

Proceedings of the twelfth 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
Tuesday, the 9th March, 1943

PRESENT

The Hon'ble Mr. Basanta Kumar Das, Speaker, in the Chair ; the ten
Hon'ble Ministers and forty Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral answers were given)

Courts of Honorary Magistrates, Habiganj

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

- * Will Government be pleased to state—
- Whether Courts of some Honorary Magistrates were established sometime back at Habiganj ?
 - If so, whether they are functioning now ?
 - If not, the reasons as to why and from when the said Bench of Honorary Magistrate is not functioning ?
 - Do Government propose to allow the Bench of Honorary Magistrates to continue to function at Habiganj ?
 - Do Government propose to call for a report from the Sub-divisional Officer of Habiganj, so as to allow Maulavi Syed Abdul Mannan to sit alone for magisterial work ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA replied :

- Yes.
- Yes. As their terms of appointment have not yet expired.
- Does not arise.
- The term of the Bench will expire on the 31st December 1944.
It will then be considered whether further extension will be necessary.
- It is the District Magistrate to move Government for enhanced magisterial powers if he considers necessary.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Sir, I understand the Hon'ble Minister says that all the Courts are still functioning. Is it his answer ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: It is quite clear from the reply. Their terms of appointment will expire in December 1944.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it known to Government that no work has been given to the other Courts ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: I have got no information regarding that, Sir.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister be prepared to accept from me that except one Court all the other Courts have been closed for a year and a half ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: If the hon. Member wants to know, I may have an enquiry made on that point.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is the Hon'ble Minister prepared to send a note to enquire of the Subdivisional Officer whether the terms have been finished?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: That is a matter for the Subdivisional Officer himself to report.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: I want to know why only one Court has been functioning and others not being functioning?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Anyhow, I will make an enquiry and ascertain whether what the hon. Member says are facts.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: My point is that whether the terms of all the other Courts have been finished and only one Court is still functioning?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: I think my reply is sufficient that I shall make necessary enquiry in the matter.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(to which answers were laid on the table)

Debt Conciliation Boards of the Province and their working

Babu LALIT MOHAN KAR asked:

9. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) For how long the different Debt Conciliation Boards are working in the Province?
- (b) Whether they propose to make a statement regarding the working of these Boards, since their inception?
- (c) Whether they have ever consulted public opinion as to (i) the utility of these Boards (ii) the mode of selecting the personnel of these Boards (iii) the real benefit that is being derived from these Boards by the debtors as well as by the creditors and (iv) the working of these Boards?
- (d) If not, whether they propose to do so?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI replied:

9. (a)—A list of the names of Debt Conciliation Boards showing for how long they have been working and also some of the Boards when dissolved is given below:—

1. North Sylhet Debt Conciliation Board	working with effect from	15th January 1938.
2. South Sylhet	ditto	ditto 1st April 1940.
3. Sunamganj	ditto	ditto 1st July 1940.
4. Habiganj	ditto	ditto 1st January 1940.
5. Karimganj	ditto	ditto 1st July 1940.
6. Nowgong	ditto	ditto 1st April 1940.
7. Dhubri	ditto	ditto 1st April 1940.
8. Silchar	ditto	ditto 1st May 1941.
9. Goalpara	ditto	ditto 1st May 1941.
10. Barpeta	ditto	ditto 1st April 1940.
11. Nalbari	ditto	ditto 1st April 1939.
	Established	Dissolved
12. Tezpur Board	1st February 1941	1st January 1943.
13. Mangaldai Board	1st July 1940	1st January 1943.
14. Kamrup Board	1st September 1937	(Split up into 2 Boards as Gauhati and Chaygaon).
15. Gauhati Board	1st August 1939	20th February 1942.
16. Chaygaon Board	1st August 1939	20th February 1942.

(b)—The state of things regarding the working of the Debt Conciliation Boards in the Province is published in the Land Revenue Administration report annually. Government are satisfied that the Debt Conciliation Boards, in general, have been working satisfactorily in this Province.

(c) (i)—The necessity to consult public opinion on their utility has never arisen. The question was exhaustively discussed on the floor of the House by the representatives of the public during discussion of the Debt Conciliation Bill at several stages and their verdict was in favour of these Boards, which has throughout been supported by public opinion also outside the Legislature.

(ii)—Government have not felt called upon to invite public opinion in matters of such minute details.

(iii)—Overwhelming public opinion in favour of such Boards left no room for consulting public opinion on the subject.

(iv)—Hon'ble Member's attention is invited to reply to question (b) above. Government have already invited opinion from all Chairmen and Ex-Chairmen of such Boards and requested for suitable suggestions from them.

(d)—Government are prepared to consider any further suggestions in connection with the working of the Debt Conciliation Act.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: May I know the reason why some of the Assam Valley Boards have been dissolved ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: Some Boards have been dissolved because there was no sufficient work.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: How long do the Government contemplate to continue all the other Debt Conciliation Boards ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: So long as the need continues, the work of a Board will continue.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Is it the intention of Government to bring even future debts within the jurisdiction of the Debt Conciliation Board and to put it on a permanent footing ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: If permanency is required by circumstances.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Is it not a fact that the Select Committee on the Debt Conciliation Bill which met in the last month recommended for the Civil Courts and the Bar Libraries for their opinion with regard to the working of the Conciliation Boards ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: If the Select Committee recommended anything, when the Bill is passed, Government will give effect to it.

Re: Manipuri Community

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

10. Will Government be pleased to state—
 - (a) Whether the Manipuri community is treated as caste Hindus ?
 - (b) The total population of the Manipuri community in the Province (to be shown valley by valley separately) ?
 - (c) The percentage of Government appointment which this community is entitled to hold ?
 - (d) The total number of persons belonging to the Manipuri community of Surma Valley who are now in executive service including the Assam Junior and Senior Civil Services ?
 - (e) Whether it is a fact that they are under-represented in Government services ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI replied :

10. (a)—Yes, if Hindu by faith.

(b)—Figures of the population deriving originally from the State of Manipur are not separately recorded.

(c) (d) & (e)—For the reasons already given, that the population deriving from Manipur is not a separate community, these questions do not arise.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Is it not a fact that the Manipuri community also reside in various parts of the plains districts of Cachar and Sylhet ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI : Yes.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Do not the Manipuri people deserve to be shown separately ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI : There is no census figure available showing the Manipuri people separately and under no classification of communal percentage that community is included.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : I want to know definitely the number of Manipuris serving under the Government of Assam in the executive service including the Assam Junior and Senior Civil Services.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI : By a reference to the Civil List the hon. Member may find whether there are Manipuris or not. Manipuris are not shown as a separate class.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Are not the Manipuris being exploited by the caste Hindus ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : That is a matter of opinion.

Number of posts in the Assam Civil and Junior Civil Services held by members of the Scheduled Castes

Babu BALARAM SIRCAR asked :

11. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) How many posts in the Assam Civil Service and the Assam Junior Civil Service are now held by officers belonging to the Scheduled Castes ?

(b) How many posts more in the Assam Civil Service are required to be filled up by Scheduled Caste candidates according to the quota allotted to each community ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

11. (a)—One and five respectively.

(b)—Six.

General discussion of the Budget and discussion on charged expenditure

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Order, order.

General discussion of the Budget.

Discussion, if any, of estimates of expenditure charged upon the Revenues of the Province, other than estimates relating to expenditure referred to in paragraph (a) of sub-section (3) of section 78 of the Government of India Act.

Mr. A. WHITTAKER : May I raise a question of procedure ? I is very difficult to deal with general discussions of the Budget when the tim

R 97D

allotted for discussion is some 12 hours after the Budget Speech has been delivered. The Budget Speech shows a great deal of preparation by the Hon'ble Finance Minister, and I think, it would be courteous to the Members of this House, if we were given a better opportunity to digest what the Hon'ble Finance Minister has said and prepare our comments. To expect a reasoned discussion of the standard which you so desire in this House, is not possible, when we heard the parent speech less than 24 hours ago. My own suggestion would be that if in future the Budget Speech could be given on say—Saturday, it would be possible to take the first day's discussion on Monday giving all Members plenty of time to digest it. Alternatively, if the Budget Speech could be given on Tuesday, Members can spend one day—Wednesday—to examine it and prepare their comments. But with the present procedure, I suggest, it is somewhat unreasonable to expect considered comments.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : In future I shall see what I can do in this matter. But may I ask whether the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister is anything more elaborate than the Budget itself? The hon. Members were supplied with the copies of the Budget Estimates before, and the Hon'ble Finance Minister's Speech only explains some special features of the Budget and those special features the hon. Members must have examined with the help of the Budget Memorandum even before the speech was delivered by the Finance Minister. So I do not think there is any difficulty in starting the discussion after 12 hours of the delivery of the Budget Speech by the Hon'ble Minister. The speech is nothing but an explanation of the Budget which was supplied to the hon. Members 15 days before the speech was delivered. With the advantage of having got the Budget beforehand, I do not know why the hon. Member should feel difficulty in digesting the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister. If I may say so, the hon. Members must have had their power of digesting the Hon'ble Finance Minister's Budget Speech whetted on by the examination of the Budget beforehand. Very well, I shall consider the suggestions of the hon. Member.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : But as a matter of fact, Sir, we did not get the Budget even 15 days before.

(Voices—We also did not get, Sir.)

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : Sir, I got it on the eve of my departure.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER . It was probably due to irregularities of communication.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hope I shall be forgiven if I do not traverse the dreary desert sand of dead habit which compels some people in spite of their conviction to congratulate the Finance Minister or the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the presentation of his Budget.

