attention to help the labourers in leaving the habit, the scheme of opium prohibition in the Dibrugarh subdivision will be crowned with success. In the circumstances non-provision of any amount for prohibition propaganda is greatly to be deplored.

Sir Muhammad complains against the last Ministry for granting 50 per cent. reduction of land revenue to certain classes of *patta* holders and complains that this was done only to embarrass the Ministry that succeeded it. I emphatically protest against the attribution of any such motive. The claim of the raiyats to that reduction is legitimate, and the action of the last Ministry contributed towards the relief of the poorer classes of heavily taxed agriculturists. It would have been more becoming for Sir Muhammad if he, without finding fault with his opponents, had suggested new sources of revenue. It was admitted by his former Government that it was possible to enhance the revenue of the province by imposing due rates of taxation on the mineral produces such as petroleum, coal and natural gas. The law on the subject of taxation on mineral produce gives wide power to provincial Governments to vary the rates on petroleum from year to year. The big commercial concern like Assam Oil Company use natural gas for purposes other than extracting petroleum for which, under the law, they are to pay a heavy royalty which they do not pay now. The rate of royalty paid by the Assam Railway and Trading Company on coal is the lowest. We expected orientation of the Budget from our veteran financier Sir Muhammad on these lines only to be disappointed, and hence a well-merited criticism of his budget as a dry and hackneyed one came even from his own party men. With these words, Sir, I beg to resume my seat.

Mr. D. B. H. MOORE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is probably true that the position of any Finance Minister is anything but enviable. It is probably even more true to say that the position of the Hon'ble Prime Minister in his capacity as Finance Minister is even more difficult, faced as he is with the problem on one hand of diminishing revenues and on the other by the persistent clamour for more and more funds to be expended on nation-building departments. We are fully aware that the Budget that is being presented to the House cannot strictly speaking be referred to as a balanced one and that the revenue surplus shown of some Rs.4,98,000 is in effect a deficit of Rs.5,02,000. Nevertheless we find cause for sincerely congratulating the Hon'ble Prime Minister in having completed what must have been an extremely difficult task under unfavourable circumstances and in face of great difficulties not the least of which was the last minute remission of revenue amounting to 12 lakhs of rupees. We find particular cause for satisfaction in the fact that no fresh taxation is envisaged for the coming year, that new schemes totalling more than three lakhs of rupees have been provided in the budget and that within the limits of impoverished revenues there are proposals for increased expenditure, notably more than rupees four lakhs on education, one lakh for agriculture and approximately half a lakh for veterinary work.

Turning to the question of the general budget, and dealing firstly with education we find that no less than rupees two lakhs on new schemes have been provided for. I do not propose to go into the matter in great detail as the Hon'ble Prime Minister has already dealt with this subject very fully in his speech. We are, however, particularly impressed with the fact

that Rs.63,000 has been allotted for the expansion of primary education, Rs.10,000 for the expansion of Madrasa education, Rs.12,000 for mass literacy campaign and that increased grants-in-aid for primary schools have been made to the Khasi and Jaintia Hills, Mikir Hills, South Lushai Hills and a so Sadiya. We have also every cause for satisfaction in noting that a sum has been set aside for the creation of certain special scholarships for the boys of scheduled, tribal and ex-tea garden labour classes

While on the subject of Tea Garden schools, I would like to remind the hon. members of the statement which was made by Mr Hockenhull during the last Budget Session to the effect that he hoped that in the course of the year every garden would have its own school. We are in the happy position to-day of being able to inform the House that from a total number of schools of 103 for the whole province in 1936, we have now a total of 369 in the Assam Valley and 160 in the Surma Valley making a total for the whole province of 529—an increase of more than 500 per cent. in 3 years. I think, perhaps, the hon. members will agree with me when I say that Mr. Hockenhull's promise has been fully implemented. A further point which might be of interest to the House is that, of these 529 schools, 85 per cent. are unaided by Government.

Turning to the question of the new embankment and drainage division, for which provision of a sum of Rs.66,000 has been made, we feel that this is a most welcome innovation as providing definite evidence that Government are determined to tackle this extremely difficult problem of recurring floods and that a Bill is being sponsored by the Government to provide the necessary powers whereby this scheme can be put into practical effect. There are however two points to which I would like to draw the attention of the Government ; firstly in our view that this division should be placed in expert hands and secondly, that preliminary advice by experts is very necessary. If considerable sums of money are to be expended on various schemes, it is, in our view, most essential that there should not be wastage of such funds. We understand there are a considerable number of small schemes which are to be undertaken at a very early date but we visualise in future schemes of very considerable magnitude being undertaken and it is, we consider, vital that every possible precaution should be taken to see that funds are not wasted.

Turning then to the question of Excise, I do not propose again to deal with this matter at length as this has also been dealt with fully by the Hon'ble Prime Minister. We note that Government's policy is to continue the experiment which was undertaken last year for the prohibition of opium but not to extend this experiment to more than the two existing subdivisions. Hon. members will recollect that at the time of discussing this experiment during the last Budget Session we put forward three views ; firstly that we fully appreciated the tremendous problem which was presented to Government in stopping illicit supplies to this province ; secondly that a grant of 1¼ lakh of rupees for the scheme was probably inadequate and thirdly that at the conclusion of one year's working we would welcome a full and true report from the Government on the scheme. We have ample evidence to show that during the course of a year the illicit trade has not been stopped. We note also that a sum of Rs.76,000 has been over expended on the experiment which we feel bears out very fully our view that 1¼ lakh was insufficient. We realize, as I have said, the colossal problem which presents itself in stopping the illicit trade. We also realise that it is probably impossible to guarantee a single medical cure for these addicts. We have reason to believe that in connection with the experiment in the Dibrugarh subdivision, based on information which we have collected most carfully from a number

of tea gardens—some 24 in the Subdivision—on which every effort has been made to check this opium habit, and we are forced to the conclusion that the only real effect of this experiment has been to provide vast profit for a circle of private individuals at the expense of the unhappy addicts. We therefore come to the conclusion that Government's policy of not extending the scheme to any further area is sound and we now await Government's report on the working of the first year with much interest.

Turning now to the question of land-revenue, we find that the fall in ordinary land-revenue receipts from 1936-37 to the budgeted figure for 1940-41 shows a staggering drop from one crore, eleven lakhs and sixty-six thousand to 86 lakhs for the present budget year. This shows a drop of no less than Rs.25½ lakhs of revenue in some three years. We agree that part of this drop in revenue has been due to real economic depression. We cannot, however, agree that the great proportion of this falling off has been justified. We feel that the continual remissions of revenue year after year are not in the real interest of the cultivators. Any small cash saving, if indeed there is any cash saving, to the cultivator himself bears very small relation to the vast benefits which might accrue to him, as has been pointed out by the Hon'ble Prime Minister, from improved water-supply, better road, more schools and improved irrigation and drainage. We are second to none in realising that in cases of severe flood and famine there is real necessity and justification for some relief, but we cannot agree that the wholesale remission such as the recent 12 lakhs' remission by the late Government can be justified. We heartily endorse the view of the Hon'ble Prime Minister on this matter of land-revenue remission, and would only say that with the prospect of rising prices for the current year, we trust that Government will seriously consider if any remission is called for during the year 1940-41. I must draw pointed attention also to the method of revenue collection. There is, as I have already pointed out, a big drop in revenue and we find a very significant figure in the Memorandum showing that no less than Rs.17,000 has been adjusted for cash misappropriation. We feel, Sir, that there is an imperative need for tightening up the whole system of revenue collection so that collections may be made regularly, fully and punctually.

Dealing briefly, Sir, with the matter of communications, we agree entirely with the Government of India's views that there is a real need for better control of motor transport and we would stress that immediate extension is now necessary for the system of traffic control in the province. As hon. members are aware, there are now two traffic control officers working in the province who are by general consent doing excellent work in undertaking heavy responsibilities and duties in checking over-loading, dangerous driving and other mal-practices, and on the principle that where responsible and heavy duties are undertaken and performed efficiently, then, the allowance and salary of such officers should be adequate and commensurate with the responsibility and work undertaken. We visualise the probability of an increase in traffic and a corresponding increase in the duties and responsibilities of these officers in the next few years. And I would press our views on the Government that these officers who undertake such work should receive adequate salaries.

In conclusion, I would again request the Government in all seriousness to examine thoroughly the whole question of remission of land-revenue during the year 1940-41 and to forego, except in real urgency, further needless remissions which, to judge by recent experience, tends to be based more on political expediency than genuine economic necessity.

Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the speech made by the Hon'ble Premier in presenting the Budget for the year 1940-41 marks a deep contrast to what he was accustomed to before our party took office for a period just extending a year. I feel flattered that my speech of the last year should have proved so stimulating that it enabled the good Premier to go beyond the fact of merely detailing the figures in the Memorandum on the Budget Estimate. But at the same time I feel very unhappy and extremely sorry that the facts contained therein should have been found by him so provoking that he was compelled to forget what is expected of the Hon'ble Finance Minister and particularly of Sir Muhammad who, as he himself says, has had the privilege and experience of presenting more than seven Budgets to the Legislature in Assam. Sir, I was rebuked by him for what he calls treating the House to political polemics. I was reminded that what I had said in my last year's Budget speech was meant for the gallery and the political propaganda while I categorically deny such allegation. I wish to assure him and the House that my condemnation of the Government of India Act, 1935 and the policy of Imperialism pursued by the British Government in India was done not with a view to enter into any polemics but was based on sheer conviction and on belief that as long as present relationship of the Central and Provincial Governments remain unchanged, there was no hope of bringing the province to a state of solvency. Sir, the fact of laying down reins of office when we had found it impossible to function with dignity and self-respect is a proof of how sincere we are in condemning the Government of India Act and how we are prepared to sacrifice for the cause of independence which every Indian should hold dear.

Sir, the Hon'ble Premier has spoken at length about the breakfast which he is relishing and the dinner which he is expecting. I would be the last person to deny him the breakfast which he is relishing and the dinner which he is expecting to-morrow. But, I am constrained to tell him that the opportunity of relishing the breakfast and of expecting the dinner, has been provided to him by the efforts and the sacrifice of the party to which I have the honour to belong. (*Hear, hear.*) Has Sir Muhammad made any effort or sacrifice which has brought him the breakfast? Moreover, if he is in office to-day, where he is in a position of relishing the breakfast, it is because this party has left the office under circumstances in which it will be unworthy for any Indian to accept this position of humility. Sir, he has criticised us and found fault with us for pursuing a policy which according to him has led the country to a hunger strike. If we had taken the same attitude, as has been taken by the Premier and which he advises us to take with regard to British domination in India what would have been the position of India to-day? Can any one deny that but for the stand taken by the Congress against Britain, Sir Muhammad would have got what he is relishing to-day? Sir, I was further told that on the occasion of presenting the budget it was not proper for me to enter into political polemics. But of what value can such an advice be when the preacher himself acts contrary to what he preaches? After hearing this sermon I had naturally expected that the Hon'ble Premier would come forward with proposals for improving the Finances of the province and with measures which will go to mitigate the miseries of the people. But what we do actually find? We find that his whole speech is full of polemics, whether financial, political or administrative. He has been pleased to tell me that I was not familiar with the condition, the events and the history of Assam. It is difficult for me to say why he thinks so. Is it because I have not had the privilege

and honour of being born in Assam and of being brought up in this province and because of his longer acquaintance with his Assam he can claim to have more knowledge than I am of the events and history of Assam ? Whatever the reasons which actuated the Hon'ble Premier to make this statement, I wish to add that in making allegations against the previous Governments for the present chaotic financial condition of the province I gave consideration to matters such as the peculiar condition of the province. I assert that the previous Government ought to have found ways and means to overcome these difficulties. He has on the other hand said that the present financial position of the province is mainly due to two factors, first, the remission of land revenue which the previous Government granted to the poor people, and secondly, the policy of 10 per cent. reduction of opium initiated by the previous Government But Sir, it is not surprising that he forgot to mention another fact or which is in fact responsible for the present chaotic financial condition of the Province. This province has been a close preserve of a community whose patronage he is enjoying to-day. But for this reason and not for giving remission of land revenue and reducing consumption of opium perhaps Assam would have been in a happier position to-day (*Hear, hear*).

Sir, while accusing us for paying a higher rate of interest on treasury bills it was very amusing to hear from the Hon'ble Premier the fact that, by exerting his personal influence over Sir James Taylor, he was able to have the interest on treasury bills reduced from 3 to 2½ per cent. I hope he is not insinuating that I took any commission from Sir James Taylor for allowing him to charge interest at the rate of 3 per cent. from the Government of Assam. I wish, however, Sir, to remove the impression created by the Hon'ble Premier that I have been responsible for paying interest at this increased rate. He would no doubt bear me out that before the war we paid on these treasury bills even at the rate of ½, 1 or 1½ per cent. interest and that only after the war the interest was increased to 3 per cent. It would be interesting for the Hon'ble Premier to know that it was the Congress Premier of Madras who made a representation to the Reserve Bank after it was discovered by him that the interest paid by the Central Government on such treasury bills was lower than what was paid by the Provincial Governments, that it had no justification in charging from the Provincial Governments the rate of interest at a higher rate. The subject matter of this representation was included in the agenda and would have come for consideration at the conference of the Finance Ministers which was fixed to be held in the month of January. That, however, did not take place because Ministries in Congress provinces had resigned in the meanwhile but I may assert that it was as a result of this representation that the Governor of the Reserve Bank had revised his policy and decided to charge the Provincial Governments the same rate of interest which it was charging on treasury bills from the Government of India. I hope, Sir, the House will now realise that it was not because of persuasion or personal influence exercised by the Premier over Sir James Taylor that the rate from 3 to 2½ per cent. was reduced for to think so will be doing a great injustice to Sir James Taylor who in such matters, I have no reason to believe, is guided by any other consideration than that of treating all the provinces on just and equitable grounds.

Sir, I was attacked by the Premier for bringing the taxation measures but it is amusing to find that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister who has had so much to say against these taxation measures, has relied on those very measures

for his breakfast (*Hear, hear*). Sir, he has not only kept intact the measures which I had the privilege to sponsor last year, but he has also not reduced the rate of tax on agricultural income as is evident from the Finance Bill for 1940 which he has introduced. If the income from the Agricultural Income-tax is so poisonous, if the income from the Amusements and Betting tax is one the incidence of which according to the Premier would fall only on the poor people, if the income from the tax on petrol and kerosene oil is not justified why has he kept these Acts, intact ? (*Hear, hear*) With the income derived from these very Acts, he has been able to make a provision for the Parliamentary Secretaries, Private Secretary and for an increase in his salary and those of his colleagues. If the hon. members would be pleased to look into the provisions made for Ministers' salaries, etc., they will find that expenditure on this one item alone has increased by nearly 50 per cent. The expenditure provided on account of Ministers' establishment, Parliamentary Secretaries and Private Secretary, as the hon. members will be able to find, comes to Rs.2,77,152—that is an excess by Rs.1,35,108 from that of last year. Sir, he has called the Agricultural Income-tax Act very obnoxious, as in his opinion the incidence of the tax will ultimately fall on the poor. I challenge him to prove that it is so. What I say to-day may not be accepted by my philosopher and guide, but he will have to admit, after he has got the facts and figures, that not one of the poor cultivators will ever have to pay the tax on agricultural income. Sir, I have yet to see that a poor cultivator derives a net income of Rs.3,000 per year from his cultivation on which alone he will have to pay the tax, as provided in the Act. If such an instance exists, by what imagination can he be called poor, is beyond my comprehension. I make bold to say that the incidence of this taxation will chiefly fall on the tea planter and in a smaller degree on the zemindars of Goalpara and Sylhet. The argument advanced by the Premier that if the zemindars have to pay the tax they will ultimately realise it from their poor tenants is without any basis and not tenable. The zemindars will then not only be inviting trouble from the peasantry but will also make themselves liable for further taxation. They will never follow such a course and the piece of advice given by our veteran leader, as is evident from what Mr. B. N. Mukerji, a zemindar, has said in this connection.

Then, Sir, I have been criticised for imposing the tax on amusements and betting and on petrol and lubricants. I have further been ridiculed for overestimating the yield from these sources. The only thing I should like to add now in this connection, Sir, beyond what I stated last year, is that, as far as I know, not a single pie has yet been realised as tax from betting, and racing from the Shillong race course. I do not know the present stage of the file with regard to this matter. I think, at this stage, it will not be proper for me to go into details on the particular matter, but sufficing it will be, to inform the House and I hope the Hon'ble Premier will also agree with me that our case stands on very good grounds and the tax when realised from this source will give a substantial yield. I had expected 1½ lakh as from this source and if we have got over 30 thousand rupees for a part of the year mainly from the cinemas, but not a pie from the betting, I do not know how the charge of overestimation can be levelled against us.

Then, Sir, as regards the tax on petrol and lubricants, I should like to mention here one important fact. When I was in office it was brought to my notice that the Commercial Carrying Company had not been paying the tax on petrol and lubricants consumed by their lorries and cars plying on Gauhati-Shillong road. I do not know, Sir, if the Hon'ble Minister in

giving us the figure from this source, has taken into account the income which we should get, in spite of their complete defiance from the Commercial Carrying Company. I do not know, Sir, if the Commercial Carrying Company has in the meantime been exempted by the Premier from paying this tax. But I can say this much, Sir, that if the collection of the tax is properly supervised and no concession and favour is bestowed by the Government. I have no doubt in my mind that we shall get over 4 lacs of rupees a year from this source of taxation. I hope Sir, the Hon'ble Minister in charge will please take note of what I have stated in this connection and inform the House as to what steps have so far been taken by the Government for realising this tax from the Commercial Carrying Company.

Then, Sir, we have been criticized for giving a last minute land revenue remission of 50 per cent. The Hon'ble Minister has accused us not only here but I have heard it mentioned also outside, that such a remission was given by us at the time of our going out of office only because we wanted to put the future Ministry in difficulty. But apart from the fact that we always stood and worked for such remission, may I remind the Hon'ble Prime Minister of what he said on the last occasion ? Sir, criticising the Budget Speech which I made last year the Hon'ble the Prime Minister said :

"The first is that our masses are suffering under a groaning poverty. To remove the poverty of the masses, in my opinion, three courses were open to him. First is to reduce the burden of taxation upon them in any shape whatsoever. Most of my friends have already told the House that this has not been done. Even the solemnly declared 50 per cent. reduction of revenue is not there in the Budget."

Sir, only last year he had gone out of his way to advise us that one way of removing the poverty of the poor people was by means of reducing the incidence of taxation on them, but this year we find him not only criticising us for the steps taken by us in this direction but also declaring it as mere spoon feeding. The House is aware of what I said on a number of occasions last year regarding the reduction of land revenue. I stated that when we took office the year was too advanced for us to issue fresh orders before the preparation of the dole and that the next step in the matter of reduction of land revenue would be taken up by us after the taxation bills were passed and when the time came for issuing fresh orders to the local district officers for the year 1940-41. If only last year my hon. friend was of opinion that to help the cultivator it was necessary to reduce the incidence of taxation on him, how can he now accuse us if we did in fact reduce the land revenue ? The Hon'ble Prime Minister has also been supported by my hon. friend Mr. Moore, the Leader of the European Group, when the former stated that the reduction of land revenue is neither in the interest of the poor cultivator nor will it help him. But may I ask Mr. Moore whether after going into the facts and figures he considers that the incidence of taxation on land is based on equitable and proper grounds ? What is the land revenue per bigha which he, as a tea planter, pays and what is the land revenue per bigha which is normally paid by the poor cultivators ? Is the assessment equitable, fair and just ? Is he justified in paying per bigha say about three to four annas at the most when he gets a net income of Rs. 60 or 70 per year from that piece of land while the poor cultivator pays over a rupee for the same land though his net income does not exceed 10 or 12 rupees ? It is all very easy to criticise the action taken in this matter by the previous Ministry, but I would only ask him to justify such criticism after going into the facts and figures. On what basis is the taxation based in his own country ? Do the poor people there pay higher rate of

taxation than the rich people? Sir, I assert that the principle in the matter of taxation and assessment of land revenue which is followed in his own country has not his support in India. By such criticism he makes it only too clear how he and his community feel about the poor people of this country.

Then, Sir, we were criticized for not putting into concrete shape what we had promised in our Budget Speech last year. The Hon'ble Premier, to illustrate his point, was pleased enough to single out one or two instances, particularly that of Dong system. He said "My predecessor, the Finance Minister, had promised to spend a sum of Rs.15,000 on what he called the Dong system but nothing in this direction was done by the previous Ministry prior to their resignation". Apart from the fact that persons living in glass houses should not throw stones on others, I can point out to him that a number of promises, which were made by him when he was a Minister in 1937-38, were not fulfilled by him. I can tell him that if we had promised to spend Rs.15,000 on Dong system we meant to spend the amount for the purpose we had allotted. I think my Hon'ble friend, the Revenue Minister will bear me out that I was responsible for sanctioning several amounts for Dong not only at one place but at a number of places particularly in Nalbari, Khetri, Dharmapur mauza and Merua and Kalkalia bund in Sylhet. In one case I also had made it a condition that 20 per cent. of the contribution for the construction of such a bund should be made by the local people for whose benefit such bund was to be constructed. Now, Sir, in face of these facts, for the Premier, to come forward and to say that our Ministry did nothing in that behalf is, to say the least which is very unkind and unjust. Sir, I invite the Hon'ble Revenue Minister to say if it is not a fact that the actual work if not done was only due to the fact that it was not possible for the Public Works Department to take these up during the rains.

Then, Sir, the very scheme of Drainage and Irrigation for which we have been asked to give our blessing is one, which if I may be allowed to say, owes its existence to us. I had mentioned about it in my last budget speech, and, soon after the session was over, instructions were issued to the Department concerned to work out the proposal. The scheme was prepared under our guidance and included in the new schemes to be undertaken in 1940-41. From what I have said there is no question of blessing the scheme as its very existence is due to us.....

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAIYIDUR RAHMAN: The scheme was started as far back as 1930.

Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: But it was put into concrete shape only last year. Before I switch off to other matters and in order to substantiate what I said in this connection I will refer to two matters which my hon. friend the Premier should have considered before accusing us for inactivity. In introducing the budget of 1938-39, he said, "a scheme of subsidised dispensaries for rural areas has been devised, and the sum of over twelve thousand rupees has been put down in the estimates for next year." Sir, only the other day this House passed a resolution regarding the subsidised dispensaries which alone would set the scheme envisaged as far back as in 1938-39 and my hon. friend though was in power for over 9 months after it had received the approval of the Assembly could not bring it into concrete shape. Secondly, in that very year he promised a sum of Rs.10,000 for a model village scheme, which was never spent. About this he said:— "By an oversight the sum of Rs.10,000 voted by the Assembly for the model village scheme was put in the budget of 1937-38 under 57.—Miscellnaeous,

which meant that the money could only be drawn and spent by the village authorities. This sum could not therefore be utilised for the purpose meant, and in the next year's budget a provision for Rs.25,000 has been made under the proper head. A Special Officer has also been appointed to organise the model villages on the lines laid down by the Ministry ". The sum of Rs.10,000 provided for in the budget of 1937-38 could not be spent as it was by mistake put under a wrong heading, but what explanation can be given for not utilising the sum of Rs.25,000 provided in the budget of 1938-39 although my hon friend, the Premier, remained in power for over 9 months after the budget was passed. The House will be interested to see that only Rs.25 was spent out of it.

Then, Sir, very impressive figures have been given by my hon. friend, the Prime Minister, in support of the creation of the post of the second Conservator of Forests by his Ministry. He would like the House to believe that by the creation of such a post he would be causing the Province a saving to an extent of Rs.22,000 per year. I have tried to work out these figures, and I feel myself constrained to differ from the Hon'ble Premier. I find that even the explanations given by the Hon'ble Prime Minister do not support his contention. He has explained that if the post of the Personal Assistant is converted into that of the Conservator, the incumbent of the post will get per month an overseas allowance of only £13 instead of £30, and that as a Conservator he would also not be entitled to an allowance of Rs.200 which he is now drawing as the Personal Assistant. This, in his opinion, therefore, will result into an ultimate saving to the extent of Rs.22,000 per year to the Government. I would however like to enlighten the House as to the exact nature of these figures. In the first year I admit that there will be a small saving of Rs.300 only because though the moment the Personal Assistant is promoted to the post of the Conservator he will start drawing Rs.1,750 per month instead of Rs.1,350 a month which he is now drawing but this increase in expenditure will be off set on account of the saving in allowance and on account of the reduction in overseas allowance. But, Sir, when the next year and in the following years for 5 years he will get an increase of Rs.100 a month per year, the hon. members will easily see that in the next year the expenditure on this account will increase by Rs.1,200, in the 3rd year by Rs.2,400, in the 4th year by Rs.3,600 and in the 5th year by Rs.4,800. In addition to that the House should bear in mind that the Personal Assistant, who is to be appointed as a second Conservator, has yet 8 years to go, and as the Hon'ble Prime Minister knows, that for acting as Head of the Department for over 5 years he would be entitled to get an extra pension of Rs.50×6=Rs.300 per year in addition to the additional pension of Rs.400 per year which he, as a Head of the Department, would be entitled to, over and above what he would get if he retired as a Deputy Conservator. I am therefore unable to find how this will bring an ultimate saving to the Province. I know that my hon. friend will now come out with an explanation by saying that the saving is caused to the province by the fact that it has no longer to pay for Mr. Harrison. May I ask him if he can give us an assurance that Mr. Harrison will never return to Assam ? Mr. Simmons another officer in this Department did return after he had gone to Dehra Dun. What guarantee is there that, if Mr. Harrison is not found suitable, and his services are no longer required at Dehra Dun, he will not be sent back to Assam ? As a matter of fact, the Hon'ble Prime Minister should have welcomed the much needed saving on account of Mr. Harrison going away to the Government of India. I had the privilege of going through the file, and it would not amount to giving away of the official secrets if I say that, when this post of the second

Conservator was retrenched, it was decided that it should be kept in abeyance and not restored till the forest revenue had risen over thirty lakhs of rupees per year. Has now the revenue increased to that extent ? It is I am afraid somewhere in the neighbourhood of 16 or 17 lakhs. Does he know that once he has decided to revive this post how difficult it will be for the future Government to do away with it ? He has told us that one way of improving the financial position of the province is by means of retrenchment. Is this the way in which he seeks to effect retrenchments ? Is this his way of reducing the top heavy expenditure of the province ? If he says that a second Conservator is necessary because the officers in the districts are not much up to the mark and therefore require supervision, so, I have no hesitation to say that these provincial officers who are now in charge of the districts were recruited, when my hon. friend, Sir Muhammad Saadulla was in charge of the administration of this province. To say to-day that these officers cannot be left to hold charge of districts without being supervised by the Personal Assistant or the Conservator, would speak ill of the choice made by him. I would ask him either to have full confidence in these officers, or if he finds that anyone of them is not doing his work properly he must take action against them and substitute in their place officers who can be well trusted and relied upon.

The Hon'ble Premier has spoken at great length about the schemes which have been embodied in the next year's budget. Before I go into the details of these schemes I would only point out to the House that in 1939-40, when the Agricultural Income tax Bill was only introduced and when we did not have at our disposal the increased income from various taxation measures, the Government of which I was a member, had embodied new schemes in the budget to an extent of Rs.3,34,271 out of which for Education alone, a sum of Rs.1,93,125 was provided. Then Sir, in 1938-39 in which year, my hon. friend had the privilege and honour of presenting the budget for that year, new schemes involving an expenditure only of Rs.44,221, were provided. In 1940-41 when my hon. friend has the advantage of having at his disposal an increased income of over Rs.30 lakhs from the Agricultural Income tax, and the various taxation measures, he has only embodied new schemes in the budget involving an expenditure of Rs.3,70,848. These figures will, if compared in an honest way, show how far they represent the intentions of the two Governments towards the people of the province. Sir, my hon. friend has spoken at length on the new education scheme which he claims to have provided. I make bold to say that it will be difficult for the Premier to contradict, if I say that most of these schemes for which he claims credit were prepared under our instruction and guidance and the only new education scheme that has been included by this Ministry is the one regarding the Girls' College at Gauhati.

On the other hand, I am pained to find that, while we had provided a sum of Rs. 87,000 for mass literacy campaign, this Government has reduced the provision for this scheme to Rs.12,000 only. Again I was sorry to find that this Government has reduced the provision of Rs. 50,000 intended to be provided by our Ministry for the introduction of free compulsory primary education in municipal areas throughout the province. This Government proposes to spend only Rs.10,000 which will necessarily imply only introduction of such education only in selected towns. Further, after our Ministry had decided to spend Rs.75,000 towards the Primary Education in the villages, this Government can hardly deserve our congratulation for reducing the amount to Rs.40,000. For the Hon'ble Premier, to come forward and say in face of these facts, that he is trying for the upliftment of the masses is indeed a mockery. Provisions on schemes,

which would have benefited the people, have been reduced in order to divert the amount so saved towards the provision for Private Secretaries, Parliamentary Secretaries and the increase in their salaries—provisions which are necessary for their own existence and not for the improvement of the condition of the masses.

The Hon'ble Premier has lost no oppurtunity to emphasise that by providing Rs.10,000 for Madrassa Education he has succeeded where I had failed last year. I had thought that he would be the last person to stoop to such tactics and utilise such opportunities as of mere political propaganda against me. If he would care to go through the last year's budget carefully, he would find that though no separate amount was specifically mentioned by me in my budget speech, I had stated last year in my reply to the budget criticism, there was an increase in expenditure on Muhammadan education by nearly Rs.2,000. In addition to that, I had provided a separate amount towards the Primary and Secondary Education in the immigrant areas. This year we have found no such provision on this account by a Ministry which has so much feeling for the poor backward immigrants. A sum of Rs.2,500 for the Islamic Madrassa at Shillong was provided at our instance in this year's schedule and I challenge the Premier to contradict this statement. In spite of this propaganda our conscience is clear and I assert that during our regime the claim of Muhammadan community received full consideration at our hands. The Madrassa at Rangiya, which is perhaps the only Madrassa in the Assam Valley, owes its existence to us. The provisions made for immigrant schools at Nowgong, Barpeta and Darrang are due to our efforts. To day my hon. friend Mr. Rouf, I do not know if he is here, criticised the Government for making no separate provision for education of the immigrants. But that very gentleman had no kind words for us when we had made such provisions for the immigrants last year.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I hope the hon. member is going to finish.

Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I have got two or three more important points, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : But the hon. member knows that I have given him more time than he wanted. But having regard to the peculiar position of the hon. member he may carry on and finish soon.

Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: We have been maligned so much that I feel it necessary to reply to all the charges made against us.

Sir, from the Budget I find that the Hon'ble Premier is intending to have a separate Department for the collection of Agricultural Income-tax, and it is also evident from his speech. If I am not mistaken, he has stated that the creation of a separate Department has become necessary because the Government of India want it so as they feel that their interest would not be well protected if their officer is also made responsible for supervising the collection of the provincial Agricultural Income-tax as well. May I tell him that over 90 per cent. of the provincial tax will be realised from the tea planters and as far as those 90 per cent. of the tax payers are concerned, there can be no question of dispute between the two Governments because the income from such a source will be assessed after making such reductions as are provided by the Central Government and then 40 per cent. of the tax on such income will go to the Central Government and 60 per cent. will come to the Provincial Government. I fail to understand how there can be opportunities for dispute bewteen the

two Governments when it is merely a question of splitting the tax in that proportion. The other portion of the tax will come from zemindars and it has been held that the Government of India has no claim on tax derived from this source. I for one do not understand how can there be any dispute with regard to this portion of the tax which will be realised from the zemindars not for the benefit of the Government of India but for the provincial Government. If these facts had been brought to the notice of the Government of India, I feel sure that they would not have insisted on the appointment of a separate Special Officer, who, in addition, to be given a salary of Rs.1,000 per mensem will naturally have to be provided with a separate establis hment, etc. Sir, I would ask the Hon'ble Minister to bear in mind that the income, which he has the privilege to derive from the Agricultural Income as a result of our efforts, is not to be spent on the salary and convenience of individual members.

Adjournment.