My first impression, after a careful perusal of the Budget was one of disappointment.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : But the hon. Member did not wait for the Budget Speech. As I said, he began examining the Budget without waiting for the Hon'ble Finance Minister's Speech.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : Yes, Sir. I was disappointed. It will come very soon. I found that the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister was nothing but a paraphrase of the Budget Memorandum. My first impression after a careful perusal of the Budget was one of disappointment. I had expected better things from the Hon'ble Minister this year. He ought to remember that Opposition criticism is a

very important factor in any democratic form of Government; so I hope that he will pay attention to Opposition criticism.

The Budget, Sir, shows ample evidence of carelessness and inattention, which in the case of the author can only be ascribed to the deadening influence of his assured majority.

I am fully aware, Sir, of the limitations of the Constitution as well as of the abnormal position due to war conditions. This is the second war Budget and the Hon'ble Finance Minister wants us to appreciate that not only the nation-building but also nation-saving works have been taken up by the Government. But I ask him if he does seriously feel that the estimates of expenditure on Air Raid Precaution and on the head Civil Defence that he had made, will really serve the nation? This will not. Only the people can fight the fascist successfully; only the people can meet the menace, and only their own interest and own leadership can inspire the people to the war, to victory. China and Soviet Russia have made even Mr. Churchill feel this, not to speak of others. After Singapore and Burma, the Indian people want to see if Britain can still learn the truth and unlearn the impérialistic arrogance. Mr. Churchill records the morale and unity of Russians even in the darkest hours and demands the same of his own people, evidently of the loyal friends of India. But darkness alone does not breed the unity or morale. Mr. Churchill knows the secret, but he would not admit it. Unless the demands of the Nationalist India are accepted, the provision of crores of rupees in the Budget will not save the nation. Unless the people are saved from starvation and given proper food and clothing, the morale cannot be maintained. Sir, this war is a menace to the humanity, but its evils and horrors are not unmixed. This war has also come to the rescue of many, particularly of this Government which owes its existence to the continuance of the war.

This Ministry have failed and completely failed to do justice to the people. Taking advantage of the war, it has given a complete good-bye to every kind of nation-building affair, rather it is doing anti-national work.

Sir, not only the Budget is disappointing, but the Budget Speech is more disappointing and barren. The real problem of the Province is to get two square meals a day for its people, to save them from the jaws of death by preventing preventible diseases, to give them some education so that they may grow and develop into manhood. If it is the duty of any civilized Government to take civil defence measures against air raid for town people, it is also its duty to protect the villagers from starvation and fell diseases. Malari, Kala-azar, Cholera and other preventible fell diseases have extended to villages. The poor, half-starved and ill-clad cultivators are falling easy victims to these diseases. The prices are soaring up and price control is only in name. The want of any policy for effective price control is a serious shortcoming. The index of cost of living is well over 200. If the people are to suffer from mal-nutrition, the nation-saving cry and the nation building cry are really a cruel joke. The Assam Government have not sanctioned even 25 per cent. dearness allowance which is overdue for more than a year. Slit trenches are apologies for defence. One is to trust on luck and luck alone to escape from injury from bombing, and therefore, to call all these slit trenches as shelters is ridiculous.

The problem of political prisoners and detenus, price control and dearness allowance, adequate supply of small coins are some of the most urgent matters, but very little attention has been given to them. Provision of a lumpsum in the Budget is very bad, because, at the end we

invariably find that there has been no well thought-out plan or scheme, no machinery examined for actually putting such schemes into operation, and money was provided only to delude the people outside and deceive the Members of the House at the time of the Budget. The nation-building services are still being starved and the scrutiny of the details which will be made during the Demands for Grants will show that there is hardly any increase in any of the departments of nation-building character. At the same time we are hopelessly and rudely reminded of the continued absence of policy and plan with regard to these nation-building services—particularly with regard to Irrigation, Agriculture, Industries, Public Health, Education, Co-operation, etc. It appears that there has been a perfect deadlock in the Secretariat so far as the nation-building departments are concerned, and all sins of omission and commission in these departments are tried to be covered up and condoned in the name of war situation. In fact, the phrase 'nation-building' has been so often repeated that it seems to have lost any meaning and has degenerated into a mystic jargon for defending anything. The art of a builder is not a simple one. He must first know what he is going to build and have a full knowledge of the requirements and of the materials at his disposal. It is only then that he can make a plan and specification. The work can begin only after the plan and specification are ready and must proceed according to these. He is a bad architect who does not follow the sequence. The builder of a nation must also follow this sequence, otherwise he is bound to fail and will only waste the resources of the nation.

Now, coming to the question of rice, in the Report Bulletin No. 23 published by the Senior Marketing Officer, Assam, it is seen that the total production of rice in Assam in terms of rice is four crores eighty-seven lakhs twenty-six thousand and eighty maunds. He does not take into consideration the quantity of rice (paddy) required for seed and other uses. So there must be a serious shortage of rice as most of the people are too poor to have two square meals a day, and are simply living from hand to mouth. The export and import figures do not reveal the true state of poverty and starvation existing in the villages. The figures of export and import published in the Press Note by the Government show that the normal surplus in the Province is 7 lakhs of maunds of rice per year. Everyone knows that flood and drought frequently occur in Assam. The production of agricultural crops are dictated by these factors. The Government figures show that in the year 1939-40, which was a flood year, the import of Burma rice into Assam increased to 1,180,307 maunds as against 366,246 maunds. The import in 1937-38 which was a normal year and the figures of export in the year 1939-40 dwindled to 206,925 maunds. But the actual condition of production and our requirements should be judged by the individual years and the conditions of monsoon. This year, the Grow More Food Campaign potato, vegetables and pulses, practically nothing was done to increase the production of rice—the staple food of the people and there was no foresight and well-planned scheme behind this scheme for tackling that vital problem. It is also known that in Assam chances of expansion of paddy area are very limited; all suitable paddy lands are already under cultivation. So, in the year 1942-43 there was no increase of area under paddy and it is reported by everyone—and we have seen actually—that the paddy crop has been very badly affected by drought and damaged by insects. The maximum rice acreage that is expected in the Surma Valley is 2,203,607 acres. The normal yield of rice per acre may be taken to be a maximum of 11 maunds of rice (this figure is much more than the Government figure). If we take

the rice crop as 75 per cent. of the normal in the current year, the quantity of rice that is expected in the Surma Valley this year, is 18,179,757 maunds. So, the actual shortage in the Surma Valley alone this year would be 6,059,920 maunds of rice. Assam Valley in general does not export rice but used to import the whole quantity of Burma rice for consumption in the tea gardens. It is also evident from the report of the Senior Marketing Officer that Manipur used to export about four lacs of maunds of rice every year to Upper Assam. This quantity of rice supplied to Upper Assam has also been totally stopped due to the exigencies of the war situation prevailing there. Even if the Government insist that their normal surplus is 7 lacs of maunds, even then they should modify the surplus figure in the light of temporary increase of population due to the influx of army, labourers and Burma evacuees from outside. This increase of population may also be estimated at 10 lacs in Assam and their normal requirement of rice for one year is to the tune of about 50 lacs of maunds. So, I hope the Government will take timely note and stop exporting rice.

Sir, we all know what difficulty we are facing to secure our daily need. The price of pulses has gone very high. Cloth has become scarce though we heard from Government that they have made provision for supplying standard cloth to the people of the Province. Due to scarcity of kerosene oil, everybody is suffering beyond measure. Coal and wood-fuel are taking the place of gold; due to want of quinine many people are breathing their last untimely. The scarcity of paper is felt by everybody but still our Hon'ble Finance Minister wasted a huge quantity of paper in paraphrasing the Budget Memorandum and presenting before us the same, naming it as Budget Speech. Government have provided a good sum for the Grow More Food Campaign. But only supplying a good variety of seeds will not solve the problem. Unless the crops can be saved both from excess and shortage of water, it is of no use supplying good seeds. Moreover, so far as Surma Valley is concerned, I know that cattle used by the cultivators for ploughing their field are being exported for military requirement. Wheat is a thing which will be forgotten very soon by the people of Assam. Mustard oil, the other important articles of daily necessities, are not available in many places. I hope Government should not lose any time to take note of all these things and to remove these real difficulties at once. Sir, last time the Hon'ble Premier gave me compliments for pointing out some mistakes in Budget figures, this time I hoped that the figures would be facts, but to my utter disappointment I find only going very hurriedly through the pages that there are about three dozen of mistakes in this year's figures too, though a correction slip was supplied to us yesterday. Sir, I wish the compliments should go to the Finance Department this year.

Sir, I think it would be better for me if I mention the pages now just like last year, I shall go in detail at the end of my speech. Just now I am mentioning the pages only.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It will be better to point out the mistakes now.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Page 31—2—Pay of Establishment—Mandals—The scale is Rs.11—15. There are 4 incumbents. The Budget provision is Rs.496. Sir, the allowance rate is Rs.10, over and above the scale. Let us keep aside the allowance rate and take only the minimum salary. In that case the monthly requirement is Rs. 44. If it is multiplied by 12 the figure will be Rs.528, Sir, which is more than the budgeted amount; if we add allowance, the amount required will be much more.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: At page 45, under Judicial and Non-Judicial—C—Superintendence—1.—Pay of Establishment—Servants (15—20). Here if we take the highest figure, *i.e.*, Rs. 20, the amount cannot exceed Rs.240, there being one incumbent. So the amount budgeted is in excess of the requirement.

At page 53, Expenditure from Road Fund—(a)—Pay of officers—Secretary, Provincial Transport Authority. The scale is from Rs. 750—1,450, the amount budgeted is Rs. 5,200. In this connection I think it would be better if I mention about the Note which I find on the Budget Memorandum, and after giving due consideration to that this figure is incorrect. Even if Rs.750 is taken to be the present salary, in that case also the amount should be more than the amount shown deducting one-tenth of the requirement which will be received from the Central Government. This has been explained in the Budget Memorandum but in spite of that the figure has not been put correctly.

At page 68, Director of Land Records, etc. the scale is from Rs. 1,000—2,250 *plus* special pay Rs. 150. Taking for granted that the present incumbent is drawing Rs. 2,250 *plus* Rs. 150, *i.e.*, Rs. 2,400, the amount required in 12 months cannot exceed Rs.28,800. But the figure put here is Rs.30,000 which is in excess of the requirement.

Then again on the same page—Pay of Establishment—Elephant establishment, the scale is Rs.11—20. The figure should not be more than Rs.240 for one but Rs.309 have been budgeted which is also in excess of the requirement.

At page 70, 2—Pay of Establishment—Elephant establishment, the scale is Rs.14—22. There are 4 incumbents. Even if we take the minimum, the monthly requirement is Rs. 56 per month and the annual will be Rs. 672, but the figures shown here in the Budget is Rs. 602 which is less than the requirement.

At page 71, T.—Subdivisional Establishment—Elephant establishment, the scale is from Rs.13—22. Even if we take the present pay at Rs.13, the monthly requirement for all the 7 incumbents will be Rs.91 a month and if this figure is multiplied by 12 the figure will be more than Rs.1,100, but here the figure is less than this.

Page 72, 1—Pay of Establishment—Establishment and allowance Rs. 13—15). The provision here is for Rs. 192 and Rs.216 under Non-excluded and Excluded areas respectively, but under no circumstances it can exceed Rs.180 in all.

Page 81, (At the top), Interpreter—the pay given here is Rs. 18. There is only one incumbent and the amount shown is Rs. 240, but it should be Rs.216. The amount shown in the Budget is in excess of the requirement.

Page 84, B.—Charges for Police Custody—Deputy Superintendent's allowances. Here the scale is from Rs.10—12, and there are only 3 incumbents and the amount shown is Rs. 480. But it cannot be more than Rs. 432.

Again, allowance to Sub-Assistant Surgeons at Rs.10, and there are 3 incumbents. So the figure should be Rs.360, whereas it has been shown, under Excluded and Non-excluded areas, Rs 120, each. Rs.120 have been shown less than the requirement.

Page 93, F.—Railway Police.—Pay of Establishment—Servants Rs.6—15. If we take even Rs.15, the amount cannot exceed Rs. 180, but here it is shown, Rs.204. So the amount is in excess.

Page 95, Pay of Establishment—Constables, the scale is from Rs.18—22. They are 34 in number, but the amount that has been provided here is in excess because even if we take Rs. 22, in that case also, the amount will be Rs. 8,976.

Page 96, Pay of Establishment—Pound-keepers and herdsmen. The scale is from Rs.5—25, and there are three in number. Even if we take Rs 5, the monthly requirement is Rs. 15 and in 12 months it should be Rs.180. But it has been shown Rs.48 and Rs.36 under Non-excluded and Excluded areas respectively, so there is less than the amount required.

Page 123, just in the middle—under ordinary dispensaries—Dhais and nurses. The scale is from Rs. 30 to Rs. 50. Even if we take Rs. 50, there are 12 incumbents, the monthly requirement is Rs. 600 and in 12 months, the amount cannot be more than Rs. 7,200. But here it is shown much in excess.—under Non-excluded areas Rs.7,691 and under Excluded, Rs.1,470.

In the same page, Sir, just at the bottom—Sub-Assistant Surgeons—the scale is from Rs. 75 to Rs. 200. This year there are two incumbents. If we take Rs.200, in that case, for two we require Rs. 400 a month, and in 12 months we require Rs. 4,800. But here under Non-excluded areas the amount is Rs. 2,068 and in Excluded areas Rs. 8,208 have been shown, so the budgeted amount is much in excess.

Page 124, just in the middle, Sir, under Leper Hospital, Sylhet—2—Compounders and Dressers. The scale is from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40. Even if we take Rs. 30, in that case our monthly requirement would be Rs.60 and in 12 months it will be Rs. 720. But it has been shown less here, as the amount budgeted is Rs. 612.

Page 129, the total of—A.—Public Health Establishment under Excluded areas is wrong. In place of Rs.11,560 it will be Rs.11,650.

Page 132, just at the top—Pay of Magic Lantern Operators at Rs. 20. There are 7 incumbents. The monthly requirement is Rs. 140 and in 12 months it will be only about Rs. 1,680. But here Rs. 1,900 has been shown which is in excess.

Page 140, Sir, under Director—the scale is Rs.1,400—1,600. There is one incumbent in Non-excluded areas. The amount shown is Rs. 12,627, but even if we take Rs.1,400 the amount required will be Rs. 16,800. We do not find any explanation for this.

Page 144, Field Assistants—fifth from the top. The rate is Rs. 60. There are two incumbents. The allotment is only Rs. 816 but it will be Rs. 1,440.

Again at page 144. Just below the Field Assistant—Clerks, the rate is Rs. 40. We require Rs. 480 but here it is Rs. 530. So the amount has been provided in excess.

I am sorry, I have missed two in the middle.

Page 142, Scheme of agricultural marketing—in the middle—2.—Pay of Establishment—Servants. The scale is from Rs. 14—15. There are eight incumbents. The amount allotted here is Rs. 1,219—which is much less than the requirement even if we take Rs. 14 as the salary.

Page 143, Field Assistants—just at the top. The scale is Rs. 20 to Rs. 50. Even if we take Rs. 50, the ordinary requirement will be Rs. 600. But here it is shown as Rs.849.

Just below that—Grafter mali—the pay is Rs. 30 and the requirement cannot exceed Rs. 360. Here it is Rs.394. So it is in excess of the requirement.

Page 145, Just in the middle—Fieldmen for the Entomological section under 2—Pay of establishment. The scale is from Rs. 20 to Rs. 50. If we take Rs. 50, our monthly requirement would be Rs. 100. In 12 months it will be Rs. 1,200. But here it is Rs. 1,706, which is in excess.

Page 149, just at the top—Clerks—Rs. 35—90. There are three incumbents, The amount that will be required is less than the amount

shown. The monthly requirement cannot be more than Rs. 270 even if we take the highest scale, namely Rs 90 ; now in 12 months, it will be Rs.3,240.

Page 152—Just at the top, the pay of Officers—Director, Civil Veterinary Department—the scale is from Rs.350—600. But even if we take Rs.600, in that case also, the yearly requirement will be Rs.7,200 but here it has been shown as Rs.8,523, which is in excess.

Page 159—Manager and Salesman.—The scale is from Rs.40—50. There are two incumbents. Even if we take Rs.50 the annual requirement for the two incumbents will be Rs.1,200, but here it has been shown as Rs.1,356. This is also a case of an excess allotment.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir. Will it not be better to tell the hon. Member to submit a list ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It will be better to point out the mistakes on the floor of the House.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: He is taking much time of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: How many more ?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: I will finish it soon, Sir.

Page 160—Master Weavers for Commercial course.—The scale is from Rs.75—90. There are four incumbents ; even if we take Rs.75, the monthly requirement will be Rs.300 but the total provision for the year is Rs.756, which is much less than the requirement.

Page 165—The Assistant Labour Commissioner.—The scale is Rs.650, but the amount shown here is Rs.8,400. The real requirement will be less by Rs.600. Then down below—the pay of Establishment, clerk—the scale is Rs.55. The requirement should be Rs.660, but it has been shown here Rs.705 which is in excess of the requirement. Then on the same page it will appear that the pay of the Typist is Rs.50 and so the requirement ought to have been Rs.600 a year, but it has been shown more here. Then again on the same page the pay of the servant is Rs.14. There are two incumbents and so the monthly requirement is Rs.28, and the annual requirement cannot exceed Rs.336, but it has been shown more here.

Page 180—Temporary establishment under Auxiliaries.—The scale is Rs.15—20. There are two incumbents and even if we take Rs.20, the monthly requirement will be Rs.40 and the annual requirement will be Rs.480 but it has been shown as Rs.579 which is much more than the requirement.

I do not want to point out any more mistakes in the Budget figures.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: We find, Sir, that it has been sufficiently condemned.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Now, Sir, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not mention about the allowances of the political prisoners. I understand, Sir, that in some cases the political prisoners have been given some allowances, but I should say that these are not assistances but they are simply a mockery for assistance (*hear, hear*). Sir, those persons whose guilts have not been proved by any court and who have been kept without any trial in the jail, I think, it is the duty of a civilised Government to see that their dependants do not starve and they do not die out of starvation.