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

After lunch

Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I was speaking about the provision which the Government has made for having the work of Agricultural Income-tax Department supervised by a Special Officer to be appointed by the Government. The observation which I have made in this connection is not in a spirit of opposition but in a spirit of stretching the hand of help to him so that by accepting this suggestion he may cause a saving which should be as welcome to him as to us. I have, Sir, explained at length that if he had taken the trouble to approach the Government of India, I am sure the latter would not have stood in our way. They would have at least agreed to give a trial to the suggestion till it was found that there was conflict of interest between the two Governments. Now, Sir, there is another matter about which I should like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Premier and the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Revenue. This is a matter which concerns the well-being of the people living in Barpathar colonisation area and also which concerns the revenue of the province. I had the privilege of inspecting the Barpathar Development area and from my personal knowledge I can say that this area, which is over 14,200 acres and 60 per cent. of which has already been deforested for cultivation needs badly the communication and water-supply. As the Hon'ble Revenue Minister had seen the necessity of providing at least Rs. 2,998 in the coming year for five ring-wells and a road, it is surprising that a scheme of such imperative necessity has not found place in the list of new schemes submitted by the Ministry to this House. I don't know if the Hon'ble Revenue Minister has had time for going into this matter but I may warn him, that if this matter is not immediately taken up, the money spent on developing this area will go waste because I feel that the cultivators, with all these inconveniences and without any aid being given to them by Government, may be compelled to abandon this area opened up at huge expenditure. I should have thought that this Government would have considered this scheme a necessity and would have given their first preference to it. But, Sir, I find to my utter surprise that the measure which would have gone a great way to mitigate the miseries of the people for whom, I have been told, the Hon'ble Premier feels so much, has not found place in this year's new Schemes. Secondly, Sir, the Hon'ble Premier waxed eloquent about our not taking any action on the

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recommendation of the Retrenchment Committee. He has accused me for sleeping over these files for a period of ten months. He has moreover told us that the Retrenchment is one of the ways for improving the financial position of the province. Sir, I do not know how far he is justified in accusing me for sleeping over this matter. For the information of the hon. members of this House and also for his own benefit, I would like to say that, when we were in charge of the administration of the province we lost no time in going through the recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee; and I may also tell him that not only a number of these recommendations was examined by the various Ministers concerned but also many of them were discussed and disposed in Government meetings. The Hon'ble Premier should have been straight forward in placing before the House those recommendations which were disposed of by our Ministry. He also has failed to tell us what recommendations have been considered by him during the past few months. Sir, he will however agree with me that if, as a result of retrenchment saving has to be effected, the result of such a saving will not be perceptible immediately. Regarding the scale of pay, I should like to add that for the present we can only fix the salary of the new entrants and in this connection his Department will be pleased to tell him that, while I was the Finance Minister, I took pains of calling all the Heads of Departments to a conference where the question of scale of pay, for new entrants was thoroughly discussed The Finance Department was asked by me to tabulate the proposals before we resigned. If, Sir, these acts on the part of our Ministry have not helped my Hon'ble friend in coming to some decision on the retrenchment proposals, at least his experience and long acquaintance with the administration should have been sufficient for taking action on those proposals. But, Sir, on the other hand, we find that he has very vehemently supported the creation of the post of a Special Officer for war purposes—a measure which, I have no hesitation in saying before this House, our Ministry opposed and did not agree to make the province liable for an expenditure which was neither the concern nor in the interest of the Provincial Government. Hon. members are aware that the Central Government should be responsible for such an expenditure, but to-day after we have given up the reins of the administration, we find to our disgust and surprise that inspite of proceeding with retrenchment of expenditure, the Hon'ble Premier is incurring expendure on matters from which the province will not derive any benefit.

Sir, another instance of how the Premier intends to reduce expenditure will be evident from his anxiety to bring into existence new appointments of Private Secretary and the Publicity Officer, etc. Perhaps he thinks that expenditure on these items is more necessary than expenditure on ring wells and road for the Barpathar development areas. Sir, these facts will be sufficient to indicate to the hon. members the policy with regard to retrenchment or any other matter with which this Government wish to pursue. In this connection, I would like to remind the Hon'ble Premier of what he said about a year ago. He pointed out that there were only three ways for improving the financial position of the province, and one of these was by reducing the expenditure. If suggestions for the creation of the second post of Conservator, the creation of the post of a Special Officer for the war, and those for appointing the Publicity Officer, the Private Secretary and the Parliamentary Secretaries are samples of saving which the Hon'ble Premier wishes to effect, we may well expect what is to follow.

Then, Sir, in this year's Budget we find that the Hon'ble Prime Minister has made a proposal for raising a loan of 50 thousand rupees as was done by me last year. I do not propose to speak about this matter in a spirit of opposition but only with a view to remind the Premier and the House what he said last year in criticising my proposal for raising a similar loan. He said, Sir, "Then it is proposed to take a loan of Rs. 50 lakhs, to cover deficits which we have got to pay. There is no doubt that we must make some arrangement for paying it. Whether a loan of a sum of half a crore is the best way is a matter which requires very serious thought. I do not say that my friend the Finance Minister has not given careful attention to it. I will throw out a suggestion. He proposes to start a sinking fund of Rs. 2 lakhs and 15 thousand annually to pay off the loan in 20 years. This will make a mill stone round the neck of the Assam Finances for the next 20 years. It will mean that the future Budgets will be deprived of a sum of 2 lakhs, 15 thousand annually for new schemes. If we could devise some method, some way not to take loan it will be a great saving to the province. While I was in office I had considered the subject from the point of view of utilising the provident fund subscriptions that each year we get from our public servants. From the Budget Memorandum of the year 1937-38, I find that the total subscriptions to the provident fund were Rs.15,11,000, and the disbursements during that year were Rs.7,78,000 or there was a surplus from income of over 7 lakhs. This year also I find from the Budget Memorandum at page 12 the estimate of Rs.15,57 000 on the receipt side, while the estimated expenditure is Rs.10,71,000—this covers withdrawals and temporary advances during the year. There were some very heavy withdrawal recently on account of retirements and deaths of some highly paid officers—owing to the retirement of Dr. Hutton and Mr. Prichard and the unfortunate death of our Chief Engineer Mr. Shaw, even so there was a surplus of over 5 lakhs of Rupees in this fund. Hon. members know full well that to the subscribers to this fund we have to pay 4 per cent. interest. My idea is (I make this suggestion in a spirit of friendliness) whether a separate fund could not be started with the surplus of this provident fund, and instead of borrowing in the open market which at the least will bear interest at 3 per cent. we utilise this money, and for the balance we borrow for short terms by means of treasury bills where the interest is only ½ per cent. or 1 per cent. I therefore request my hon. friend to seriously consider whether he should take this loan this year at all. In the first place there are two difficulties; and it was on account of that last year, although I had made provision in the Budget for paying interest on a loan of rupees thirty-five lakhs, for brokerage to the Reserve Bank this was not done. We will be competing in the open market, and if richer provinces with big budgets of income extending over 10 and 16 crores get money at 3 per cent. can we not get our loan at the same rate of interest since our total income is less even than the income of the Corporations of Calcutta and Bombay. If we do not get the money at 3 per cent. our credit will be shaken for the future. Therefore, my advice and advice gained by experiences is that the Ministry should be very chary of borrowing at the present juncture in the open market."

Sir, this was the piece of advice the Hon'ble Premier gave me last year; but to-day he has come forward with a similar proposal for the loan. With so many years' experience of the administration he seems now to have come to the same conclusion as I did last year. He was opposed to my taking loan at 3 per cent. but now he proposes to do at a higher rate of interest, *i.e.*, 4 per cent., at a time when the time is less favourable for floating loans.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: How much more time the hon. member will want ?

Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I want another 10 minutes, Sir. Then, Sir, I should like to quote a few sentences from the last year's budget criticism of Sir Muhammad Saadulla to show the views he then held regarding "Assam Rifles". He said as follows:—

"This Budget presented by a Finance Minister belonging to that great organisation of the Congress which have undertaken to wrest independence of India from the British Imperialism, ought to have made its stand firstly for the independence of Assam's finance from the hands of the Central Government. I read and read the speech of my hon. friend the Finance Minister to find out if he has ever proposed to fight for our genuine grievances on account of our non-sharing in the excise duty on petrol and kerosene, and relief from our share of the frontier defence force—the Assam Rifles."

The Hon'ble Premier was disappointed last year on my failure to raise a protest and fight for relief from our share of the frontier defence force—the Assam Rifles. But this year we find him agreeing to make an extra provision of Rs.27,000 for the Assam Rifles instead of fighting as he would have liked me to do for relief from our share of the Frontier Defence.

Then, Sir, the Hon'ble the Prime Minister has shown us the way as to how he proposes to remove the miseries of the poor people in the villages. He has told us that he was not going to renew the enhanced Stamp and Court Fees Act, 1936. I do not know, Sir, if by throwing this suggestion, he wanted to tell the members of the House and the people outside that the Congress Ministry had at any time intended by renewing this Act to increase the burden of taxation on the people. There is nothing on record to show that the rates were either enhanced by the Congress Ministry last year, or that we had proposed to do so this year. It is, however, gratifying to find that the Hon'ble Premier, has, by deciding not to renew this Act, supported the wishes of the people and at least in this matter fallen in line with the party which stands for the reduction of the burden of the taxation on the poor, in whatever form. At the beginning of the Premier's speech we heard that, in order to understand the real causes of the financial problems of our province, we have to look and compare the history and events of this province, and after we have completely appreciated them, we have then to devise ways and means by which the finances of the province can be improved. I was all the time therefore looking forward for a concrete suggestion which I thought he would throw in the course of his speech for improving the finances of the province. But ultimately what do we find at page 30 towards the end of his speech? This is how he has concluded: "This state of affairs cannot continue long, we should devise ways and means to wipe off our debt and start with a clean slate. One way of improving our finances is the method of retrenchment, the other way is by finding ways of adding to our resources". Sir, in this very speech he had accused me for bringing the various taxation proposals which I had the honour of doing so before the House last year. But while he accuses me for increasing the revenue of the province in that way, he also admits that the only way to improve the finances of the province is by tapping new sources of income. We have been waiting for him over 15 or 20 years, during most of which period he was in charge of administration to give us some suggestions, but we have failed to find one single instance in which he proposed to tackle the question of improving the income of the province. On the other hand, when I, after only an experience of a few months, gave the province some lead in the matter he was the first one to criticise those measures and to mislead his party by stating without any facts and figures that the incidence of those measures would hit the poor. He is not justified in assuming that I

ever claimed to be the saviour of Assam finances for I would be the last person to usurp what my friend has been claiming for the last decade but what I do claim is that in my own way I made a serious effort for improving the financial position of the province. To-day I feel proud to say that I have left the finances of the province in a much better state than what I had found them when I took over charge of the Finance Department. To support this conviction, I would request the hon. members to look at the figures in the Budget for the last few years. My Hon'ble friend was in charge of the administration since 1937 till he was thrown out later in September 1938. Apart from the excess of expenditure over revenue in 1937-38, the excess of expenditure over revenue in 1938-39 was 41 lakhs, and the excess of expenditure over revenue in 1939-40, for which I may be held responsible, was 18 lakhs 26 thousand. If my Hon'ble friend and his supporters had not stood in the way of the various taxation measures which, but for their unholy alliance and efforts would have been passed earlier and realised in time, the position at the end of 1939-40 would have been different. Even according to his own estimate, an amount of 25 lakhs from the Agricultural Income-tax Act would have come to us which would have left a surplus of nearly 6 lakhs of rupees at the end of the year and the excess of expenditure over the revenues for the budgeting year would have been considerably reduced. Therefore, he should, instead of criticising me, be thankful that I had left him in a happier position which he should have utilised in making up schemes which would benefit the masses. But it is a pity that he has given no consideration in that direction and has failed to do what is expected of a Finance Minister. We had left proposals to be embodied in our schemes for 1940-41 involving an expenditure of 13 lakhs of rupees most of which were framed for the benefit of the masses and would have gone a great way to give them the much needed relief. But it is a matter of regret that instead of spending time and additional income over these proposals and doing something for the people, he has wasted his time in finding fault with our administration and with our way of thinking and the increased resources in doing good to himself, his supporters and a few individuals. Moreover, is it not ungrateful on his part to criticise those very taxation proposals but for which he would not be in a position to provide increased salary and facilities for himself ?

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: সভাপতি মহোদয়, মাননীয় অর্থ সচিব বর্ত্তমান বর্ষের আসামের আয় ব্যয়ের যে বরাদ্দ এই House এ পেশ করিয়াছেন তৎপ্রসঙ্গে আমি কিছু আলোচনা করিতে চাই।

বর্ত্তমানে বিশাল ভারতের রাজনীতি ক্ষেত্রে সংখ্যাগরিষ্ঠের একাধিপত্য বিস্তারকারী বিশিষ্ট দলের কুটনীতি জালের বেষ্ঠণে পিষিত হইয়া নানাপ্রকার ভীষণ প্রতিযোগিতার মধ্য-দিয়া বিভিন্ন রকম জটিল সমস্যা ভেদ করিয়াও যে এই প্রদেশের সর্ব্ব জাতীয় দল মিলিত এরকম একটী মন্ত্রীসভা গঠন করিতে সমর্থ হইয়াছেন তজ্জন্য আমি বর্ত্তমান মাননীয় প্রধান মন্ত্রী মহোদয়কে এবং এই মন্ত্রী সভাকে অভিনন্দন জ্ঞাপন করিতেছি।

কিন্তু, বাজেট দেখিয়া আশান্বিত মনেও নিরাশার কালো মেঘ ঘনাইয়া আসিতেছে। ভেবে ছিলাম দুতিন বার ভাঙ্গাগড়ার পর হয়ত যে মন্ত্রী সভা গঠন হইবে উহা নিশ্চয়ই জনপ্রিয় হইবে। কিন্তু হায়, বর্ত্তমান মন্ত্রী সভার ইচ্ছা বা অনিচ্ছা স্বত্বেই হউক দুর্ভাগ্য দেশের

জনসাধারণের উপকারের জন্য এই বাজেটে অত্যাবশ্যকীয় উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ কিছুই পাইতেছি না। যাহা আছে তাহার চেয়ে আরও বেশী পাওয়ার কামনা ছিল। আমি চাই দেশের প্রকৃত অভাব গ্রস্ত গরীবের উপকার। মাননীয় অর্থ সচিব বা প্রিমিয়ার এবং অন্যান্য মন্ত্রী মণ্ডলী বোধ হয় তাঁহাদের কার্য্যভার গ্রহণের পর দেশের আভ্যন্তরীন অভাব এবং দুরবস্থা সূক্ষ্ম দৃষ্টিতে লক্ষ্য করিবার অবসর পান নাই; তাই উহার প্রতিকার কল্পে এই বাজেটে উপযুক্ত ব্যবস্থার উপায় করিতে পারেন নাই। শৈলমঞ্চ হইতে দূরবর্ত্তী অঞ্চলের অভাব অভিযোগ দেখা শুনা এবং উহা মোচন করা হয়ত তাঁহাদের পক্ষে সম্ভব হয় না। কিন্তু ঐর ম অঞ্চলেই দেশের প্রায় সমস্ত লোক বাস করে। তাহারাই দেশের মেরুদণ্ড তাহারাই দেশের হস্তপদ বা খুঁটী, তাহাদের রক্তেই দেশের আয়—তাহাদের জন্যই শাসন এবং তাহাদের কাঁধেই সিংহাসন। আমি তাহাদের দুঃখ-বেদনা লাঘব এবং অভাব অভিযোগ জ্ঞাপন সাপেক্ষ এবং ঐ সমস্তের প্রতিকার কামনায় দু-একটী কথা সংক্ষেপে বলিব।

শিক্ষা

বিশ্বের এই নব জাগরনের দিনে দেশবিদেশের সভ্য জাতির মধ্যে বোধ হয় আসামের ন্যায় কোথাও কোন দেশের লোক বা জাতি মূর্খতার অজ্ঞান অন্ধকারে নিমজ্জিত নাই; কারণ এই দেশে শতকরা গড়ে ২।১ জনের বেশী শিক্ষিত নাই। কোন কোন গ্রামে তাহাদের মাতৃভাষায় একখানা চিঠি পড়িবার বা বিশিষ্ট অঞ্চলে ৫।১০ গ্রামের মধ্যে একখানা টেলিগ্রাম পড়িবার জন্য কোন লোক খুঁজিয়া পাওয়া যায় না। তাহাদের আর্থিক অবস্থাও নেহাৎ খারাপ—তাই তাহারা নিজেরা টাকা খরচ করিয়া স্কুল মাদ্রাসা স্থাপন করিতে বা সহরে বাজারে রাখিয়া ছেলেমেয়েদের লিখা-পড়া শিখাইতে পারিতেছেনা। তাই দেশের লক্ষ লক্ষ ছেলে মেয়ে মূর্খ থাকিয়া যাইতেছে। আমরা আশা করিয়াছিলাম আরও উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ টাকা প্রাইমারী শিক্ষার জন্য বাজেটে ধরা হইবে। যত দিন পর্য্যন্ত দেশের মূর্খতা দূর করিয়া দেশবাসীকে শিক্ষিত করার ব্যবস্থা না করা যাবে ততদিন পর্য্যন্ত কখনও দেশের কোন প্রকার উন্নতির আশা করা যায় না। আমি গভর্ণমেণ্টকে অনুরোধ করি কৃষি আয় কর হইতে এই প্রদেশের যাহা আয় হইবে তাহার সমস্ত টাকাই যেন শিক্ষা বিভাগে নিয়া ৩০।৪০ জন ছেলেমেয়ে থাকা প্রত্যেক গ্রামে এক একটী করিয়া প্রাইমারী স্কুল তাহাদের নিজ নিজ মাতৃভাষায় স্থাপন ক্রমে অগৌণে বাধ্যতামূলক প্রাইমারী শিক্ষার ব্যবস্থা অবশ্য অবশ্য করিবেন। ইহা ছাড়া অভাবহীন শিক্ষিত সমাজের সুবিধার জন্য শুধু সহরের ২।১ টা পুরাতন কলেজের প্রফেসার বাড়াইয়া দিলে দেশের গরীব জন সাধারণের বিশেষ কোন উপকার হইবে না এবং তাহাতে দেশবাসীও সুখী হইবে না।

কৃষি

পাহাড়-পর্ব্বতে ঘেরা, নদী-নালায় বেড়া জঙ্গলাকীর্ণ প্রাকৃতিক সৌন্দর্য্যময়ী আমাদের এইটী কৃষি প্রধান দেশ। যে কৃষকের উৎপন্ন কৃষিজাত শস্য ছাড়া দেশের আহার্য্য দ্রব্য সংগ্রহের উপায় নাই সেই কৃষকেরই কৃষিজাত শস্য উৎপাদনের সাহায্যের উপযুক্ত ব্যবস্থা করিতে গভর্ণমেণ্ট কেন যে কৃপণতা করিতেছেন তাহার কারণ বুঝিতে পারিতেছি না। কৃষি বিভাগ হইতে প্রতিবৎসর হাজার হাজার টাকা খরচ করিয়া কতিপয় স্থানে সামান্য শাক-সবজি, ফল ফসল উৎপন্নের জন্য কৃষি ফার্ম্ম খুলিয়াছেন এবং তাহার পিছনে প্রতি বৎসর অজস্র টাকা খরচ করিতেছেন। উহাতে কত টাকা আয় হইয়াছে বা দেশের কি উপকার হইয়াছে বা ভবিষ্যতে কি হইবে এবং তাহাতে কৃষকের কি লাভ হইবে? আমি বলি কিছুই হয় নাই এবং হইবেও না। তাহার চেয়ে দেশের বিভিন্ন স্থানে আবশ্যক মত জল-সেচন, বন্যার কবল হইতে রক্ষা পাইবার জন্য উপযুক্ত বাঁধ দেওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করা এবং আবশ্যকমত ঠিক নির্দ্দিষ্ট সময়ে খাঁটি বীজ দিয়া তাহাদিগকে সাহায্য ও উৎসাহিত করা উচিত। ইহা ছাড়া প্রকৃত কৃষক দিগকে আর কৃষি কার্য্য শিক্ষা দিবার দরকার পড়ে না। তার প্রমাণ স্বরূপ ঐ দেখুন। ব্রহ্মপুত্র ভেলীতে অনুমান ১০।১২ লক্ষ কষ্ট সহিষ্ণু, কঠোর পরিশ্রমী, খাঁটি কৃষক বিনা মাহিয়ানায়, নিজ খোরাকাতে বন্য চরিত, হিংস্র ঘেরিত গহণ বনের বাঘ ভালুকের সহিত লড়াই করিয়া রৌদ্রে পুড়িয়া, বৃষ্টিতে ভিজিয়া, জোঁককে শোষাইয়া, মশাকে খাওয়াইয়া অবশেষে ম্যালেরীয়ায়, ইনফ্লুয়েঞ্জা ইত্যাদি সংক্রামক ব্যাধিতে আত্মবিসর্জ্জন দিয়াও ব্রহ্মপুত্র ভেলীকে জনাকীর্ণ পল্লী ও হাট বাজার বিশিষ্ট শস্য শ্যামলা একটী সুন্দর কৃষি ফার্ম্মে পরিণত করিয়াছে এবং তাহাদেরই অর্জ্জিত শস্যমধ্য হইতে প্রায় ৬০।৭০ লক্ষ মণ পাট প্রতিবৎসর বিদেশে রপ্তানি হইতেছে এবং উক্ত পাট হইতে গভর্ণমেণ্ট প্রতিবৎসর অনুমান ১৪।১৫ লক্ষ টাকা জুট ডিউটি পাইতেছেন। কিন্তু বড়ই দুঃখের বিষয় যে সকল কৃষক মাথার ঘাম পায়ে ফেলিয়া, জলে পচিয়া এতকষ্টে ঐ সমস্ত পাট ও অপরাপর শস্য অর্জ্জন করে তাহারা উহার উপযুক্ত মূল্য পায় না। লাভবান হয় বিদেশী ধণিক-বণিক ও শোষকের দল। তৎপ্রতি গভর্ণমেণ্টের আদৌ দৃষ্টি নাই। এবার কৃষকগণ পাট বিক্রয় করিয়াছে মণ প্রতি ৩৲ টাকা হইতে ৫৲—৭৲ টাকা দরে আর ব্যবসায়ীগণ বিক্রয় করিতেছেন ১৫৲—২০৲ টাকা দরে। আমি আশা করি গভর্ণমেণ্ট অজ্ঞ কৃষকদের রক্ষার জন্য পাট এবং তাহাদের কৃষিজাত অপরাপর শস্য যাহাতে উপযুক্ত পরিমান উচ্চ মূল্যে বিক্রয় করিতে পারে তৎপ্রতি বেঙ্গল গভর্ণমেণ্টের ন্যায় আশু তীক্ষ্ম দৃষ্টি নিক্ষেপ করিবেন এং তাহারা যাহাতে আরও ভাল ভাবে বেশী পরিমান পাট অর্জ্জন করিতে পারে তাহার উপযুক্ত সাহায্য করিবেন। কৃষকের হাল কর্ষণ এবং গাভীর দুগ্ধ দানের জন্য অত্যাবশ্যকীয় গো জাতিকে সংক্রামক পীড়ার কবল হইতে রক্ষার জন্য প্রতি কেন্দ্রে কেন্দ্রে পশু চিকিৎসালয় স্থাপন ও উহার প্রসার বৃদ্ধি করা অগৌনে একান্ত দরকার।

জন স্বাস্থ্য ও চিকিৎসা

দেশের অভ্যন্তরে পতিত বন জঙ্গল থাকায় এবং পানীয় জলের জন্য উপযুক্ত জলাশয় না থাকায় খাল, বিল, নালা, গর্ত্তের কর্দ্দমাও পচা জল পান করায় দেশের সর্ব্বত্র কলেরা, ম্যালেরীয়া, কালাজ্বর ইত্যাদি সংক্রামক পীড়ায় দেশ ছাইয়া গিয়াছে। কাজেই জনস্বাস্থ্য রক্ষার জন্য পতিত বন জঙ্গল পরিষ্কার এবং উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ আরও জলাশয়ের ব্যবস্থা করা দরকার এবং কেন্দ্রে কেন্দ্রে আরও বেশী পরিমাণ চিকিৎসালয় স্থাপনক্রমে গরীব দেশ বাসীকে অকাল মৃত্যুর হাত হইতে রক্ষা করিবার কামনা করি।

রাস্তা

আমাদের পল্লী অঞ্চলে যাতায়াতের রাস্তা না থাকায় জল কাঁদার মধ্য দিয়া, জঙ্গল ভাঙ্গিয়া যাতায়াত করিতে হয়। লোকেল বোর্ড উপযুক্ত পরিমান টাকার অভাবে রাস্তার অভাব মোটেই দূর করিতে পারেনা। কাজেই এই গভর্ণমেণ্টকে অনুরোধ করিতে চাই যে Rural Developmentএর টাকা দিয়া কতক গ্রাম্য রাস্তা হইতে পারে বটে কিন্তু লোকেল অফিসারের উচিত নিজে গ্রামান্তরে গিয়া গ্রাম্য লোকদিগকে দিয়া উপদেশ ও উৎসাহ দিয়া কার্য্য করান। শুধু কেন্দ্রে বসিয়া কাগজে লিখিয়া রাখিলে কোন উপকার হইবেনা। রাস্তার জন্য গভর্ণমেণ্ট হইতে আরও উপযুক্ত পরিমাণ টাকা খরচ করা উচিত। লক্ষীপুর হইতে ফকিরগঞ্জ পর্য্যন্ত Public Works Departmentএর রাস্তাটা কখনও কোন অবস্থায় কিছুতেই না উঠাইয়া বরং ভাল করিয়া সর্ব্বসাধারণের যাতায়াতের সুবিধার ব্যবস্থা কায়েম রাখিতেই হইবে।

রাজস্ব

গভর্ণমেণ্ট বিশেষ ভাবে অবগত আছেন যে গোয়ালপাড়া প্রজাস্বত্ব আইনের সংশোধনী বিল পাশের জন্য ক্রমাগত তিন বৎসর যাবৎ গোয়ালপাড়ার সমস্ত সদস্য গণই আপ্রাণ চেষ্টা করিয়া আসিতেছেন। বহুবার আমাদের পক্ষ হইতে ও উক্ত সংশোধনী বিল আনা হইয়াছে—গভর্ণমেণ্টের পক্ষ হইতেও আনা হইয়াছে, enquiry হইয়াছে, Select Committeeর রিপোর্ট গভর্ণমেণ্ট পাইয়াছেন এবং অবশেষে কন্‌ফারেন্সে জমিদার পক্ষের সহিত আমাদের প্রজাপক্ষের মিলিত আপোষেও একটা নিষ্পত্তি হইয়াছে। এমত অবস্থায় উক্ত বিল পাশ নাহইবার অন্ততঃ কোন কারণ থাকিতে পারেনা বা নাই। এতদ-স্বত্বেও যদি উক্ত বিল এই সেসনে পাশের ব্যবস্থা নাহয় তবে মনে করিব উহা বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টের অবহেলা এবং শিথিলতার জন্য পাশ হইলনা। আরও মনে করিব গোয়ালপাড়া জিলার অনুমান ৪।৫ লক্ষ সর্ব্বজাতি প্রজার বহুকালের আকাঙ্ক্ষিত ও বাঞ্ছিত ন্যায্য দাবী দূরে ঠেলিয়া বাস্তবিকই সামান্য কয়েকজন প্রবল

প্রতাপশালী শোষক জমিদারের প্রভাবে প্রভাবান্বিত জমিদার দরদী হইয়া গোয়ালপাড়া জিলার প্রজার প্রতি ঘোর অন্যায় অবিচার করিতেন জমিদারী জুলুম হইতে প্রজাকে রক্ষা করিবার বর্ত্তমান গভর্ণমেণ্টের বাস্তবিকই আদৌ সদিচ্ছা নাই।

ইমিগ্রাণ্ট ও লাইন প্রথা

গত পরশু বিপক্ষ দলের আমার বন্ধু প্রবর শ্রীযুক্ত বেলিরাম দাস ও শ্রীযুক্ত হলধর ভূইয়া লাইন ও ইমিগ্রাণ্ট সম্বন্ধে যাহা বলিয়াছেন তৎসম্বন্ধে এবং ঐ প্রসঙ্গে আমার প্রাণের দুটি কথা এবং আকুল আবেদন আজ আমি এই House এ জানাইতে চাই।

মহোদয়, আমি একজন ইমিগ্রাণ্ট, আমি গোয়ালপাড়ায় থাকি। সকলেই জানেন গোয়ালপাড়া, সিলেট ইত্যাদি কতিপয় জিলা ইতিপূর্ব্বে বাঙ্গলার অন্তর্ভুক্ত ছিল, পরে বাঙ্গলা হইতে ছাট পড়িয়া আসামে ভুক্ত হইয়াছে। তথাপি ঐ সব জিলার বাসিন্দা বাঙ্গালীই রহিয়া গিয়াছে। তাই ঐ সমস্ত জিলা হইতে আসামের অপরাপর জিলায় লোক যাওয়া বিচিত্র নয়। যাহা হউক নিজেদের স্বেচ্ছাকৃত ভাবেই হউক আর জমিদার মিরাশদার গণের জমিচাষের জন্য ডাকিয়াই আনুন, আমরা আসিয়াছি; যখন যেথায় যাহার অভাব হয় তখন তাহা অবশ্য পূরণের ব্যবস্থা হয় তাই ব্রহ্মপুত্র ভেলীর বন জঙ্গল পরিষ্কারের ও আবাদের দরকার হইয়াছিল, দুর্ভাগ্যক্রমে তাই বিধাতা আমাদিগকে এদেশে আনিয়াছিলেন। আমরা স্বদেশের পৈত্রিক ভিটা মাটি বিক্রয় করে, আত্মীয় বন্ধু বান্ধব প্রতিবেশী ছেড়ে জন্মভূমি সোনার বাঙ্গলার মায়া ত্যাগ করে, স্ত্রী পুত্র পরিজন সহ আসামের নিবিড় অরণ্যে প্রবেশ করিয়া বাঘ, ভল্লুক, বন্য হিংস্র জন্তুর সহিত গাছের তলায় বাস করি। তৎপর বহুকষ্টে দেশ হইতে আনিত বহু অর্থ ব্যয়ে ক্রমান্বয়ে নল, খাগড়া কাটিয়া কিছু কিছু আবাদ করিতে থাকি। এই ভাবে আস্তে আস্তে আসামের সর্ব্বত্র পূর্ব্ব বাসিন্দার আহ্বানেই আমরা ছড়াইয়া পড়ি। যাহাদের হাতে অর্থ ছিল তাহারা কিছু কিছু খাস্ জমি পত্তন নিয়েছিল এবং ২।৪ খানা খড়ের ঘর বাঁধিয়া কিছু কিছু জমি চাষ আবাদ ক্রমে নিজেদের ছেলে মেয়ে সহ জীবন রক্ষার ব্যবস্থা করিতে পারিয়াছিল; আর যাহারা গরীব অর্থহীন তাহারা পাট্টাদাতা জমিদারগণকে উপযুক্তমত সন্তুষ্ট করিতে পারে নাই—তাই তাহাদের ভাগ্যে এক কাঠা জমিও মিলে নাই। পথের খরচ অভাবে পুনরায় বাঙ্গলাদেশেও ফিরিয়া যাইতে পারে নাই। অগত্যা তাহারা নিরুপায় হইয়া বিতাড়িত পশুর ন্যায় জঙ্গলে জঙ্গলে দ্বারে দ্বারে ঘুরিয়া ঘুরিয়া বেড়াইবার পর স্ত্রী পুত্রের পেটের জ্বালায় বিভিন্ন স্থানে আশ্রয় নিয়া কেহ বা আধি-বর্গা, কেহবা দিন মজুরি করিয়া অতি কষ্টে শৃগাল কুকুরের ন্যায় জীবন রক্ষা করিয়া আসিতেছিল এবং কেহ বা ভ্রান্ত, ক্লান্ত, শ্রান্ত তৃষ্ণার্ত্ত পথিকের ন্যায় জীবন ধারণের জন্য লৌহজালে বেষ্ঠিত প্রশান্ত মহাসাগর স্বরূপ আসামের লাইনের চারি দিকে ঘুরিয়া বেড়াইতেছিল এবং ইহা ঠিক সত্য যে ঐ অবস্থায় উদ্ভ্রান্ত পথিকের ন্যায় অনিচ্ছা স্বত্বে অগত্যা বাধ্য

হইয়া ভগ্ন জালের মধ্যে এবং আবেষ্টিত স্থানে প্রবেশ করিয়া আশ্রয় নিতে বাধ্য হইয়াছিল। মহাশয়, আমরাও মানুষ, পৃথিবীর সভ্য জাতির একটী জাতি—আমরা ভারত বাসী, আমরা বাঙ্গালী, বিধির বিধানেই দেশান্তরিত হইয়া আসামে আসিয়াছি। আমরা চোর ডাকাত নই, আমরা রাজা জমিদার নই, আমরা ধনিক বনিক নই, আমরা লুণ্ঠন কারী বা দিগ্বিজয়ী নই—আমরা আসাম জয় করিতে আসি নাই। আমরা অশিক্ষিত মূর্খ দীন হীন, গরীব, নিরন্ন, সহায় সম্বল হীন, জন্মভূমি, স্বদেশ, আত্মীয় পরিজন হারা দেশছাড়া, আশ্রয় হীন, বুভুক্ষু মুমূর্ষু, অনুগ্রহ প্রার্থী, দিশাহারা সাধারণ কয়েকজন কৃষক— আমাদের পেটে ভাত নাই, পরিধানে বস্ত্র নাই, থাকার ঘর নাই, হালের গরু নাই, আবাদের এক ছটাক জমি নাই—আমরা আজ মরণ পথের পথিক।

গত বাংলা ১৩৩৭ সনের প্রবল ভূমিকম্পে গোয়ালপাড়া জিলার অধিকাংশ স্থান বিধ্বস্ত হইয়া মরু ভূমিতে পরিণত হইয়াছে। তৎপর অজন্মায় এবং উপর্যুপরি কয়েক বৎসরের প্রবল বন্যায় অধিকাংশ জমি বালুকাময় হইয়া আবাদের অনুপযুক্ত হইয়াছে এবং বহু গ্রাম ব্রহ্মপুত্র নদীতে ভাঙ্গিয়া যাওয়ায় ভুতপূর্ব্ব কংগ্রেসের প্রধান মন্ত্রী মাননীয় শ্রীযুক্ত গোপী নাথ বড়দলৈ মহোদয় গোয়ালপাড়া দর্শণ কালীন হাজার হাজার জমিশূন্য বন্যা বিধ্বস্ত লোক সাহায্যের জন্য আবেদন করিলে তিনি তাহাদিগকে উপদেশ দেন যে এই অঞ্চল আর ভাল হওয়ার সম্ভাবনা নাই, কাজেই তোমরা এই অঞ্চল হইতে উঠিয়া গিয়া পতিত অপরাপর উচু ভাল স্থানে গিয়া বসতি স্থাপন কর ইত্যাদি।

The Hon'ble Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : কে আশ্বাস বাণী দিয়াছিলেন ?