Now coming to the financial position of the Province, I find that the opening balance of the current year is Rs. 76,39,000 and the closing balance will be Rs. 43,29,000, and the total revenue deficit will be Rs.10,10,000. Over and above that, the State Provident Fund liability will be increased this year and at the end of the current year the amount will be Rs.1,21,24,000. Sir, the revenue from forest should be considered as capital. Government is extracting forest produces at a large scale but the amount allotted for improvement is nominal. Government

has taken credit in mentioning that as a result of the request made by this Government for the training of students from Assam in the Railway workshop at Kanchrapara, the Railway authorities have recently selected two students from this province for admission into the workshop. This is all for the Department of Industries. Less I talk of Co-operation the better, because Government has followed the policy of non-co-operation with this department. Sir, we find in the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister that an experienced officer has been appointed as Provincial Motor Transport Controller. May we know the name of that expert with his past experience in this line? The Hon'ble Finance Minister has said that no longer can Assam be called a non-martial province and he has also given the reasons for such remark. The reasons are there in his speech and it is upto the hon Members to draw their own opinions on it. On the other hand in the very first page of his speech, I find that he has thanked the Royal and American Air Forces for saving the province from serious devastation. I would have been pleased to hear from him that the Assam Air Force composed of the people of the province has given a crushing defeat to the enemies and have saved the province from devastation. I am glad to note that India-made foreign liquor will increase the revenue under excise this year and foreign-made Assam Air Force will save the province from devastation. Sir, you will find at page 51 of the Budget Memorandum that a regular "Fire Service" has also been established in certain towns to cope with any outbreaks of fire that may occur as a result of enemy action, and I hope that there is such a service in the capital of the province. If so, may I ask the Government why the Loreto Convent could not be saved from the calamity? Is it because the fire was not due to the enemy action? If not, why the fire at one place could not be tackled successfully? Are we to believe that an organisation which cannot cope with a solitary case in normal time will be able to cope with several cases under abnormal circumstances? Sir, I find that there is some improvement in the Education Budget under some heads and I feel that the Hon'ble Minister of Education takes some care for our suggestion (*Hear, hear*). With this hope I venture to give him some suggestions. Sir one post of the Assistant Inspectresses of Schools out of the two provided in this year's Budget should go to the Surma Valley.

But Sir, I am sorry to find that the Hon'ble Education Minister who from the very beginning was treating the Sylhet Women's College sympathetically, has forgotten to increase the grant and I am sure it was overlooked by him.

Sir, the Deaf and Dumb School at Sylhet—the only one of its kind in the province—has been starved. I hope, in future it will receive the sympathy it deserves from the Hon'ble Education Minister.

Sir, the case of the Assistant Lecturers is really pitiful. I think the Government should draw up a scheme whereby there should be automatic promotion of the Assistant Lecturer on confirmation. Sir, as regards other points and those mentioned here, I shall deal more fully at the time when Demands for Grants for education will come up before the House.

Sir, in this connection I like to suggest that the Hon'ble Ministers, while moving their respective Demands, will kindly deliver a speech so as to explain the real position in their particular departments. Now, I like to make a special appeal to the Hon'ble Finance Minister and the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Medical. I request them with all sincerity that they should co-operate at least once and fulfil the desire of the Surma Valley people by starting the Medical Institution at Sylhet very soon. The Government is

feeling the difficulty in getting doctors. Had there been a Medical Institution at Sylhet, certainly Government would not have found themselves in such a helpless and hopeless position.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member will finish.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: I will finish, Sir, in two or three minutes.

In conclusion, I would respectfully appeal to His Excellency the Governor to consider whether it is not time to dissolve the House and to order a fresh election or to suspend the Constitution once again under section 93 of the Government of India Act. From the very poor attendance of Members in the House during the last session and in the present session, it has been abundantly clear that this House has ceased to be representative of the people of Assam and the House has ceased to have the confidence of the public. The galleries in the House have been empty these days and why? The obvious reason is that the public feel that the Members of the House can little influence the actions of the Ministry. Saadulla Ministry in Assam has little plan of action behind it beyond the plan of distributing patronage and lining one's own pocket. I have been tired of referring to the indecent manner in which Sir Muhammad Saadulla makes appointments in the public services. As things are at present, there is no chance of rectifying the defects and the only course is to make an end of the so-called Constitution in Assam. Look at the appointments made under the Civil Defence Department. The starting pay is Rs.300 and these are being renewed every three months without coming through the Public Service Commission.

I have already referred to some of the important problems and I would mention that Government are simply squandering public money in the name of the National War Front, which is nothing but a National Waste Front as it is in Assam. The National War Front Department should not be allowed to muddle with the economic side of the province. Though the National War Front expenditure is met by the Central Government, still it should be spent through the District heads of the province specially fish, oil, castor seed, etc., should be distributed and purchased by the district authorities. The Grow More Food Campaign has no policy behind it as I have already mentioned. The Government of India have given lakhs of rupees. Who are going to grow the crops? In the countryside people are dying for want of medicine and there is hardly suitable provision for their treatment. Government have recently increased the pay of the subsidised doctors from Rs.35 to Rs.45 a month. Have they got any doctors on this miserable salary? Have the Government increased allotment for medicines and what about the Assam Pure Food Act? Has it been so amended to remove all imperfections from it? Are there sufficient Health Officers in Assam to administer this Assam Pure Food Act? Are not there many preventable deaths arising out of taking of adulterated food? It is useless putting these questions. They go in at the one and out at the other ear. Saadulla Ministry in Assam has got no plan whatsoever for improving the state of the country. And yet Sir Saadulla goes about saying "People are happy and contented in Assam". Yes, the people are happy because their case is just like the saying "*Andher Kiba Ratra Kiba Din*".

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Budget for the year 1943-44 was presented to this House yesterday in brilliant blue and green covers. It was accompanied by a well balanced and neat speech from the Hon'ble Finance Minister with his usual fling at

the Civil Disobedience Movement and also with praises for the officers who had been working under a great strain and for the host of Secretaries and Deputy Secretaries. But a cruel Member sitting on my right has exposed all the inaccuracies in the Budget estimate. On the last occasion when this was done by some hon. Member, I happened to meet Mr. Jones—the author of the Budget—outside this Hall in the corridor and asked him if he was really getting old. He stoutly denied that he was getting old, and some sort of explanation was put before the House which must have convinced all except those who can never be convinced. Now, Sir, the Hon'ble the Prime Minister, if not the Hon'ble Finance Minister himself, is an able lawyer who has saved many from the gallows and I think, he will be able to wriggle the Ministry out of the unhappy position. But, Sir, I for myself would give credit to the Hon'ble Prime Minister and the Ministry for the Budget which has been presented. Sir, the horrors of the war must have been present in their minds, the horrors of the preparation for the war in this province,—the preparations which had drawn the cultivators from their fields and had made them to work as day labourers with wages which they spend everyday for their food, the preparations which had driven the people of the town to villages and the people of the villages to jungles, the preparations which had presented to us the sad spectacle of accidents, motor accidents from cars and vehicles driven by military drivers resulting in deaths and injuries, who do not wait for removing the injured to hospital, the immoral sight in the town of Shillong, Gauhati and other places which demoralises our youths—all these must have tormented the Hon'ble Ministers when they sat down to prepare their Budget. The actions of an insolent and uncontrollable bureaucracy and its underlings who have in the name of law and order assaulted, kicked the innocent men, women and children—both outside and inside the jail—must have caused the heart of the Hon'ble Ministers to weep in silence and fill their minds with impotent rage. That the bureaucracy is increasingly conscious of their truer and new and more real allegiance to the Governor, Viceroy and the Secretary of State and they hardly care what the Hon'ble Ministers want them to do in certain matters. In spite of all these difficulties, in the midst of all these troubles and worries, we have this attractive Budget book. I admire the cool self-possession, I admire the keen sense of duty which have enabled the Hon'ble Ministers in these trying days to carry on the administration as if nothing has happened, as if no relation and no friend of theirs have been unjustly assaulted, I admire the courage they have shown in carrying on this administration and preparing the Budget which is by no means inferior to the preceding one or others which had preceded but which I think give points to some other Budgets specially the Education Budget to which reference has been made by my hon. Friend on the right. Sir, lest it be supposed that I am paying unmerited compliments to the Ministry out of my difference with my erstwhile leader and colleagues I will cite some instances in this House. I cannot claim that my reports are more accurate than the reports which the Hon'ble Prime Minister must have received of the sad incidents because, Sir, everywhere there is hush hush and all information is suppressed. But the informations that I shall place before the House are not from the persons who have been accused when the Hon'ble Prime Minister relies on the information which he receives from the persons who are themselves accused. He says that my statements are inaccurate because he must accept the statement of a man who is an accused whereas my statements are statements of persons who have seen or have heard these things from reliable source but who do not dare to speak out in public lest they also will be persecuted.

Sir, the first incident that I would refer to is the incident which had taken place in Pathsala in the district of Kamrup in the subdivision of Barpeta on the 26th January last. On that day there a 'Nam Kirtan' was held in certain temple in Pathsala and the Nam Kirtan was attended only by women. Sir, the Police—4 constables and an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police—were waiting near about when the Nam was being held and they sent words to the Sub-Inspector of Police to advise them what to do. Suddenly the Officer in-charge, the self-same Tularam Keot (whose name I mentioned on the last occasion when, Sir, I told this House that this Tularam Keot, Sub-Inspector of Police, was responsible for shooting several persons in his jurisdiction and the result of all that in this House was that he was rewarded with King's Medal by way of decoration), came and attacked the assembly. Sir, at one time I was approached by several Government officers to say something against them in the House because as soon as I say something against them in this House, the inevitable result was either a promotion or decoration by way of Rai Saheb or some other way. I was too much pestered by Government officers in this way and I dropped the idea. But, Sir, I could not avoid bringing to the notice of this House the conduct of Tularam Keot and that gentleman must be grateful to me for the King's Cross and I am sure if I at any time break the law in his presence I shall be excused. Sir, this Tularam Keot came at once and began to attack the women and under his orders Srijukta Chandra Prova Saikiani who was present in the Nam was seized by a constable. He did not say that she was under arrest before she was actually seized. The women were non-plussed and they also tried, as she was dragged away, to detain her. When she was thus dragged, her cloth was taken away and she was left only with her petti-coat. I hope Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn will kindly excuse me for referring to this in detail. Sir, she was taken in that condition through the streets to the Thana and the women were also assaulted. While in the Thana she was assaulted, she was given a slap by the Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police and the whole day she was kept in the Thana locked-up without any facility being given to her to go out or to ease herself.