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: শ্রীযুত্ গোপীনাথ বড়দলৈ। তাহার আশ্বাস বাণীতে আমাদের গোয়ালপাড়া হইতে অন্যূন ৪০।৫০ হাজার বন্যা বিধ্বস্ত নদী ভাঙ্গা জমি শূন্য কৃষক কামরূপ, দরং ইত্যাদি জিলার বিভিন্ন স্থানে গিয়াছিল। কিন্তু জমি নাপাইয়া কতক নিরাশ মনে ফিরিয়া গিয়াছে, কতক বিভিন্ন স্থানে অনন্যোপায় হইয়া ঘুরিয়া বেড়াইতেছে। গত দুই বৎসর বন্যায় কৃষকদের সম্পূর্ণ শস্যাদি নষ্ট হওয়ায় এবং বর্ত্তমানে ইউরোপে ভীষণ সমরানল প্রজ্জ্বলিত হওয়ায় সমস্ত জিনিষের মূল্য অত্যধিক বাড়িয়া যাওয়ায় জমিশূন্য আশ্রিত বর্গাদার এবং কামলাদিগকে কার্য্য হইতে ছাড়িয়া দিতে বাধ্য হইয়াছে। কাজেই ঐ সমস্ত নিরাশ্রিত লোক নিরুপায় হইয়া অন্ততঃ মাথা গুজিবার জন্য বাধ্য হইয়াছে বিশাল রিজার্ভ এবং লাইনের ধারে ধারে। ভুতপূর্ব্ব কংগ্রেস গভর্ণমেণ্ট এবং আসাম কংগ্রেস কমিটি সিদ্ধান্ত করিয়াছেন গত ১৯৩৮ সন পর্য্যন্ত আগত এবং ১৫ বা ততোধিক লোকবিশিষ্ট লোকদিগকে স্থান বন্দোবস্ত দিতে। তদনুযায়ী মণ্ডল, কানুনগো ইত্যাদি অফিসারগণ যাহা রিপোর্ট দাখিল করিয়াছেন, বিশ্বস্তরূপে জানিয়াছি উহা বাস্তবিকই ঠিক হয় নাই। যাহারা পয়সা খরচ

করিতে পারিয়াছে তাহারা কিছু কিছু জমি পাইয়াছে, আর যাহারা একেবারেই জমিশূন্য গরীব তাহারা কিছুমাত্র জমি পায় নাই। ইতাবসরে শিলং আসিয়া জানিতে পারিলাম, গতকল্য কিম্বা অদ্য হইতে বরপেটা অঞ্চলের ইমিগ্রান্টদের হাজার হাজার বাড়ীঘর আগুন ধরাইয়া জ্বালাইয়া পোড়াইয়া দেওয়া হইবে। যদি বাস্তবিকই উক্ত প্রলয়কাণ্ড আরম্ভ হইয়া থাকে তবে ঐ দেখুন—গভর্ণমেন্ট ফোর্স বেষ্টিত একদল ভগবানের সৃজিত দেশীয় হাজার হাজার লোক বেষ্টিত নিরাশ্রয়, সহায়হীন, জমিশূন্য আসামবাসী ইমিগ্রান্ট ধ্বংসী হাজার হাজার লোল জিহ্বা বিস্তারী বিজয়ী আগুনের সভ্যজগত বিস্ময়োৎপাদনকারী ভয়াবহ দৃশ্য! আর অপর দিকে দেখুন—সহায় হীন, নিরন্ন বনবাসী, অজ্ঞ, অনাহারা হাজার হাজার ইমিগ্রেন্টগণের গগনস্পর্শী মর্ম্মভেদী বিধাতার আসন টলিত করুন ক্রন্দন। অনেকস্থলে তাহাদের ধনপ্রাণ বাঁচাইতেও সময় দেওয়া হয় না ইত্যাদি! ইহাতে কি পৃথিবীর ইতিহাসে আসামের কলঙ্ক কালিমা দেখা দিবে না?

মহোদয়, আমি গভর্ণমেন্টের নিকট এই House এ সনির্ব্বন্ধ মিনতি করিতেছি যে ঐ সমস্ত বাড়ীঘর পোড়াইয়া না দেওয়া হইয়া থাকিলে পোড়ানের পূর্ব্বে ন্যায়ধর্ম্ম আইন মত একটা বিচার করিতে এবং তাহারা কে, কতদিন যাবৎ আসামে আসিয়াছে এবং তাহাদের অবস্থা কি ও তজ্জন্য কি ব্যবস্থা করা উচিত ইহা দেখিতে হইবে। তাহারা শুধু চায় পেট বাচাইতে, কৃষি কার্য্য করিয়া খাইতে দু বিঘা জঙ্গলা পতিত জমি। আমরা এখানে স্থায়ী ভাবে বাস করিতেছি, এদেশ আমাদের। আমরা একই মাটি চাষ করিব, একই হাটে কেনা বিক্রী করিব, একই ঘাটে জল খাইব, একই রাস্তায় হাটিব, একই গ্রামে পরস্পর ভাই ভাই হিসাবে বাস করিব। যদি আমাদের খারাপ কিছু থাকে, উহা আপনাদের সৎসংসর্গে দূর করিব অন্যথায় খারাপের শাস্তি হউক; উহাতে আমাদের কোন আপত্তি নাই। সমস্তেই আমরা রাজী আছি—শুধু চাই আশ্রয়।

মহোদয়, মহিষ, বাঘ, ভাল্লুক আদি হিংস্রজন্তু যদি এদেশের পতিত জঙ্গলে স্বাধীন ভাবে চরিয়া বেড়াইতে ও বাস করিতে পারে তবে আমরা মানুষ হইয়া একটু স্থান পাব না কেন? সুদূর পাশ্চাত্যের ইংরেজ সাহেবগণ যদি বহু লক্ষ একর জমি চা বাগানের জন্য পাইতে পারে, পশ্চিম দেশস্থ ১৫ লক্ষ শ্রমিক যদি এদেশে বাস করিতে পারে তবে আমরা বাঙ্গালী মুসলমান এমন অখণ্ডনীয় কোন্ দোষে দোষী যে জমি পাইব না?

মহোদয়, আমরা যাহারা জমিশূন্য ঘোর বিপদাপন্ন বর্ত্তমানে শুধু তাহাদিগকেই জমি দিয়া আশ্রয় দেওয়ার জন্য অনুরোধ করি। বিশ্বব্যাপী স্বাবলম্বী আত্মশক্তি স্থাপনের মিলনের যুগে জাতিবর্ণনির্বিশেষে ভাইয়ে, ভাইয়ে মানুষে মানুষে প্রেম, প্রীতি, ভালবাসা, সদ্ভাব স্থাপনের পরিবর্ত্তে ভেদনীতি মূলক অবৈধ কুপ্রথা যদি রহিত না হয়, নিরপরাধী লক্ষ লক্ষ ঘুমন্ত অজ্ঞ, মূর্খ ইমিগ্রান্টকে যদি লাইন জেলের ও খোঁয়াড়ের প্রাচীরে অন্যায় ভাবে জোর করিয়া আবদ্ধ রাখা হয় এবং এদেশের প্রজা হিসাবে সর্ব্বত্র সর্ব্ববিষয়ে ন্যায্য অধিকার দেওয়া না হয়.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: আমি আশা কৰি আপনাৰ বক্তৃতা শীঘ্ৰই শেষ কৰিবেন।

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: এই অত্যাচাৰীত লাঞ্ছিত, উৎপীড়িত উপেক্ষিত, ঘৃণিত অবজ্ঞাত ১২ লক্ষ ইমিগ্ৰান্টের জন্য অগৌণে একটা সুব্যবস্থা কৰা না হয় তবে আমার মনে হয় শীঘ্ৰই দেশময় এমন একটা ভীষণ বিপ্লব বহ্নি জ্বলিয়া উঠিবে যাহার বিষময় ফলে হয়ত ৰক্তের স্রোতে ঐ লাইনের প্রাচীর ভাসিয়া যাইতে পারে এবং গভর্ণমেণ্টেরও শাসনের কেলেঙ্কারী হইতে পারে।

Srijut BIDESHI PAN TANTI: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, চাৰ চাতুল্লাকা দ্বিতীয় মন্ত্রী সভাকা ১৯৪০-৪১ সনকা বজেটকো উপৰ মেৰা অল্পবুদ্ধিছে যা কুচ বলনে চেকুঙ্গা ও ইচ মাননায় এসেমব্লিমে নিবেদন কৰতাহু। মেৰা সামান্য বুদ্ধি যো সমজা ইচ বজেটমে মেৰা লাখো গৰীব মজদুৰ ভাইকো উপকাৰ কো লিয়ে বেচি পয়চা ৰাখতে হুয়ে নেহি দেখা।

সভাপতি মহোদয় ভূতপূৰ্ব্ব কংগ্রেচ যুক্ত মন্ত্রীমণ্ডলী নে কৃপা কৰকে লাখো ফালটু মজদুৰ কো উপকাৰ কো লিয়ে ২,৫০০ রুপিয়া ৰাখা ও রুপিয়া সে আসামকা চাৰাপ্রান্ত মে ফালটু মজদুৰ লোগনকো দেহাতোমে বহুত স্কুল খুলা গিয়াহে ইচ লিয়ে কংগ্রেচ যুক্ত দলকো মেৰা সাদিক ধন্যবাদ দেতাহু। পৰন্তু চাতুল্লা মন্ত্রী সভাকা পেচ কৰতে হুয়ে বজেটমে পাঠশালা কো চালানেকো লিয়ে কুচ রুপেয়া ধৰতে হুয়ে নেহি দেখকে মেৰা যো আশঙ্কা হোতাহায় যো খুলা হুৱা স্কুল বন্ধ হো যায়েগা। মেৰা বুদ্ধিমান বন্ধু মিঃ চাৰবান নে ইচ বাতকো কুচ বয়ান কৰেঙ্গে। এক মেৰা আশা থী, ইচ বাৰে মে নেহি কুচ বলকৰ মন্ত্রীমণ্ডলীকো উলটা ধন্যবাদ দেতে হুয়ে দেখ কৰ মুঝে যো মালুম হুতাহে ও আপনা স্বার্থ সিদ্ধি হোনোকে ব্যতেচেহি অর্থশূন্য ধন্যবাদ দেয়েহে।

চাৰ চাতুল্লাকা যো মালুম হোনা চাহিয়ে যে চাহ বাগানো কাম কৰনেৱালে বহুত চা মজদুৰ আভিতক আফিম নেহি চোৰা হে। ডিব্রুগড়মে যেচা সৰকাৰ আওৰ বেচৰকাৰী ব্যক্তিগণ আসামী ভাইলোগকা বিচচে আফিম চোৰায়া, তেচা চেষ্টা বাগানকা মালিক চৰ নেহি কীয়া। চাৰ চাতুল্লানে আফিম ম ধুবতে হুয়ে শত শত জীব মজদুৰ লোগকো বিচচে আফিম নিকাল কো বজেট কুচ রুপিয়া নেহি ধৰকে গৰীব মজদুৰ কো অন্যায় কিয়ে। মেৰা প্রিয় বন্ধু চাৰবান কা যো বিষয় কো উপৰ দৃষ্টি নেহি উও ভি বহুত দুখ কা বাতহে।

সভাপতি মহোদয় মে ইতনাহি নিবেদন কৰকৰ মেৰা আসন লেতাহু।

Srijut DHIRSINGH DEURI: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, আন আন মাননীয় সদস্য সকলৰ পিচত বাজেটৰ আকৌ সমালোচনা কৰি মই সভাৰ সময় নষ্ট নকৰিলোহেতেন, যদি নতুন গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ হাতত আমাৰ পিচপৰা জাতি সমূহৰ স্বার্থ অক্ষুণ্ণ

থাকিলহেঁতেন। দুৰ্ভাগ্যবশতঃ এই গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ হাতত আমাৰ স্বাৰ্থ বিকাশৰ নোহোৱাত মই ট্ৰাইবেল লোক সকলৰ হৈ মোৰ কৰ্ত্তব্যপালন কৰিবলৈ বিয় দিছোঁ।

মাননীয় প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী মহাশয়ে তেখেতৰ বক্তৃতাত কৈছে যে লাইন প্ৰথা সম্পৰ্কে যোৱা গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটোত কি আসামৰ আদিম অধিবাসী বিলাক আৰু কি পমুৱৈ বিলাক কোনো সন্তুষ্ট হব পৰা নাই আৰু সেইবাবে তেখেতে তাৰ সংশোধন কৰিব খোজে। মই তেখেতৰ লগত একেমত হব নোৱাৰিলোঁ। এইটো সঁচা যে কংগ্ৰেছ যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰীসভাৰ প্ৰস্তাৱতকৈ আমি লাইন প্ৰথা সম্পৰ্কে আৰু কটকটীয়া নিয়ম বিচাৰিছিলোঁ। আমি বিচাৰিছিলোঁ যাতে আসামৰ এটুকুৰা মাটিও পমুৱৈ বিলাকে নাপায়—আমি বিচাৰিছিলোঁ যাতে বেদখল কৰা মাটিৰ পৰা উঠাই দিওঁতে ১৯৩৭ চনৰ এপ্ৰিলৰ আগত অহা আৰু পিচত অহা পমুৱৈ বিলাকৰ ভিতৰত কোনো পাৰ্থক্য কৰা নহয়। বেদখল কৰা মাটিৰ পৰা উঠাই দিওঁতে এটা নিৰ্দিষ্ট সংখ্যাতকৈ বেচিকৈ পমুৱৈ একেঠাইতে থাকিলে তেওঁলোকক বিশেষ সুবিধা দিয়াৰ আমি বিৰোধী আছিলোঁ। মুঠতে আমি পৰিস্কাৰকৈ বিচাৰিছিলোঁ আৰু আজিও বিচাৰোঁ যাতে আৰু এছিটামানো মাটি পমুৱৈ বিলাকে নাপায়। এইবিলাক নোহোৱা স্বত্বেও মই স্বীকাৰ কৰিব লাগিব যে কংগ্ৰেছ যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰী সভাৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটোৱে পমুৱৈ সমস্যা বহুতো সমাধান কৰিছিল। যদি বৰ্ত্তমান গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে সেই প্ৰস্তাৱটো তৎক্ষণিকে কাৰ্যকৰী কৰিলেহেঁতেন তেন্তে এই জটিল সমস্যাটোৰ সমাধান হলহেঁতেন। কিন্তু প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে তাকে নকৰি আগৰ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে যথেষ্ট আলোচনা কৰি যথেষ্ট সময় লৈ কৰা এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো পেলাই থৈ আকৌ এই প্ৰায় সমাধান হোৱা প্ৰশ্নটোৰ বিবেচনা কৰিব খুজিছে। যদি তেখেতে তৎক্ষণাত আগৰ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ প্ৰস্তাৱ অনুসাৰে বেদখলকাৰী পমুৱৈ বিলাকক উঠাই দিলেহেঁতেন আৰু তাৰ পিচত পিচপৰা সম্প্ৰদায় বিলাকৰ ৰক্ষাৰ কাৰণে আৰু নতুন উপায় অৱলম্বন কৰিবৰ উদ্দেশ্যে এই প্ৰশ্নটোৰ পুনৰ বিবেচনা কৰিলেহেঁতেন তেনেহলে তেখেতৰ সদিচ্ছাৰ ওপৰত আমাৰ সন্দেহ নহলহেঁতেন। কিন্তু তাৰ পৰিবৰ্ত্তে আমি দেখিছোঁ যে দলে দলে পমুৱৈ বিলাকে আমাৰ নিৰীহ মানুহ বিলাকৰ মাটি বলেৰে দখল কৰিছে—আজি আসামৰ বহুত ঠাইত মাৰামাৰি কটাকটি হব লাগিছে। এই দুখৰ কাহিনী বিলাক মই আজি এই সভাত দাঙি ধৰিব খোজোঁ।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, মন্ত্ৰী সভাৰ গৰাকি প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী ডাঙৰীয়াই স্বীকাৰ কৰিছে যে তেখেত প্ৰাদেশিক মুছলিম লীগৰ সভাপতি। আমি জানোঁ যে মন্ত্ৰী সভাৰ চাৰিজন সদস্য লীগৰ সভ্য। আমি জানোঁ যে মন্ত্ৰীসভাৰ এজ মুখিয়াল মাননীয় মৌলবী আবদুল মাতন চৌধুৰী মহোদয়ৰ চেষ্টাত নিখিলভাৰত মুছলিম লীগত আসামৰ লাইন প্ৰথা উঠাই দিব লাগে বুলি প্ৰস্তাৱ গৃহীত হৈছে আৰু প্ৰাদেশিক মুছলিম লীগে সেই প্ৰস্তাৱ গ্ৰহণ কৰিছে। সিদিনা মাথোন ঘাগমাৰিত বহা আসাম প্ৰাদেশিক মুছলিম লীগ কনফাৰেনসত

যত আমাৰ মাননীয় প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী, ৰাজহ মন্ত্ৰী আৰু আন লীগ মন্ত্ৰী সকলে শোভাবৰ্দ্ধন কৰিছিল—লাইন প্ৰথা ৰহিত কৰিব লাগে বুলি প্ৰস্তাৱ গৃহীত হৈছে। আমি প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বিপক্ষে বাতৰি কাকতত বিবৃতি দিব বুলি উদ্বিগ্ন ভাৱে বাট-চাই আছিলোঁ—কিন্তু দুখৰ কথা যে তেখেতে এই কনফাৰেন্‌চত যোগ দি আৰু তেখে-তৰ উপদেশ আৰু আশীৰ্ব্বাদ দি তাৰ মৰ্য্যাদাহে বঢ়ালে। এই সৰ্ব্বনশীয়া প্ৰস্তাৱটো সম্পৰ্কে তেখেত নিমাত থাকিল। কংগ্ৰেছ যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰী সভাই ইস্তফা দিয়াৰ আগে আগে আৰু ঘাগমাৰি কনফাৰেনসৰ সময়তে এটা উৰাবাতৰি প্ৰচাৰিত হইছিল যে পমুৱৈ বিলাকে গাৰবলেৰে আসামৰ সকলোবোৰ খালি ঠাই দখল কৰিব আৰু উঠাই দিবৰ যত্ন কৰিলে সত্যাগ্ৰহ কৰি তাৰ প্ৰতিবোধ কৰিব। এই বাতৰিৰ সত্যতা 'ক কব নোৱাৰো, কিন্তু ঘাগ্‌মাৰী মুছ্‌লিম লীগ কনফাৰেনসৰ পিচৰ পৰাই সকলোঠাইতে দলে দলে পমুৱৈ বিলাকে বে-আইনী ভাৱে গাৰবলেৰে মাটি দখল কৰিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰিলে।

কামৰূপৰ পূবসমৰিয়াত পমুৱৈ বিলাকে আজি মাত্ৰ তিনি বছৰৰ আগতে নিৰ্দ্ধাৰিত কৰা অসমীয়া লাইনৰ ভিতৰত ৫০০ ঘৰ মানুহৰ মাটীবাৰীৰ জোৰেৰে দখল কৰিছে। তাৰ ভিতৰত ৩০০ ঘৰ মানুহ আমাৰ কছাৰী মানুহ। পমুৱৈ বিলাকে আমাৰ সৰল কছাৰী বিলাকৰ পথাৰৰ পকাধান কাটি নিছে—তেওঁলোকৰ মাটিতে বলকৰি ঘৰ সাজিছে আৰু তাত কোনোবাই বাধা দিব খুজিলে ভয় দেখুৱায়। এই সম্পৰ্কে অনা adjournment motion টোৰ উত্তৰত মাননীয় ৰাজহ মন্ত্ৰী ডাঙৰীয়াই ইয়াৰ প্ৰতিকাৰ কৰিছে বুলি কৈছে। কিন্তু যদি সেয়ে হয় তেন্তে পমুৱৈ বিলাকে কিয় বেদখলী কৰি আছে? মাননীয় প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰীয়ে যোৱা জানুৱাৰী মাহত পমুৱৈ বিলাকক ক্ষেত্ৰপাৰাত লগ পায়। কিন্তু তেখেতেৰ আশ্ৰয় বিচৰা হতভগীয়া কছাৰী বিলাকক তেখেতে লগ নাপালে দুৰ্ভাগ্য!

আমি শুনিছোঁ যে একেসময়তে বৰপেটা মহকুমাৰ ট্ৰাইবেল বিলাকক পমুৱৈ বিলাকে অত্যাচাৰ কৰিছে আৰু তাৰ সকলো বিলাক ৰিজাৰ্ভ বলেৰে দখল কৰিছে। কিন্তু বাত আৰু বৰপেটাৰ পকাধানজাত পমুৱৈ বিলাকে কছাৰী ব্লকৰ ভিতৰত হোজা কছাৰী বিলাকক মৰামৰি কৰি ধন প্ৰাণ নাশৰ ভয় দেখুৱাই তেওঁলোকৰ মাটীবাৰী বলেৰে কাঢ়ি লৈছে। আমাৰ নগাঁও জিলাতো বলেৰে মাটি বেদখল কৰাৰ আসঙ্কা হৈছে।

এই বিলাক হোৱা সত্বেও মাননীয় ৰাজস্ব মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে বিবৃতি দিছে যে তেখেতে দৰং আৰু উত্তৰলক্ষীমপুৰত পমুৱৈ বিলাকৰ কাৰণে নতুন ৰিজাৰ্ভ খোলাৰ বিবেচনা কৰিছে। পমুৱৈ বিলাকে কিন্তু মন্ত্ৰী মহাশয়ৰ সিদ্ধান্তলৈ বাট নাচাই যতে মাটি পাইছে তাতে কাকো নোসোধাকৈ বহি গৈছে। তেখেতে কৈছে যে বেদখল কৰা পমুৱৈ বিলাকক উঠাই দিওঁতে কঠোৰ ব্যৱস্থা অবলম্বন কৰা অনুচিত আৰু কোনো ঘৰ ভঙা বা পোৰা আৰু তাৰবাবে মিলিটাৰীৰ সহায় লোৱা উচিত নহয়। মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে নাজানেনে যে অতি

কঠোৰ ব্যৱস্থা প্ৰয়োগ নকৰিলে পমুৱৈ বিলাকে মাটি কেতিয়াও এৰি নিদিয়ে। সেই-দেখি মই কওঁ যে যদি গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে ট্ৰাইবেল আৰু আমাৰ আদিবাসীবিলাকৰ স্বাৰ্থৰক্ষা সঠিকৈয়ে কৰিব খোজে তেন্তে বেদখলকাৰী বিলাকৰ বিৰুদ্ধে সকলো প্ৰকাৰ কঠোৰ ব্যৱস্থা অৱলম্বন কৰিবই লাগিব।

সভাপতি মহোদয় এই বোৰৰ পৰা মন্ত্ৰীসভাৰ সদিচ্ছা আৰু sincerity ভালদৰে বুজা যায়। তেওঁলোকৰ সবহ ভাগে সাম্প্ৰদায়িক সভাবোৰত লাইন প্ৰথা অবলম্বে উঠাবলৈ আৰু তাৰ বাবে প্ৰয়োজন দেখিলে আইন অমান্য কৰিবলৈ বক্তৃতা দিছিল আৰু সেই সকলেই লাইন প্ৰথা ৰাখিবলৈ প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি দিয়ে।

আমি জানোঁ আমাৰ ভৱিষ্যত আন্ধাৰ। আমি জানোঁ যে সাৱধান নহলে পমুৱৈ বিলাকৰ আক্ৰমণত আমি বুৰঞ্জীৰ আৰম্ভৰে পৰা এই প্ৰদেশৰ পৰা আমাৰ নাম লুপ্ত হৈ যাব।

মাননীয় স্যাৰ চাহুল্লাৰ আগৰ মন্ত্ৰী সভাৰ দিনতো আমাৰ স্বাৰ্থৰ প্ৰতি অৱহেলা আৰু পমুৱৈ বিলাকৰ মাজত আইন আৰু শৃঙ্খলা ভঙ্গ কৰিবলৈ উৎসাহ আমি দেখিছিলোঁ। মাজতে যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰী মণ্ডলীৰ দিনত আইনৰ প্ৰতি দেশত শ্ৰদ্ধা বাঢ়িছিল। এইবাৰ আসামত মুছলিম লীগ মন্ত্ৰী সভা হোৱা বুলি এই মানুহবোৰৰ অত্যাচাৰ আৰু দুগুনে বাঢ়িছে। বৰ দুখ আৰু লাজৰ কথা যে আমাৰ ট্ৰাইবেল সদস্য এজনে এই মন্ত্ৰী মণ্ডলীত যোগ দিছে, মই আশা কৰো। এই গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ হাতত আমাৰ দুৰ্দশা দেখি বিবিলাক মানুহৰ ভোটত আজি কেথেতে এই পদ পাইছে তেওঁলোকৰ স্বাৰ্থ ৰক্ষাৰ কাৰণে মাননীয় ৰূপনাথ ব্ৰহ্ম চাওৰাথা এই মন্ত্ৰী সভাৰ সংশ্ৰৱ ত্যাগ কৰিব।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, শিক্ষাৰ বিষয়ে মই কেইআষাৰ মান কওঁ। ট্ৰাইবেল বিলাকৰ মাজত শিক্ষিতৰ সংখ্যা এজনত কৈ সবহ নহয়। তথাপি বহুতো প্ৰতিশ্ৰুতি দিয়া স্বত্বেও বৰ্ত্তমান প্ৰধান মন্ত্ৰীৰ ভূতপূৰ্ব্ব গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে আমাক একো নিদিলে। কংগ্ৰেছ যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰী মণ্ডলীয়ে ট্ৰাইবেল আৰু অনুন্নত সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে ৫০,০০০৲ টকা দিছিল। তাৰে প্ৰায় ২৯,০০০৲ টকা ট্ৰাইবেলৰ কাৰণে দিয়া হৈছিল। কংগ্ৰেচ যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰী সভাৰ ওচৰত আমি তাৰ বাবে কৃতজ্ঞ। কিন্তু আমাৰ শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে আৰু বেচি টকাৰ প্ৰয়োজন আৰু সেই বাবে এইবাৰৰ বাজেটত আমি আৰু সবহ টকাৰ আশা কৰিছিলো। কিন্তু যদিও মাদ্ৰাছা শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে এইবাৰ ১০,০০০৲ টকা বেচিকৈ ধৰা হৈছে যাৰ বাবে ৭০,০০০৲ টকা সদায় খৰচ হয়, ট্ৰাইবেল বিলাকৰ শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে এটা ফুটা কড়িও ধৰা হোৱা নাই। এই মন্ত্ৰী সভাই মিডল আৰু প্ৰাইমাৰী স্কুল বিলাকত ট্ৰাইবেলৰ বাবে কেইটা মান বৃত্তি দি ট্ৰাইবেলৰ বন্ধু বুলি চিনাকি দিবলৈ বৃথা যত্ন কৰিছে। তাৰবাবেও আমি তেওঁলোকৰ ওচৰত কৃতজ্ঞ হোৱাৰ কোনো কাৰণ নাই —আচলতে এই টকা খিনিও কংগ্ৰেছ যুক্ত মন্ত্ৰী সভাইহে নিৰ্দ্ধাৰিত কৰিছিল বুলি মই নিশ্চয়কৈ জানোঁ।

হাইস্কুল বিলাকত ট্রাইবেল ছাত্রবিলাকক free-studentship দিয়া সম্পর্ক শিক্ষামন্ত্রী মহোদয়ে যি অবহেলা দেখুৱাইছে তাত মই বৰ আচৰিত হৈছোঁ। আগৰ শিক্ষামন্ত্রী মহোদয়ৰ লগত ট্রাইবেল সদস্য সকলৰ হোৱা আলোচনী সভাত ঠিৰাং হয় যে প্রত্যেক স্কুলৰে ছাত্র সংখ্যাৰ শতকৰা ৮ জনকৈ ট্রাইবেলৰ আৰু শতকৰা ৫ জন অনুন্নত সম্প্রদায়ৰ কাৰণে free-studentship দিয়া হব। আগৰ নিয়মমতে শতকৰা ১৩টা free-studentshipৰ ভিতৰত শতকৰা ৮টা মুছলমান ছাত্রই পায় আৰু বাকী শতকৰা ৫টা বাকী বিলাকৰ মাজত ভগাই দিয়া হয়। এইবোৰ free-studentship দিয়া হেতেন গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ মাত্র ৫,০০০৲ টকা মান খৰচ হল হেতেন। আগৰ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে আমাক যি সুবিধা দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছিল তাকো এতিয়া আমাৰ পৰা কাঢ়ি নিয়া হৈছে। মুছলমান ছাত্রসকলে দুগুণ সুবিধা পায় কেৱল দুখীয়া ট্রাইবেল বিলাকৰহে ন্যায্য দাবী উপেক্ষিত হৈছে।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, মাননীয় অৰ্থসচিবৰ বক্তৃতাত যোৱা গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে দিয়া খাজানা ৰেহাই নীতি বেয়া বুলি দেখুৱাবলৈ যত্ন কৰা দেখি মই বেজাৰ পাইছোঁ। প্রধান মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ক মই জনাওঁ যে খাজানা ৰেহাই দিয়াত দুখীয়া ৰায়ত বিলাকে বৰ সকাহ পাইছে। যদি গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে খাজানা ৰহাই কমাবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰে তেন্তে তেওঁলোক ৰাইজৰ মাজত অপ্রিয় ভাজন হব লাগিব।

যোৱা গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ আৰু এটা জনহিতকৰ কাম বৰবিহ কানিৰ প্রচলন সম্পূর্ণ বন্ধ কৰাৰ পৰা লাভ হৈছে আমাৰ ট্রাইবেল আৰু অনুন্নত সম্প্রদায়ৰ লোকসকলৰ। কাৰণ শতকৰা ৭৫ জন কানীয়া এই সম্প্রদায় বিলাকৰ অন্তর্ভুক্ত। ৰাইজৰ দ্বাৰা নির্ব্বাচিত গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে এনে এটা লোকহিতকৰ কাম যে পৰিত্যাগ কৰিব তাক মই বিশ্বাস কৰিবলৈ টান পাইছোঁ। তথাপি মই আশা কৰোঁ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে এতিয়াও এই কামটো হাতত লব।

সর্ব্বশেহত মন্ত্রী সকলৰ দৰ্ম্মহা সম্পর্কে অলপ কব খোজোঁ। মই আচৰিত হৈছো যে এই বিল সমর্থন কৰিবলৈ সদস্যৰ অভাৱ হোৱা নাই। সিদিনাখন মাত্র আমি সকলোৱে মন্ত্রী সকলৰ দৰ্ম্মহা ৫০০৲ টকা আৰু এলাৱেঞ্চ ২০০৲ টকা নির্দ্ধাৰিত কৰি দিছিলো আজি আকৌ ৯ জন মন্ত্রীৰ বাবে ৭৫০৲ টকা দৰ্ম্মহা আৰু ২৫০৲ টকা এলাৱেঞ্চ আৰু প্রধানমন্ত্রী ডাঙৰীয়াৰ বাবে ১,৭৫০৲ টকা দৰ্ম্মহা আৰু ২৫০৲ টকা এলাৱেঞ্চ দিব লগা হৈছে। মই আজি এটা প্রস্তাৱ কৰি কালিলৈ তাক সলনি কৰিবলৈ বৰ টান পাওঁ। তদুপৰি আগৰ মন্ত্রী সকলে যদি ৭০০৲ টকাৰে সুকলমে চলিব পাৰে তেন্তে আজিৰ মন্ত্রী সকলৰ ১,০০০৲ টকাৰ প্রয়োজন কি মই বুজা নাই। তাৰ উপৰিও আকৌ দহজন পাৰ্লিয়েমেণ্টেৰী চেক্রেটেৰীৰ হেনো প্রয়োজন। ইমান বোৰ মন্ত্রীৰ দৰ্ম্মহা যোগোৱাৰ পিচত পাৰ্লিয়েমেণ্টেৰী চেক্রেটেৰীৰ দৰ্ম্মহা দিবলৈ আমি ধন কৰ পৰা পাওঁ? বৰ্ত্তমান মন্ত্রী