A complaint was actually made before the Subdivisional Officer, Barpeta, but he refused to accept that complaint. I say all this on the authority of a letter which I have received from her son, and I will ask your permission, Sir, to read out that letter.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member should read out the substance in English only.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, I have given the substance already. But if I am allowed to read the letter which was written by her son it will be better.

“সম্প্রতি ২৬ জানুৱাৰী দিনৰ দিনা আবেলী পাঠশালা দৌলৰ মঠ আৰু পূজা মন্দিৰৰ সন্মুখত তিবোতা সকলৰ এখন মেলা বহে। তাত মোৰ আই শ্ৰীযুতা শইকীয়ানীও উপস্থিত আছিল। নাম বহাৰ লগে লগে এজন এচিষ্টেণ্ট এন্স, আই সহ এটা সশস্ত্ৰ পুলীচ দলে নাম বন্ধি আছিল, শেষত সিহঁতে দাৰোগালৈ স্মৃধি পঠিওৱাত “কি কৰ্তব্য” দাৰোগা তুলাৰাম কেওঁট নিজে আহি হঠাৎ তিবোতা বোৰক আক্ৰমণ কৰে, প্ৰায় এশমান তিবোতা ধাইল হয়। নামৰ মাহ-প্ৰসাদ লও-ভণ্ড কৰি দিয়ে আৰু আইক নামৰ মাজৰ পৰা টানি নিয়ে। তেওঁক “গ্ৰেপ্টাৰ কৰা হল” বুলি নোকোৱাকৈ হঠাৎ তেওঁৰ হাতত ধৰে গৈ আৰু কনিষ্ঠৰলে টানে। তিবোতা বোৰে হঠাৎ এই আক্ৰমণত বিবস্ত্ৰৰ দৰে হয় আৰু আইক পিছফালৰ পৰা ধৰে। এনে হোৱাত পুলিচৰ টানত তেওঁ প্ৰায় বিবস্ত্ৰাৰ

দবে হয়, তেওঁৰ গাৰ কাপোৰ-কাণীও খুলি যায়পেটিকোটী চৌ থাকে, তেওঁ নিজে বাৰ বুলি কোৱাতো এৰি নিদি এই অবস্থাবেই চকিয়াই চকিয়াই নি বাচত তোলে।

তাৰ পাছত তেওঁক থানালৈ নি থানাৰ সন্মুখত দাবোগাৰ এচিষ্টেণ্ট জনে (মুছলমান জামাদাৰ) তেখেতক এটা চৰ নাৰে, এটা খুঙা নাৰে আৰু চকিয়াই চকিয়াই নি লাকাপত বন্ধ কৰি থয়। তেওঁক বাতি পেচাব কৰিবলৈ পাত্ৰ দিয়া নুছিল। পুলিচে তেখেতৰে নিচিনা দেশৰ নেত্ৰীস্থানীয়া মহিলা এগৰাকীৰ লগত এনে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰাৰ একো কাৰণ বচা নাছিল। এই ঘটনাত পাঠশালাৰ বাইৰে আৰু তিব্বাতাবোৰে এস, ডি, ও, ঝাউওৰ আদালতত গোচৰ কৰিবলৈ গৈছিল, কিন্তু এস, ডি, ওই মোকদ্দমা নললে। বৰ্তমানলৈ তেখেতক দিনা বিচাৰে আটক ৰাখিছে, গৌহাটী জেলত।”

She was being pushed in the street with her petti-coat and taken into the Thana in that condition without allowing her to dress herself properly although she said that she was accompanying them to the Thana. I have practically said all these in my speech before.

I refer next to the incident of Babu Sushil Chandra Das, Senior Extra Assistant Commissioner of Tezpur. An application from the Chairman of the Tezpur Municipality has already been sent to the Government, but I do not know what action has been taken on it. That a fire broke out in some Government building, I think near the Municipal office in Tezpur, and Sushil Babu being in charge of the district on account of the absence of the Deputy Commissioner from the headquarters was present there and was supervising the men who were attempting to put down the fire. As he was doing so Mr. Lloyd Rees the Superintendent of Police came there and practically assaulted and insulted him.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: On a point of information, Sir. Has Mr. Das the officer in question made any complaint before any higher authorities?

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: He has made a complaint before the higher authorities and the Chairman of the Municipality also sent a representation to the Government. I have with me a copy of that representation. He was actually assaulted and the Chairman of the Municipality was also threatened with assault. I understand Sir, that later on Mr. Lloyd Rees wrote a letter to Sushil Babu saying “if you have felt insulted by my conduct I apologise for it.” There was a very big “if”—very big question. Question is “I am a European, an officer of the Indian Police Service. You are an Indian and an officer of the Provincial Service. Remember all those facts. I have done something but it is questionable whether you are really feeling hurt by it. If you are really feeling anything tell me, there is my apology and that finishes the whole affair. The Deputy Commissioner is satisfied, the Commissioner is satisfied and the Government is extremely happy. There is no worry about it anywhere”. That is the position, Sir. That big “if” is a source of great trouble to us Indians.

Then I come to an incident in Nowgong. There was an officer in charge of Police Station, Rajendra Nath Barua by name. Rather unusually he happened to be a Bachelor of Law. Instead of going through the law court he wanted to establish law and order outside the law court by entering Police Service and he was one of the Sub-Inspectors of Police. Somehow he did not pull on very well with a very over-zealous Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Radha Ranjan Dhar, and very over-zealous Superintendent of Police, Mr. S. N. Datta, whose acts of heroism in quelling down peaceful and political movements will remain ever as an object of pride for the

future generation of Indians. (*Ironical cheers*). He was under orders of transfer to Sylhet. He wanted to be excused from the transfer on the ground that his wife was in a delicate condition. He was told that he must either proceed to Sylhet or resign. He adopted the latter course quite unusual for an Indian to give up the position of Daroga which is so much aspired after. After that he took permission to practise as a lawyer because he had a Law degree. It so happened, Sir, some time in the last month that the Superintendent of Police wanted a bus to go somewhere and the Bus Syndicate put a bus at his disposal. But the bus was damaged somehow on the way and on the next morning, although it was requisitioned, the Secretary of the Bus Syndicate, Srijut Phani Dhar Bora said that the bus was not in a position to ply. The driver informed this to the Police. The Superintendent of Police got enraged and he himself came to the Secretary of the Bus Syndicate and threatened to assault Phani Dhar Bora. Like most of us he somehow ran away and saved himself. Then this man, Phani Dhar Bora, had the hardihood to bring a complaint against that Police officer Mr. Datta with the help of Srijut Rajendra Nath Barua and Rai Bahadur Brindaban Chandra Goswami as lawyers. The result was what should have been anticipated. The permit of the particular Bus Syndicate was suspended and none of the buses is allowed to run. The nephew of Rai Bahadur Brindaban Chandra Goswami was arrested and made a security prisoner. What happened to this Rajendra Barua, the *ex*-Police Officer? He was also put under arrest, sent to jail and kept in confinement for the whole day in the constable's barrack without any food. Well a devout Hindu will say that this is the "*Karmafall*". This Sub-Inspector of Police must have done something for which he is now getting reward. Now, how does this Rai Bahadur feel for the treatment to his nephew? Khan Bahadur Alla Buksh renounced his title even at the risk of his Ministry. Our friend is a Rai Bahadur only in name who is now getting his *Karmafall*. All this matter was brought to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister who is away at the present moment. The Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn knows it well, but she would not like to disclose all that in the House.

Coming to another instance, Sir, on the report of some guns having been stolen in the area under the jurisdiction of Nalbari Thana in the District of Kamrup, a force of armed police numbering some 200 were sent to the area to search the houses in order to find out the guns. It was only a plea, but the main idea was to create a reign of terror in the village so that all classes of people might take care of the future. Now I will read a letter which I received only this morning about what these people actually did there at Nalbari.....

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: On a point of order, Sir, is letter reading allowed?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member is doing so in support of the allegations which he is making and the letter is the source from which he has got these informations.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: The hon. Member should satisfy himself about the truth of the contents.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, he must have done so.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I may read—

“ দুখৰ বিষয়, প্ৰায় এমাহ মানৰ পৰা আমাৰ অঞ্চলত পুলিচ বাহিনীয়ে জোৰ জুলুম আৰু অত্যাচাৰ আৰম্ভ কৰিছে। মিছামিছিকৈয়ে যাকে তাকে গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ কৰে—নাঠিৰে কোবায়, জোতাৰে গুৰিয়াই—নানান কৌশলেৰে টকা ভেটি খায়। এই দৰেই পুলিচ-

বাহিনীয়ে—আমালোক কৃমক সকলক—জুলুম কৰিবলৈ ধৰিছে, শান্তিৰ নামত অশান্তিৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছে।

তাৰ উপৰিও পুলিচ বাহিনীয়ে আমাৰ ধৰ্ম্মত হাত দিছে। এই অঞ্চলৰ বিশেষৰ দেৱালয়ৰ দামা বজাবলৈ নিদিয়—দেৱালয়ৰ মাজেদি জোতা পিন্ধি অহা-যোৱা কৰে। দেৱালয় গেটৰ ভিতৰত কুকুৰা আদি নিমিদ্ধ বস্তু ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে। পুলিচক সুধিলে— লাঠিৰে ধোঁচে, আৰু গালা-গালিত বাহিৰে বিশেষ নাই।

যোৱা ১৮ ফাগুণৰ বাতি, হঠাৎ কেবাশ ও নিলিটাৰী পুলিচ লগত লৈ বহুত পুলিচ প্ৰবেশ কৰেহি। বহুত মানুহক বন্দুক চুৰি আদি মিছা অপৰাধত অভিযুক্ত কৰি— ধৰ খানা তালচ কৰে, মাৰ-পিট কৰে আৰু গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ কৰি লৈ যায়। স্থলবোৰত প্ৰবেশ কৰি স্থলৰ কাম বন্ধ কৰে।

গাঁৱৰ দুৰ্ভিক্ষ আৰু টকা পইচাৰ অভাৱ বশতঃ চহৰৰ কাছাৰীলৈ যাব নোৱাৰি— আমালোকে গাঁৱৰ হাই কাজীয়া গাঁৱতে পঞ্চায়ত পাতি বিচাৰ কৰিছিলো। পুলিচে পঞ্চায়তৰ মেধৰ সকলোকে গ্ৰেপ্তাৰ অত্যাচাৰ আদি কৰি পঞ্চায়তবোৰ উচ্ছেদ কৰিছে। তাৰ ওপৰিও বেলশৰ ডাক ধৰলৈ মানি অৰ্ডাৰ অহা বন্ধ কৰি আমালোকক জুলুমত পেলাইছে। পুলিচৰ অত্যাচাৰ—বেলশৰ, চামটা, পিপলী বাৰী, ককয়া, গন্ধিয়া, কৈহাটী, সাহপুৰ, কৈঠাল কুছী, বনগ্ৰাম, বাহজানী, বাণিবাৰী আদিতোই চৰম সীমা পাইছে।”

I may translate this important portion—“Since a month in our parts the police force have began to commit acts of oppression. They arrest people for no reason, assault them with lathies and shoes and by different means. In many ways they take bribes. In this way they are creating a reign of terror amongst us. Over and above that they have violated our religion and polluted our places of worship. They prohibit us from the use of temples, beating of drums, etc., and they themselves enter into the temples with their shoes on. They kill fowl near the gates of temples and eat these with other prohibited things. If we question them for so doing they beat us with Lathies and abuse us in filthy language. On 18th of the month of *Fagun* some hundreds of military police came to our village and many of our people were made accuseds for nothing, broke open and searched our houses, arrested some people and taken away. They entered the schools and closed them”. This is the report on the military police...

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: Sir, if every one of the letters that have been received by post from comparatively unknown persons are read, would not the business of the House be greatly paralysed?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I do not think the business of the House will be greatly paralysed; but I am requesting the hon. Member to give the substance of the letters only. Of course he bases his allegations on these letters; so he is entitled to quote these letters. But I am requesting him to give the substance of the contents of these letters.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: So many letters are received by hon. Members, and if all of them are to be read by each Member in this House, I think, Sir, the whole session will be taken up by letters alone.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I shall consider that question when such a situation of every Member trying to read out letters of this sort would arise.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I think, Sir, this interruption is due to the fact that the conscience of two hon. gentlemen has been pricked. However, my object has been amply fulfilled from what I have shown. I can assure you I shall read no more letters to-day.

Now, Sir, I draw the attention of the Government to the large number of persons who have been arrested; some of them have been detained for more than five or six months. The practice which is being now adopted is that if they are detained for 4 or 5 months and if no evidence is found against them, they are converted into security prisoners and detained for an indefinite period. If some sort of evidence is found they are placed on trial and are sentenced. If by accident any Magistrate conscientiously discharges an accused, this accused is forthwith arrested at the jail gate and converted into a security prisoner. This is the vicious circle in which events are moving. First arrest, then either a security prisoner or some sort of trial, then after trial again a prisoner under some other charge for an indefinite length of period.

As regards security prisoners, I am referring particularly to my Friends who are Members of this Assembly. Almost all of them have been arrested before they knew anything about the move, before the proceedings of the All-India Congress Working Committee were made known. More than six months have elapsed since then; no charges have been brought against them and they have been detained and Heaven alone knows when they will be released. What is the condition of their family? In these hard days Government have given them no allowance. So far as Members of the Legislative Assembly are concerned, they are getting a salary of Rs.100 per month. Is Rs. 100 per month sufficient to maintain the families of these security prisoners? They have to pay insurance premium; they have to pay municipal tax; they have to pay land revenue and to meet other expenses for the medical treatment of their family members. If it is necessary that they should be detained they should be given suitable allowance.

Coming to non-Members of Legislative Assembly they have been given an allowance at Rs. 25 per month. Take the case of Mr. Tayebullah, Pleader and landholder, President of the Assam Provincial Congress Committee. His allowance is Rs. 25 per mensem. What is the pay of the Jamar or Head Chaprasi of the Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn? It is Rs.26 per month, and what is the allowance of Maulavi Tayebullah, President of the Congress Committee? It is Rs.25. What is the allowance of Srijut Padmadhar Chaliha, B.L., Senior Practising Pleader? It is Rs.25. On the last occasion when I brought this to the notice of the Government.....

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: May I know from the Hon'ble Minister whether it is a fact that Maulavi Tayebullah's allowance has been increased to Rs. 50?

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: The Hon'ble Prime Minister will be able to contradict my information.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KARAMAT ALI: My information is that it is Rs. 50.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: I speak subject to correction. My information is that it is Rs. 50.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Even so, is that enough for a pleader of so many year's standing? They actually put in their applications. Will Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali be satisfied with this allowance if he is made a security prisoner?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: That will depend on circumstances.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I cannot be sure of that—anything may happen.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: I am afraid, Mr. Chaudhuri has misunderstood me.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: *Karmafal* is there.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: However, Sir. A monstrous punishment has been awarded in the case of Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan. It is 18 months. In the case of Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma it is also 18 months. In the case of John Thomas it is 18 months. Do something of that kind for Security Prisoners if you think that they have committed any offence. Keep a record in history that Assam has not lagged behind in the matter of monstrous sentences passed against political prisoners. It is 18 months. Do something. Be bold. Keep a record for the posterity in the matter of sentences passed.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It is better for the hon. Member to go on with his speech without being emotional.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali's heartlessness is responsible for my emotions.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: I only wanted to know whether it was Rs. 25 or Rs.50; because if it is Rs. 25 I was given a wrong information.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: If I remember aright, it is probably Rs. 45. I am not sure.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: There is a story, Sir. At first a man saw a brother, then he became a friend and afterwards he became an enemy and a shadow. The Hon'ble Finance Minister first told that it was Rs.50; but now he says that it is Rs. 45. So I think, by the time he reaches home and sees the file, he will see the actual figure of Rs. 25 (*laughter*).

Sir, in the midst of all these, I shall be failing in my duty, if I do not pay my tribute of appreciation to the Ministry for the humane and wise policy which they adopted in releasing Doctor Bhubaneswar Barua before his time. After two months of detention in Jail, he was put on trial; I was present when the judgment was delivered. The offence alleged against him is the offence, Sir, which you yourself had committed recently, namely, he went to preside over a meeting which was held on the occasion of the last birth day of Mahatma Gandhi to pray for his long life. The judgment was delivered in my presence and I remember the words which the Magistrate used. It was admitted by the prosecution that nothing prejudicial was uttered by the accused. It is also stated in the judgment that Doctor Bhubaneswar Barua was suffering from high blood pressure and his health had deteriorated in the Jail. In spite of that, Sir, the Magistrate felt compelled (I use the word "compelled" advisedly) to sentence him to four months imprisonment. But, Sir, I admire the action taken by the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge and the Ministry as a whole for releasing him and granting him a remission of two months.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN Mr. Speaker, Sir. Is the hon. Member competent to criticise the action of the Magistrate's judgment? He said that the Magistrate felt compelled to sentence him.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: The Magistrate is not on his trial now. If I say that the Magistrate felt compelled not by Government, or Police or the Governor but by the evidence before him, (*laughter*) what then?

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: How could he say that the Magistrate was compelled?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member said that he was using the word "compelled" advisedly.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: He said that there was nothing prejudicial in the evidence.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. I hope the hon. Member will finish.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Now, Sir, equally gracious was the action of the Government in releasing Srijut Laksheswar Borooah. The gentleman lost his wife while in jail. He was released on the last occasion on account of ill-health. He was such a fine man that lest he may be supposed to have mixed with any Congress Politics, he left Dibrugara and stayed all the time in Gauhati. Nothing was alleged against him. In spite of all that, Sir, he was arrested and put in jail as a security prisoner. I don't know whether the release has been temporary or it is once for all. Any way, I should praise the Ministry for doing this act of kindness. He could be present in his wife's Sradha ceremony. I also want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge to the case of Srijut Sarveswar Barua. He has been a Member of the Legislature for more than 17 years; he was loved by all. Year after year, he was returned unopposed from his constituency to this House. He is a man whom every one knows to be absolutely devoid of violence, either in thought or in speech or in action. Such a man has been sent to jail and detained as security prisoner for more than six months now.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: What Budget has to do with the detention of Srijut Laksheswar Borooah or anybody else?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member should know that a Member while speaking in connection with the Budget can give vent to the grievances of the public before the House. That is the principle followed—"Grievances before Supply." But he cannot altogether omit speaking to the Budget.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: There is no provision in the Budget to this effect.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I am reminded by Maulavi Abdur Rahman's conduct of the Bengali adage "যাঁর বিয়ে তাঁর খবর পাই পাড়া পড়শির ঘুম নাই" If at all, only the Hon'ble Ministers can take exception to what I say but I find that they are listening quite patiently while my hon. Friend Maulavi Abdur Rahman is interrupting me at every step. That may be the way to qualify oneself as a Public Prosecutor but that is not the way of a Member of Legislature. I do not know whether he will be glad or sorry to hear that Srijut Sarveswar Barua lost his son while he was in jail. Although no offence has been alleged against him, still he has been detained. I bring all these facts to the notice of the Ministry for their consideration. I don't know whether my hon. Friend Abdur Rahman wants that the Ministry should not consider this at-all.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Certainly not. Perhaps he was sent to jail for taking part in the subversive movement against Government.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Now I am bound to say, Sir, that there is a pack of liars who make this kind of false report against Srijut Sarveswar Barua and whose reports are responsible for his detention. I will say one or two words more about the treatment in jail. The treatment in jail has been very unsatisfactory and classification very