সকলে যদি আগৰ মন্ত্ৰী সকলৰ উদ্দেশ্য লৈ চলিলহেতেন তেন্তে মন্ত্ৰী সকলক দিব খোজা বেচি ১,১৬,০০০৲ টকা জনহিতকৰ কামত খৰচ কৰিব পৰা হলহেতেন। সেই টকাৰে আমি free-studentship প্ৰভৃতি ট্ৰাইবেল বিলাকৰ বহুতো সকলুৰা উপকাৰ কৰিব পাৰিলোহেতেন।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, পিচপৰা ট্ৰাইবেল সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ প্ৰতিনিধি হিচাপে মই কওঁ যে যদিও সদাই পিচ পাৰ থাকি আমি আজি আমৰ শিক্ষিত হিন্দু-মুছলমান ভাই সকলৰ পৰা সহায় আৰু সুবিধা বিচাৰিছোঁ, তথাপিও আমি তেওঁলোকৰ পৰা কেতিয়াও আতৰি থাকিব নোখোজোঁ। আমি কেৱল তেওঁলোকৰ পৰা আমাৰ প্ৰতি স্নেহ আৰু সহানুভূতি বিচাৰিছো যাতে আমাৰ অৱস্থাৰ পৰিবৰ্ত্তন হয়। আমাৰ শোকলগা অৱস্থাৰ এটা কাৰণ আমাৰ নিজৰে এলাহ হব পাৰে, কিন্তু তাৰ প্ৰধান কাৰণ আমাৰ শাসক সকলে চিৰদিন আমাৰ ন্যায্য দাবী উপেক্ষা কৰি আহিছে। যোৱা কংগ্ৰেছ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে আমাৰ প্ৰতি সহানুভূতি দেখুৱাইছি"—যদিও তেওঁলোকে আমি যিমান বিচাৰিছিলোঁ সিমান সুবিধা আমাক দিব পৰা নাছিল। আমি আশা কৰো যে এই গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টেও আমাক কেৱল কথাৰে নহয়, কংগ্ৰেছ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ দৰে কামেৰেও সহানুভূতি দেখুৱাব। বৰ্ত্তমান গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ কামৰ পৰা মই অৱশ্যে বিশেষ একো আশা কৰা নাই। তথাপিও ছুবীয়া ট্ৰাইবেল বিলাকৰ হৈ মই তেখেত সকলক পুনৰ অনুৰোধ কৰিলোঁ।

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my expectations with regard to the budget have failed so much that my disappointment has been succeeded by delusion. The sudden increase of more than one lakh of rupees for the Hon'ble Ministers with their paraphernelia is simply appalling under the present condition of the finance of the province. The more I look at the course of events in this province, Sir, the more I am convinced about the failure of Reform and of the so-called responsible Government here. One contingency which perhaps the framers of the constitution could not foresee and which has robbed the substance of the autonomy is that there is no limit to the number of Ministers in the Cabinet. At this fag end of the Reform when the Government of India Act of 1935 has been buried with stock and barrel in the Majority of the provinces and when the British Government is trying its best to have a constitution framed which will satisfy the Indian ambition and when the Cabinet was formed in this province to carry on the administration during a political crisis, it is a pity that an administration should be set up here with as many as 10 Ministers and 10 Parliamentary Secretaries. Moreover, Sir, a huge sum has been allotted for a Publicity Department and a Private Secretary to the Hon'ble Prime Minister. It seems, Sir, that this Government have learnt at least one lesson from Herr Hitler the utility of a Publicity Department which even England has been very much reluctant to introduce.

Sir, I do not mention all these from any carping or sinister motive. The eyes of our countrymen are fixed on the budget proposals and I am positive that they cannot accept these new proposals cheerfully as they will prove so very expensive with doubtful results. I cannot but mention another point about these new proposals. It is a sad relic of bureaucratic

idea that the members of the Civil Service should always be appointed to all special posts. I cannot understand as to why these officers should be allowed special allowances while they play the role of a Raja as in Bijni or of a Secretary or of Dr. Goebell as is proposed now. It is a pity that the Assistant Publicity Officer who will perhaps not be inferior to the Publicity Officer in experience and education will get a salary almost equal to the allowance proposed to be given to the Publicity Officer. Sir, it is high time that Government should stop this kind of allowances attached to high salaries.

Next, Sir, the decision of the Government to delay in giving effect to the total prohibition of opium in selected areas will bring profound disappointment to the country. No sacrifice would be too intolerable—no effort would be too great to eradicate this deadly poison and a reversion or suspension of this policy of prohibition will be an interference with the clock of the province's progress. The Government should not make smuggling an excuse for the stoppage of prohibition, inasmuch as they cannot suspend the Indian Penal Code simply because it has become insufficient to deal with the crimes.

So far as Education is concerned, I am sorry to find that Government has not helped those who have helped themselves and an omission to grant an amount to Barpeta College at least to give it a footing, is too conspicuous to escape our notice. Government have granted both recurring and non-recurring sums to the Girls' College at Gauhati. Personally I do advocate co-education specially at the stage of University education. When women are competing to-day with men for jobs and are even decorating the Treasury Benches there is no meaning in establishing exclusive Colleges for girls in this province. It is more so, Sir, because of the simple reason that University syllabus for girls and boys is the same. I hope my friend Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn will agree with me in this respect.

I do not grudge, Sir, the sum of Rs.10,000 allotted for Islamic studies, but a few hundred allotted for Sanskrit studies compare very poorly with this amount I shall be failing in my duty, Sir, if, while talking of education, I do not voice on the floor of this House the desire of our countrymen to have a University at Gauhati. Our disappointment for shelving the question of establishing a High Court will be compensated to some extent if we get a full-fledged University at Gauhati.

Sir, I shall close my speech by a brief reference to the Agricultural Department. Although provision has been made for the appointment of a few more demonstrators, it is but a poor attempt to make the countryside derive benefit from a top-heavy administration, the officers of which do research work which never reaches the peasant. Unless, Sir, some reorientation of this Department is carried out, I am afraid, our agriculturists will never be able to go a step forward from the pre-historic days. I do not want to add more, Sir, but it is a pity that in spite of a tale of 31 pages containing new schemes the budget infects us with pessimism.

Rev. L. GATPHOH: Sir, after listening with rapt attention to the preliminary part of the speech delivered by the *ex*-Finance Minister which is of the nature of a duel between himself and the present Finance Minister, I feel quite at ease to take my stand here as I think the Hon'ble Speaker will not consider what I am going to say is irrelevant to the budget. Sir, this is an occasion which only comes once a year to a legislator and I take this opportunity to stand here to echo what a man in the streets, what a labourer, what an agriculturist, what even a politician in the province, when left alone to himself and in his lucid intervals, thinks and feels about the political mess in Assam.

If we trace the career of this august Legislature we shall find that there is one thing which is very striking and very significant too, that is, the numerical growth of the Ministry. We set out to work the constitution in 1937. We started with five Ministers. Then it was thought that five Ministers were too many for this poor, small and backward province. But soon after for reasons unknown to many, the number was raised to six. Again when the party that was and is now again in the Opposition came to power. The Congress party that stood and still profess to stand for strict economy and so-called liverty, found themselves compelled to cut the ground on which they stood and the number of Ministers went up to eight under their regime.

In fairness to the Congress party, they gave the lion's share of six seats out of the eight in Cabinet to men who represented the party or parties whose strength did not very much exceed the total number of seats in the Cabinet. Credit must be given to whom credit is due. I had hoped—that I was greatly disappointed—I had hoped that under the dictatorial influence of the zeal and the creed of the Congres party, their associates in the Assembly would soon be imbued with the spirit of self-abnegation and would agree to have the number of seats in the Cabinet reduced to a minimum number required so as to obtain the long desired results of less expenditure and more efficiency in the administration and that that would lead to their illusive goal of Free Assam or Free India as they would rather have it called—free to develop its economic sources—free to shape its own destiny—though I am afraid, there would be no freedom then for a citizen to follow his own conscience. At any rate a political emancipation in their sense of the word will have been achieved.

But fortunately or unfortunately the Congress Ministry, whether willingly or unwillingly lay down the reins of Government risking everything—the prestige, the security, peace and even safety of the province, just at the time when the whole world is faced with an unprecedented crisis—just at the time when they had just overhauled the fiscal machinery of the province, leaving its parts to the Government in a heap and confused state. What an irresponsible act! It amounts to a betrayal of the trust committed to them by the people of the province. At such a time and in such circumstances veteran politician Sir Md. Saadulla—a man of great statesmanship, came forward and with an indomitable will and courage once more, took hold of the helm of the State to steer it clear of the labyrinths and intricacies of vexatious Legislations and playful experiments dictated by sentiments and love for show and display.

Labouring under such conditions the Premier, the Finance Minister Sir Md. Saadulla is to be heartily congratulated and applauded for the budget for 1940-41. He has the sense of honour to accept the legacy of bankruptcy left by his predecessor and the previous Government. He has acted like a real sporstman in giving a fair and further trial to those costly schemes initiated by the previous Government which involved heavy losses to Government in revenue, although other methods pursued, would eventually lead to the same end and bring about the desired result. It must not be mistaken that I am quite pleased and satisfied with what the budget provides for the needs of my constituency. I wish it were more. But he is a wise and most practical person who cuts his coat according to the cloth. No budget, in examining it if only the details are looked into, can please and satisfy any politician on earth. We must look to the policy underlying those details in it. And this budget clearly shows that the policy of this Government is to

look after the interests of all parties and communities irrespective of their creed and political views. It is for this reason, chiefly that I commend the budget to the public through the Chair.

Sir, I feel, that it is not right for us to expect too much from the meagre exchequer of the province. Much can be done through private enterprise to develop the resources of the country, through voluntary associations to increase mass literacy—spread the knowledge of hygiene and sanitation all over the country. There is plenty of scope for patriotic men and women in these directions. And if such efforts were made and Government took no notice of them—Government refused to give their helping hand —then and then only would they justly come in for criticisms and for condemnation. I shall have left out what I wanted to say at the very beginning, if I take my seat without referring to the strength of the present Cabinet. Who is resposible for ever increasing the number of the Ministers in the province of Assam ? The man in the street says—not the Prime Minister, not the Government of India Act—not the Assam United Party alone but the whole House, bear the full share of the blame. The intelligentia on the province, in their heart of hearts feel and are fully convinced that the legislators have not yet caught the spirit of self-abnegation to keep the interests of the province as a whole on the foreground of their mind. It is time that we pause and think seriously over the whole political situation in Assam.

Mr. BENJAMIN CH. MOMIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I speak on the budget I should like to say something about the grievances of the Nokmas or Heads of various Akhings of Garo Hills. The subject that comes upforemost in the mind of a Nokma, the recognised proprietor of the Akhing in this respect, is the great possibilities that are going to be opened in the Garo Hills in near future by working its mineral resources which were lying unexplored up to the present time. I humbly and respectfully request the Government to safeguard the children of the soil in this matter and that of the Nokmas who for generations, jealously guarded the Akhings entrusted to them with practically no gain in return. Sir, I beg to state that under the system that is in vogue the Nokmas are not obtaining the legitimate share of the income from other resources of the Akhings, such as sal trees, elephants, elephant tusks, house tax and other taxes on revenues. I fervently hope that inequities in these matters will not escape the attention of the Government's kind consideration. Sir, in support of my statement I beg to quote a few sentences from a letter, dated the 20th March 1908, from the Secretary to the Government of India R. W. Carlyle, Esq., C. I. E., to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Eastern Bengal and Assam. The letter in the part paragraph 10 shows as follows :—"The deprivation of the half allotment of land revenue which the Nokmas and Laskars previously enjoyed under the circumstances explained in paragraph 7 of your letter of the 26th November 1907, has evidently left them with a sense of grievances for which there appears to be some foundation, and considering the importance of doing all that is reasonably possible to conciliate the men who may be regarded as the natural leaders of the community, the Government of India would be prepared to agree to any reasonable concessions which the Lieutenant Governor may consider it advisable to make in respect of this matter." Sir, I beg to state that although the Secretary to the Government of India was willing to conciliate with the leaders of the community, nothing was done up to the present time. Therefore, I fervently hope that this Government will not fail to give their attention to the statement that I have given now and do their best to fulfil the claims of the Garo Nokmas. Sir, paucity of communication in our part of the province is a notorious fact.

Construction of the Bajengdoba road was left half finished, and two roads under projects, *viz.*, the Garobada Hallidayganj and Mukhdangra-Rajabalahat roads were not taken up at all. Equally inadequate is the arrangement for medical aid within the district, difficulty in obtaining which has further been enhanced due to absence of connecting roads. Establishment of two dispensaries immediately, one at Rongrenggiri and the other at Rongchugiri village may go to obviate the difficulty for some time.

Sir, difficulty about communication brings in bold relief another inconvenience which the people who live in the interior of the district suffer from, and that is about obtaining redress against oppressions of powerful adversaries seeking protection of law. The only court of law being situated at Tura, people from the interior cannot think of getting redress about their grievances due to the distance, and not very infrequently they submit silently to the oppressions. In view of the large area that is administered by the Magistrates at Tura, a subdivision within the district has become overdue, the most suitable place for which will be Rongrenggiri being centrally situated.

Sir, in education the Garos are still very backward. There are about 300 Lower Primary Schools and 7 Middle English Schools within the district, but there are only 2 Middle English and 16 Primary scholarships for Garo boys and girls for three districts, *viz.*, Kamrup, Goalpara and Garo Hills, which is too inadequate in view of the large area for which the competition is open. Therefore I submit, Sir that at least 9 Middle English scholarships and 25 Lower Primary scholarships should be allowed for the Garo Hills district for the present.

Sir, I would like to point out to the Government that during the dry season the water-supply of Tura town is very inadequate and some people for want of water will have to take their bath and food very late at night. I hope that the Government will not forget the inconveniences of the Tura town people and provide special fund for meeting the newly projected water-supply. I cannot remain without thanking the Government for providing some fund for the construction of two bridges on the Tura-Mankachar road for which we were pressing the Government for a long time. The natives of the Garo Hills, under the present arrangements do not get any share of the contracts, works of which are executed within the Akhing lands of the Nokmas. Some of the works are the construction or annual repair works to (*a*) Tura-Damra Road, (*b*) Tura-Bajengadoba Road, and (*c*) the Tura-Phulbari Road, at the disposal of either the Public Works Department, the District Fund or the Tura Fund. It is respectfully prayed that the part of work that falls within an Akhing may be given for execution to the Nokmas or for a man of that particular Akhing instead of to non-Garo or Garo contractors who have no interest in the welfare of that Akhing. I desire the Government to look after the needs of the Garos and fulfil it in no time. With these few words I resume my seat.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker Sir, allow me to congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for the presentation of his budget of the year 1940-41. Indeed, a few new schemes undertaken by this Ministry show that some attempt has been made to meet the demands of the public in general ; but it must be said that response from the Government is not denied of the impoverished masses.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has placed his seventh Budget before the Legislatures but I am afraid one may not be wrong to say that so far as the Surma Valley is concerned he has very little knowledge of the pressing needs of the masses living in outlying neglected villages.

As a humble representative of a purely rural area lying on the extreme border of the province and of a constituency which is a permanent abode of chronic epidemics and ignorance and poverty, I, on the fourth occasion of my budget speech, am labouring with this consciousness that I have not been able to achieve any substantial relief for my people, whom I had the honour to represent in this House. Year after year we have seen in this House the race for the office of Ministers, or for the Committees and we have pressed in the floor of this House and to the successive Governments the pressing needs of our people but how far have we done our duty to the voters ? I am glad once more to take the privilege of pressing the needs of my people, *viz.*, (1) protection of the villagers' crop fields from inundation of flood, (2) from ravages of water-hyacinth, (3) supply of seeds and improved implements and manure, (4) preservation of cattle from epidemics, (5) arrangement of market for the villagers' produce by improving the method of communication and saving the people who live in the forest reserves from the oppression of Forest Department as well as from the exhorbitant charges of the forest articles such as bamboo, (6) arrangement of pure drinking water and (7) establishment of schools.

It is no doubt that there is a long list of demands and we are conscious that it is not humanly possible to expect that any Government working under the limitation of the Government of India Act, 1935, would be able to bring a radical change of the present state of affairs, but a good beginning can be started if there is a genuine desire to serve the people. If there is a sincere and earnest zeal to cater to the needs of the people, many humane works can be accomplished. Assam is a province noted for its vast natural resources. The Government can provide fresh income to the provincial Exchequer by encouraging people to various cottage industries.

The vexed question of Line System, I painfully say, has not attracted the attention of any Government and I find no reason as to why this vicious system should be continued. In the interest of the province's solvency, I request the present Ministry to give full consideration to this demand and wipe out the obnoxious system.

Thanks to Almighty God, a consciousness has dawned over our ill fed and ill clad masses, and I must in this connection appeal to political sections of the country to devote their energy to the constructive side. We have had many an unpleasant memory on political controversy, but I must confess that so far as the interest of the Sylhet district is concerned, neither party nor Government has done proper justice to the interest of the ill fated district.