perfunctory. Last time I drew the attention of the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Jail that educated men belonging to respectable Goswami and Brahmin families have been put in 'C' Division. I can cite specific instances. One Srijut Kumudeswar Goswami is well known to the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Jails. When he became Minister, Srijut Kumudeswar Goswami gave tea party in his honour in his house. His son an M A. was put in 'C' Division. I also know the cases of other respectable B.L. Pleaders who have been placed in "C" Division in Jails. I can also cite the instance of John Thomas, B.L. the brother of Miss Bessie Thomas, Assistant Inspectress of Schools. He comes from one of the premier Christian families in Assam, but he was placed in "C" Division also. Is this not a distinct lack of supervision on the part of Government?

Sir, I have various other things to say. I have already found, Sir, that Mr. Whittaker is sighing a grateful relief, as I am closing. I will say more at the time when the cut Motions come up.

Adjournment

The Assembly then adjourned for lunch till 2 P.M.

After lunch

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I was given a list from which it appears that only 6 Members are to speak to-day. Two have already spoken and 4 Members remain to speak; and for the next day I have got a list of 13 Members. The hon. Members will please realise that on the next day I shall have to fix a time limit. To-day I have not done so as there are only 6 Members to speak; 13 Members to speak on the next day would require at least three and a quarter hour if 15 minutes is given to each Member. The hon. Members should remember that the Hon'ble Finance Minister should get at least half an hour for his reply, and it may be necessary to give him one hour; because many points would be raised by the general discussion. So I would request the Members to economise time as much as possible on the next day when they would be speaking to the Budget.

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, would you consider making transfer from the next day to this day?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I shall certainly do it.

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: Would you transfer my name, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, the hon. Member can speak to-day.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to sound a note of disapproval of the Budget presented by the Hon'ble Finance Minister. No Budget of a progressive country is above criticism and this year's Budget is also not an exception. However, I congratulate the Hon'ble the Finance Minister for the absence of high sounding words from his Budget speech. We heard of notable improvements in every sphere but I am sorry to say that the country has not at all improved. Scarcity of food-stuff and daily necessities of life are felt everywhere. Prices of commodities are raising daily so high that it has almost gone beyond the limit. The poor cultivators who were living from hand to mouth and who could very hardly make their two ends meet are now in regular peril. Grow More Food Campaign is going on, but no body cares to enquire how the cultivators are to grow more food. They have got neither money nor plough cattle nor have they got sufficient land. What they earn with the sweat of their brow, they spend in purchasing the minimum amount of cloth for their family members. Only advice for grow more food cannot satisfy their hunger.

Last year when the crops failed, the cultivators in some localities were given agricultural loan but this year when the situation is still more grave, Government has ordered for the realisation of that loan. It was found in some places that the loan realisation officers were competing among themselves for topping the list in respect of amount realised. Representations were submitted to Government by the public associations and Members of this House, but in spite of all these, the realisation campaign is vigorously going on. For fear of the iron hand of the realisation officer, cultivators are selling their milch cows, plough cattle and essentially necessary boats for want of which they cannot go out of their home in the rainy season. In fine, by the loan realisation campaign, the Government are rendering the cultivators poorer at a time when they deserved additional financial help from Government. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has kindly informed the House that Government have sanctioned the remission of the outstanding agricultural loans in the Assam Valley to the extent of Rs. 69,000 but about the Surma Valley the Hon'ble Minister is silent. I would ask Government to see their way to remit the same.

What is most deplored is the want of any declared policy of Government due to which general administration of the province has gone from bad to worse. Officers were working as they like; a considerable number indulging in money making through contracts in "benami", while there is no check from Government. The name of the Province's Chief Engineer has loomed large in the columns of newspapers in a manner that brings slur upon the august head of the administration of Assam while there is no attempt to refutation of the charges brought against the Chief of the Public Works Department, nor the officer concerned took any help of law court to vindicate himself. I am told that the matter has gone up to the Government of India and I don't know how the Council of Ministers will persuade itself to digest it. For want of proper supervision magistracy has become weak and the Judicial Department has lost its former prestige.

On the 1st September, in the night, fire was set to some records in the Sunamganj Munsif's Court by opening the door-lock with a key of the Court building, but in the middle of November while replying to questions about that matter, Government could not tell the House the name of the officer who was in charge of the keys. In the course of 45 days, Government could not enquire about the charges brought against Mr. Haldar, the District Judge of Sylhet and Cachar. Replies given to many of my questions asked in the November Session were not founded on truth. People who knew things read the reports in the proceedings of the Assembly and laughed at the attempts of Government for the suppression of truth. This showed how much regard the officers and the Government had for truth. Public brought many grievances against whimsical officers to the notice of Government, but a deaf ear was turned to them. From all these, the poverty stricken people of this unfortunate province could not think that the Government was popular, that the Government was their own, that the Government was for the people, by the people and of the people. The picture is even worse than that of the bureaucratic days.

I would show, Sir, by document how things are done surreptitiously by officers and how the Government failed to check them. According to the census of 1941 and the Government Circular of September, 1941, the number of Hindus of Assam Valley and Surma Valley are 2,051,017 and 846,212 respectively, the percentages being 22.6 per cent and 9.3 per cent respectively. The percentages of Muslims of Surma Valley and Assam Valley were 23.3 per cent. and 14.3 per cent.

respectively. Now if you look on the pages of "Amalgamated Roll of the office establishment of the Assam Civil and Public Works Department Secretariats, corrected up to July 1942", you will find, Sir, the number of Hindus of Assam Valley and Surma Valley are 2,558,819 and 978,113 respectively, *i.e.*, the Hindu population is increased by 508,000 in the Assam Valley and 131,000 (round figures) in the Surma Valley and the percentage of Muslims shown as 12.9 in the Assam Valley and 20.8 in the Surma Valley, a decrease in the course of a few months. Who is responsible for these manipulations—the Registrar of the Civil Secretariat or any body else? We know, Sir, that there was no census between the months of September 1941 and July 1942 and it is evident that in order to give more appointments to the Hindus at the cost of the Muslims, this criminal manipulation was done with a set purpose and most cleverly and surreptitiously.

Muslim cause is jeopardised by not appointing any Muslim to any of the many temporary posts that are created from time to time in the Assam Secretariat with special and additional pay. If the Muslim assistants cannot be relied upon, why should they not be eliminated altogether? There are more than two hundred posts of assistants in the Secretariat and due to the manipulation by the Registrar or any unknown hand, as shown above, Muslims are loser by 12 posts. Even if the above loss of Muslims are set right by recruitment of Muslims afterwards, they will remain junior to the Hindus who have already been taken in through the engineering of the Registrar and in their whole service of 30 years they will suffer for their being junior to Hindus in the matter of promotion.

In order to improve the position of Hindu assistants and simultaneously to prejudicially affect the Muslim assistants, the Registrar has chalked out novel plans by transferring Hindu assistants from Finance Secretary's side and placing them over the Muslim assistants under Chief Secretary's side. This has completely blocked the prospects of Muslim assistants whereas by transfer of Hindu assistants to Chief Secretary's side even very junior Hindu assistants under Finance Secretary are getting promotion. But in the case of Muslim assistants such favour is denied even on requests. By the grace of the Registrar, a Hindu assistant (*e.g.*, Taresh Chandra Bhattacharjee who has been promoted to the upper division in the Supply Department of the Secretariat superseding the claims of 2 Khasis and 5 Muslim assistants) can officiate in any Department under any Secretary but Muslims are entirely debarred from getting such chances.

Now is the ripe time for Muslim assistants in general to aspire after promotion but in order to deprive the Muslim assistants the Registrar has been trying to set up old condemned Hindu assistants to be tried for promotion. Babu Sudhendu Mohon Roy's case may be cited as an instance.

Establishment Branch of the Secretariat has been filled by Hindus of his clique and party. Out of seven assistants there is only one Muslim who has been kept there as a communal show and he is not allowed to deal with any important matter regarding recruitment and promotion of Secretariat Establishment, but even his junior temporary Hindu assistant has been confided with important matters.

While appointing chaprasis, domestic servants of the Hindu favourites of the Registrar and his relatives have been taken in. Number of Muslim chaprasis is almost nil.

By introducing four months leave vacancy rule at the instance of the Registrar, Government have deprived the Muslim assistants of promotion as some of them happen to be senior to Hindu assistants.

The whole position of the Civil and Public Works Department Secretariat deserves thorough overhauling to which I draw the attention of Government.