While we do appreciate that the Government of Assam has willingly allowed a loss of the huge figure of 28 lakhs due to the annual reduction in opium with a view to improve the moral, material and physical well-being of the Assam Valley and has allowed a loss of 28 lakhs *plus* 12 lakhs—of which 3 lakhs will fall this year due to 50 per cent. reduction of land revenue with a view to ameliorate the indebted condition of the distressed Assam Valley people—and the present Government though doubtful of the total prohibition of opium scheme for selected areas, has allowed once more a continuation of the loss of 4½ lakhs this year too for the supposed good of the Assam Valley people. One wonders what provision has been made for the uplift of masses of the low-lying lands of the Surma Valley. Though personally speaking I have not much confidence in the services, still it is a factor to be counted with, when the Assam Valley Hindus have separated their service ratio from the Surma Valley Hindus, we do not find any earthly reason why the proportion of service between Assam Valley Muhammadans

and Surma Valley Muhammadans is not separated. I do not see any reason, when this scandalous circular of music before mosque has been wi hdrawn in the Assam Valley (notwithstanding communal riot over this issue in the Assam Valley—), why the circular has not been withdrawn from the Surma Valley ? Is it that we in the Surma Valley—Hindus and Muhammadans—should go on fighting after shadows leaving substance for others ?

The Surma Valley Hindus and Muslims are equally neglected in Earle Law College at Gauhati and the Secretarial posts of the Assam Government. These are only a few instances of the glaring injustice that is being done to the Surma Valley. For a doubtful scheme Sir Muhammad Saadulla would not grudge 4½ lakhs, but for a medical school at Sylhet, which will give great relief to the helpless mass, no funds will be forthcoming.

Every year in the Surma Valley, through the blessings of the Madrassa education, we are getting hundreds of Maulavis but they are only adding to the number of the unemployed. I suggested once more that in the Government Alia Madrassa of Sylhet a technical department for practical training in different crafts should be incorporated. Already an amount like 15 to 17 thousand is lying with the Mutawwalli of the Khan Bahadur Yahiya Estate for the benefit of the Muhammadan students of the Sylhet Madrassa and a sum of Rs. 10,000 if advanced and added with the aforesaid sum it can give a good start for a branch of the technical school at Sylhet, and through these Maulavis we can popularise amongst our illiterate masses the various crafts.

As time is very limited, I shall now submit a few words more. Sir, it is against the spirit of the day and the creed of the party which we belong to (an institution which has suffered ignominy and disgrace for our aspirations of Ministry) that the Private Secretary of the Prime Minister of a popular Government or the Publicity Officer should be filled up by men of Provincial Executive Service. We trust that our Ministry should not continue the bureaucratic policy any longer.

As to the creation of the offices of Parliamentary Secretaries my friends in the opposition who doubled the number of the Ministers know very well the necessity of the creation of those offices.

I beg to submit a few local grievances—

1. Bamai Middle English School.—This institution is 70 years' standing and situated in a thana where there is not a single high school and where the Mussalmans are admittedly very backward in education. It should be raised to the status of a high school and immediately a building grant should be advanced.

2. Ummatunnessa High School at Andiura, police station Madhabpur, is recipient of Rs. 40 per mensem, but this is very inadequate. This must be raised to Rs. 80. I am very much thankful to Srijut Gopinath Bardoloi for giving grants of Rs. 40 and Rs. 15 to the Bamai Middle English School.

3. I am pained to say that the Madrassas at Katiara in Lakhai thana, at Daspara and Itakhola in Madhabpur thana have received no grants from the Government. I am sure that the worthy Education Minister will give full consideration to these institutions and he will not be uncharitable like some Ministers whose favour either in the shape of service or distribution of their discretionary fund is confined either to their own constituency or a few camp followers of theirs.

I shall further request the Education Minister that a Common Room should immediately be provided to the boarders of the Murarichand College Hostel, Sylhet and provision for Biology class should be made in the Murarichand College.

It is a negation of democracy that the Government should wrest from the hands of the public any local Self-Governing institution. I request the Government of Assam to hand over the Sylhet Municipality to the custody of the public at Sylhet. There may be reasons for their mismanagement, but mismanagement there is everywhere. Why should there be injustice so far as the Sylhet Municipality is concern?

I must in this connection express my thanks to our *Ex*-Finance Minister Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed for the way in which he approached our masses. A spirit of self-determination should be instilled in our masses. There ought to be no more procession and no " sarkar salams ".

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: It is with a deep sense of disappointment that we meet here on this occasion to discuss the budget. While 7 out of 11 provinces in India have refused to work this constitution on the noble and legitimate issue of Independence and here too a large majority of our people fell in line with those seven provinces we find, with shame and amazement, a set of our countrymen in their greed for money and lust for power, zealously assisting the enemies of our country's freedom to continue their domination over us. After the Congress-Coalition Ministry had refused their co-operation in this province no honourable citizens should have stretched out their hands to Britain to carry on her Imperialistic designs in India at the time of her selfish warfare. To our utter shame and disgrace we find yet another section of our countrymen claiming a division of India on communal lines and identifying the major communities with different nationalities. They further claim privileges which no nationalist can ever concede. Some such people or their followers have combined with some renegades and self-seekers to achieve their purpose in Assam too and are to-day the rulers of this province. What common creed and policy among the professed contradictions in the Cabinet itself have put them together is a matter worth being looked into through this budget.

Sir, the speech that the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has made on this occasion makes us look round and observe to find whither this province is moving. The insincerity of their tears and anxieties for the woes and miseries of their fellowmen in the countryside is perceptible in every paragraph of the Hon'ble Premier's speech and their activities along with this budget are only confirming our convictions.

Sir, I confess, I have failed to understand how things have been made to square up in the budget by a jugglery of figures. The budget being the indicator of the progress of a province I do not see in it any indication of a step forward. It has belied the hopes of their own adherents, and has clearly exposed the hollowness of their hearts for improvements in the condition of the peasantry.

In it we find that inspite of his desperate endeavours in his speech to conceal his feelings for himself and the brethren of his community and yet to bridge the differences in his own camp by sophisticated arguments Sir Muhammad has failed to thoroughly veil up his *zid* to maintain the old order and to discredit all past or future Governments that have not him as their leader. I can assure him, however, that howsoever ignorant the people for whom the literature of his speech is meant they have already understood him and his Cabinet through their own activities and these people will demonstrate their minds as soon as the opportunity comes. He seems to be

very jubilant while remarking that the last Coalition Government within 14 months of their life, could not do all that they wanted to do but does he expect to blind us to what he has done for the people during the fifteen years of his intimate connection with the Government of this province ?

He may have bragged of his abilities before the dumb fanatics sitting with him and behind him or before the subordinates who dare not challenge but his declarations will not go undisputed by those who are watching his activities with concern. We ourselves look on him with such concern and we confess we are unable to join the chorus of eulogy poured on him. The policy and creed he is pursuing along with those others sitting in line with him are exposed in their nakedness. They are reactionary and anti-national.

Nothing could be worse misrepresentation of fact than what the Hon'ble Premier states in the second paragraph of page 4 of his speech in respect of granting of remission of land revenue and about prohibition. The whole paragraph and its next in which he claims for himself the role of 'Deus ex machina' or the saviour of Assam's finances—is unfounded and untruth. I would like to read out the paragraph for hon members' remembrance :

"Similarly, when the Government in past years found that the burden of land revenue taxation fell harshly upon the population on account of the world-wide depression, they introduced the system of remitting land revenue by three annas in the rupee. This scheme of relief to the cultivators was continued till 1936-37, when realising that the cultivators were not getting any profitable return from their agricultural produce, I increased the rate of reduction to 5 annas in the rupee. By this remission Government relieved the raiyats of the payment of a sum of over Rs.28 lakhs each year in land revenue. It will thus be clear that long before any other provincial Government in India thought of them, the Governments in Assam in the past have evolved schemes both for gradual prohibition of opium and for remission of land revenue which together cost them over half a crore of rupees annually ; and this, may I remind my hon. friend, was done with the sole object in view of ameliorating, or to use his own hackneyed phrase, for the well-being of the people of Assam. As a humble Member of that old Order of Administrators, I shall continue to be inspired in all my actions by the righteousness of the cause and I shall not allow myself to be deflected from my course by ill-conceived criticisms."

Next paragraph—I am sorry ..... to himself.

Everyone in this House knows how persistently he has been opposing the remissions and the schemes of prohibition and yet he had the boldness to make the statement as he has done. Everybody will remember how we on this side of the House had to carry those resolutions in the teeth of vehement opposition by Sir Muhammad and his company and it amuses us to find him to-day claiming the honour of saving the masses. It was only the other day when a Mouzadar supporter of this Ministry at Nowgong claimed the honour of annas 8 reduction of revenue from this Government. Such is the nature of propaganda done by Sir Muhammad and his party.

Another aspect in his speech with regard to land revenue remission is alarming and will surely concern the agriculturists very gravely. The saviour of Assam peasantry maintains that it is still a moot point whether the remission to the agriculturists have helped them to become thrifty or have really given them any relief. We, however still contend that there are yet many who need much more relief in as much as there are agriculturists who own much less land than what is necessary to provide two meals a day

for the whole year and why should they be forced to bear the burden of taxation at all ? One further statement in his speech causes graver anxiety for the tribal people particularly. He complains of the relief being given without being wanted and particularly by the backward people who, he maintains, want further taxation for expansion of education among them. While money is being poured for wastage in sectarian education in Madrassas and Maktabs he dreams to possibly bring in a bill for taxing education of the Mikirs, Lalungs, Kacharies, Miris and the *ex*-garden labourers—for whom he could not find even a score of thousands. Ignorant as they are of the capacity of the Exchequer to provide all free facilities for the education of their children we can assure them that given their legitimate share they would not require any further taxation. If no money could be provided for greater grant for their education why have concessions been given to the millionaire planters in respect of Agricultural Income-tax ? Why do the Hon'ble Ministers require greater salaries ? Do we not know several instances when money flows out for Madrassas without being asked for while Sanskrit education is having practically none ? Do not the Hon'ble Ministers know how many local bodies are crying for additional grants to quench the thirst for education of the people in the interior—more especially among the same backward people ? Do not the Ministers remember how many backward people visited them during their tours and wailed for facilities of roads, schools, water and dispensaries ? Surely their dream of better Raj can never be realised from this Budget and its framers.

These indigenous children of the soil who are yet renowned for their bravery and martial spirit are backward to-day per force of circumstances. But while they are getting crumps the new-comers from the neighbouring province are having the bread itself. It is not in the matter of education alone that they are crying in the wilderness—it is in the sphere of their homestead and agricultural lands as well. What about the Line system ? These indigenous people of the province—the tribals and the scheduled are soon to be driven to the hills to make room for the invading hordes of immigrants. The reserves so kept for the expansion of the natural population are being thrown open directly or indirectly for accommodating the immigrants and if the present policy of allowing squattings and stopping evictions of immigrants is carried on till the end of another year there will be no place on earth for the natives of the province. Is it not time to cry halt to this policy of encouraging immigration and provision of lands for them ? The speech of the Hon'ble Premier clearly tells us the policy of his Government in this regard. They appear to be holding the reins of Government for themselves, to satisfy their own greed for personal aggrandisement and for continuation of Planter Raj as also of the immigrants. Under the shelter of the Government of India Act these gangsters are exploiting the masses and also the poor opium-eaters. Anti-nationalists and anti-prohibitionists, with their zeal to crush the national movements, are to-day the rulers of the destiny of our people. The fallacy of their logic against total prohibition is perceptible to all who possess a pair of eyes, and yet there are some still clinging to them with their eyes open.

As regards the anti-national ideas that they have spread in the countryside after the assumption of their office scarcely four months ago—the facts are beyond our imagination. Communalism of the vilest form has reigned supreme in various localities. To mention what has happened in Nowgong district alone—Puranigudam in that district is a place where the Hindus and Muslims lived in greatest amity, but since after the recent visit of the Hon'ble Premier the feelings ran so high that the Idol of Saraswati

was removed and defiled with nightsoil by some *goondas*, and there is apprehension of a breach of the peace at any moment. Yet another instance is the fact that during the last 3 months no less than 12 Hindu girls, including one Mikir, have been abducted by Muslim *goondas*. It is more deplorable that the Hindu Police officers either cannot trace out the culprits, or do not dare touch them lest they themselves are put in trouble. We hope and trust that the Hon'ble Ministers have nothing to do with such feelings betrayed by the officials or the leaguers, but they have the duty to restore communal harmony and sense of security among all sections of the population.

Now, again, to deal with the Grant for Education, generally I feel that it is the worst part in the whole budget, not worthy of being touched with a pair of tongs. The scanty provision made for primary education, as well as secondary, is no more than a drop in the ocean. The progress of literacy as it indicates and recommends, is one which will put us at its end after 9 centuries. In Nowgong alone—all the Aided schools are starving for the scanty provisions at their disposal. The one High School at Koliabar, which provides for nearly a lakh of population at one end of the district, receives only Rs.50 a month—which is inadequate even for one teacher. It has been crying hoarse for additional grants for its proper equipment and efficiency, and it alone deserves Rs.200 more a month for proper discharge of their responsibilities to the youth of the locality. The other High Schools in the district also demand closest attention and deserve the grants for them being doubled up. The Middle English School at Dakshinpat will soon die out of existence if it does not receive its due share of attention. Other Middle English Schools also require increased aid, but with the small provision made in the budget how can the other districts also have their share of grants ?

I find a large number of friends of the present Cabinet have come their long way from Nowgong for small mutual benefits, but will their services be worth while if grants for the schools in the district are not doubled up and substantially new grants are not made for the new schools ? Further, Sir, the district of Nowgong has always been most unfairly treated being put in a row with the subdivisions, and its wailings as a district have always gone unheeded by the Government.

The small figure of Rs.12,000 for mass literacy is simply staggering us. It may be that the present Ministry cannot tolerate the removal of illiteracy firstly because they cannot carry on with their policy and programme successfully before a literate people, and secondly because their pet mauzadars cannot take advantage of the raiyats' illiteracy in the matter of collections. The Hon'ble Premier was feeling like earning gratitude of the Educationists when he proposed diversion of the amount to be spent for prohibition for the expansion of primary education. Has he not stopped our scheme of prohibition, but where is the money being diverted ? Why did he not provide the amount for the 3,000 primary schools of his dream, or for doing away with the illiteracy of adults ? Knowing him and his Colleagues as we do, they will scarcely divert any spare money for expansion of general education among the masses.

He has provided a large portion of the savings out of his non-prohibition scheme for the salary of himself and his Colleagues. With the Rs.1,300 more provided for his own salary, could he not have a hundred more venture primary schools provided or could there not be provision for water-supply to at least a hundred villages in the rural areas or for at least 20 subsidised dispensaries ? Herai so reflection of his heart

and his earnestness for education, sanitation, and medical relief of the peasantry. Some of his very same Colleagues who were working at Rs.500 a month only till a few months ago, do now require an increase of Rs.250 a month. Some of his very same Colleagues who were begging Parliamentary Secretaryships from us at Rs.300 a month cannot live to-day without a thousand rupees per mensem. When paucity of funds is being argued against popular demands, the present Ministry want to live with greater dignity and pride of their own conception. Were the Congress Coalition Ministers, who were also living in Shillong, undignified or irresponsible that the present Ministry want more salaries for maintaining their dignity or for working with any sense of responsibility ? Will they have to go for accepting bribes, or with begging bowls, if the higher salaries are refused ? Almost shamelessly the Hon'ble Premier draws an analogy with the Congress Ministries, where they had Parliamentary Secretaries. Will Sir Muhammad Saadulla tell us where is the Congress Province with so small revenues having as many as ten Ministers and as many Parliamentary Secretaries ?

Sir, while the Livestock Department so long aided by the Central Government is to be abolished this year for refusal of grants for its continuation by the Provincial Government—a department which has done immense good to the people in the rural villages, while no more money is available for aid to villages for construction of roads and tanks or for water-supply— our Ministers want their luxurious salaries. Sir, self-interest, fraud and misrepresentation cannot go further.

We, however, yet hope that better sense will prevail on those occupying the Treasury Benches and behind, and that with a spirit of service and sacrifice they will serve the people for whom they hold the position of trustees. Again I hope that they will join us in our fight for freedom, in our struggle for independence, and try to settle our differences and bring about harmony, peace and prosperity in the land. Let us for the time being sink our differences and present a united front in the cause of freedom without which there can be no balancing of budgets for an impoverished people. Let us all combine our efforts for emancipation of the country, when alone there will be peace and prosperity of our people.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Before I adjourn the House I may inform the House that to-morrow after 2 p.m. I propose to give the time at our disposal to the Leader of the Opposition and to the Hon'ble Premier. The hon. Leader of the Opposition will have to sum up the debate, and the Hon'ble Premier will have to reply to the numerous points that have been raised in this debate. So the hon. members will please note that all other members will have to finish their speeches before 1 p.m.

A Voice:—Will you not be pleased to extend the time to 5 p.m. as several hon. members have not yet spoken ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Much time was wasted yesterday, when they could have made their speeches. However, as I have said, I shall have to give all the time after 2 p.m. to the hon. Leader of the Opposition and to the Hon'ble Premier.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 27th February, 1940.

SHILLONG :
The 29th March, 1940.

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