In spite of the fact that there is a considerable number of competent and brilliant officers in the Home Department of the Government of Assam, Government have dragged out some retired officers from graves blocking the path of promotion of the promising officers. I sound a note of emphatic protest against this policy.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has pleaded for the experience of the re-employed retired officers. I would ask Government for Heaven's sake not to rely on the experiences of them, because some of them, while in service, set very bad examples before their fellow officers by their abominable ways and means. My earnest request to Government is that they would without any consideration remove these officers, already worn out and pensioned off, immediately, and appoint competent officers from this Province's permanent cadre in their places otherwise disaffection will be great among the officers and as well as the educated public.

So far as price control is concerned, Government have totally failed. However, it is a redeeming feature that the Government is alert about supply and that they have employed an experienced officer, but up till now the activities of the Supply Department have not reached a satisfactory stage. By giving contract for supply to some outsiders Government have mortgaged the economic development of the Surma Valley. This is resented in every quarters. I would request Government to take the public into their confidence and appoint a Committee with officials and non-officials to control over supply and price of commodities.

I congratulate the Hon'ble Minister of Education for his attempts to expand the field of education though it is not up to our expectation.

Sir, the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister lacks in ideas about nation-building departments. War is responsible for many things I admit, but I cannot admit that it is responsible for the absence of mental alertness of our Ministers.

With these words, I beg to resume my seat.

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the fourth year of War it is a matter of congratulation that a Province which is also a war operation area should estimate a deficit of only 10.1 lakhs. Last year we all heard a good deal of criticism about a deficit which was estimated at 9.5 lakhs. But if Members of this Assembly will look at the latest revised figures for 1942-43, they will find that estimated deficit of 9.5 lakhs has been reduced to 2½ lakhs. This point should be noted. We offer our congratulations to Government.

Satisfaction at these figures is, however, very appreciably tempered if we examine the foundation on which they are built. Taking the actuals of 1939-40 for comparison it will be seen that Assam will secure this year, 1943-44, from War time prosperity the following bonuses :—

Nineteen extra lakhs from Income-tax collected by the Centre.

Four and half lakhs from Petrol Tax entirely due to the levy on petrol used by the Army.

Nine extra lakhs from the profits of the Forest Department, entirely due to Defence Department purchases.

Now all these items give a total of 32½ lakhs to be received from the Centre, the bulk of which will disappear at the end of the War. It is a paradox still as true this year as last year that the War which has caused so much human suffering, as far as Assam is concerned, has been a source of profit. In my opinion the Budget figures induce an entirely false

sense of security. In a full year the cancellation of the land revenue remission will yield 30 lakhs. The whole of this sum will be required to cover the loss of war bonuses, which I would describe as windfalls, and which amounts to a total of 32½ lakhs. Those of us who wish to see a blue print of a better Assam in the post-war period, must begin now to search for new sources of revenue. We welcome warmly the courage which prompted the Prime Minister to announce the cancellation of the land revenue remission. We wish, however, to underline that courage by pointing out that there is no prospect whatever of restoring any remission without imperilling the financial stability of the province. We must go further by suggesting that unless new sources of revenue are found we can only look forward to recurring deficits in the post-war years, and a shrinkage instead of an expansion of the nation-building activities.

The Budget offers an opportunity to break new ground. There are so many persons in this House who will subject this Budget to an audit scrutiny that I am justified in asking the Assembly to consider wider aspects of Government policy from the citizen's point of view rather than the auditor's point of view. We all know of President Roosevelt's definition of the cause of the United Nations as the fight for four freedoms—first, the freedom of speech, second, freedom of religion, third, freedom from want and finally freedom from fear.

For the purposes of budgetary discussion on the floor of this House the most important freedom is the freedom from want and I hope that from the Government of Assam we shall receive some indication of what they think about this fighting cause. This freedom from want is not a ridiculous ambition—we know that men have the technical skill to produce in overflowing abundance all the necessities of life. We all know also that even in remote Assam dependent on every other country in the world, a hungry man in the Assam Valley or Surma Valley will affect the standard of life of the well-fed man in Ankara or Cairo. In the industrial countries of the world this demand for the freedom from want has been pressed as a right and already there has been produced in England the Beveridge plan. A similar plan is promised from America and even for agricultural India the claim will be made for a Governmental approach to the ideal. Like every other freedom the price has to be paid. It cannot be bought on the cheap at bargain rates; it has to be paid for in contributions from beneficiaries and also by taxation. To achieve this freedom we require in the first instance courage and imagination from our Ministers.

As I have shown earlier, the Province is living on windfalls, and not even the permanent cancellation of the land revenue remission will compensate for the cessation of these windfalls when the war ends. There is a very real danger in Assam of the Legislature assuming that the revenue from taxation is a fixed quantity which cannot be increased without some of our legislators getting up and raising distress cries that the poor cultivator or the poor planter or the poor Government servant is being ruined. The facts, of course, are quite different. The provincial income is the total of goods and services produced by all the residents. That income increases with inventions: it increases with the growth of new industries, the improvement of communications, provision of better education and health services, the opening of new areas: it increases with the wise direction of Government spending: it decreases with a Government which gives no lead or gives a wrong lead.

My second major point is that to increase the Provincial income or the Provincial wealth it is necessary to spend revenue as well as capital. For

example, we have learnt from war time experience that improved communications mean better prices for the cultivator and therefore more wealth for the Province. To build those communications out of income would take years: to build them quickly we require capital which means borrowing. The more revenue a Province is prepared to raise by taxation the higher its standing as a borrower and the cheaper the terms on which it can borrow. In my view the biggest service which the present Government can render is to adopt a courageous taxation policy and to take advantage of the present prosperity. I know that war prosperity is unequally divided and that some of the poor are poorer than they have been, but it is obvious that the bulk of the population are richer than they have ever been before. If we are to avoid a disastrous post-war slump the Government will need to have the greatest reserves at its command, both revenue and capital. Now is the time to build up those reserves—and to build up a reputation for sound but imaginative finance so that we increase not only our taxable capacity but also our borrowing capacity.

I look forward to the time when Assam, which has some of the finest hydro-electric possibilities in the world, will be able to use these; when each village will have its supply of electric light and a pure water supply drawn from wells and reservoirs pumped by electric motors; when irrigation will be a common place supplied by power; when every road running through a village will have a dustless surface and when to live by a main road will not carry with it the present liability to lung trouble caused by dust. These are only some of the items which appear on my blue print of the post-war Assam. These are not the idle musings of the visionary: they are the ideas of men with both feet on the ground and their eyes fixed not on the clouds but a near-by target. All these goals are practicable if we have leaders with imagination to lead and courage to demand present sacrifices and followers in this Assembly with something of the same imagination and courage as their leaders.

For those who examine the Finance Minister's speech there are already the vague outlines of the shape of things to come. The Provincial Motor Transport Organisation is a bold step with great possibilities. I believe that the public of Assam will never get the motor passenger service it deserves from a number of small men each having one lorry, each handicapped by lack of capital. The future of motor transport may be public ownership, possibly Municipal owned, certainly fleets with a large degree of State control. A second feature is the supply organisation particularly that dealing with indigenous products. There are permanent lessons to be learnt from the War time purchases of rice and paddy and it may well be that one of the post-war advances will be the organised purchases of grains immediately after the harvest to save the cultivator from the slumps in price at the time of harvest. It may even be a prelude to the payment of land revenue in kind.

The most remarkable evidence of the imagination we require is the fact that Assam, by virtue of having its own machinery for purchasing rice and paddy, is in a position to help other areas in India which are seriously short of rice. The maladjustments in the All-India situation are such that immediate supplies are more valuable than three times that supply in 6 months' time. By the foresight of the Prime Minister, Assam is in a position to give rice at once, and to play a great part, even at some risk, in relieving the All-India shortage. This action yields other benefits for now that all food grains are coming under the close control of the Central Government, this province has successfully claimed reciprocal treatment and has secured recently increased supplies of dal and wheat. I hope the Ministry will continue to believe that this is not the only field where sacrifice pays big dividends.

There are disappointing features about the Budget. In a province dependant as we are on agriculture, the provision of only 14½ lakhs for this Department makes it the Cinderella of Assam. Much has been said about improved seeds but very little about opening up new areas for cultivation. Opening up new areas is expensive, but it would be a justifiable expenditure of capital and at war prices the capital investment would be repaid in a very short time. I hope the Finance Minister, in his reply, will not be deflected by all the minor criticisms of his Budget, but will state precisely Government's intention in opening up new areas for development. To increase food production now by any means is just as much a war effort as sending regiments to the western desert.

As for roads, the Province is finding for repairs 29 lakhs (less than 1 lakh more than last year). Roads are deteriorating at an alarming rate and though Central assistance is forthcoming for certain roads, I do not consider that 29 lakhs is sufficient to maintain our roads in good repair. I have already stated that I regard roads as a capital asset. To increase the ordinary person's ability to move easily from place to place is the greatest single educating factor. This important capital asset must therefore be kept up and it cannot be done with the present high cost of materials and labour by merely repeating last year's provision.

Finally I hope that the Government of Assam is alive to the need for reconstruction. It is folly to imagine that once the Armistice bugles blow we shall all slide easily into pre-war ways of life and pre-war petty quarrels. The post-war world will have such problems to face that many of the war time controls will continue for years. Capital equipment for such development schemes will not be available except on an internationally controlled priority scheme. Such equipment will go to the Government which has its plans ready. I should like to see the Government of Assam begin now to plan ahead and secure the expert advice necessary to make a flying start after the war. I hope to develop this idea at greater length on another occasion.

I end as I began, with a plea for the abandonment of fixed ideas about taxable capacity. In our struggle for freedom from want our first struggle must be to free our own minds from the parochial ideas about Provincial finance. If we can live more Spartan lives now we can all live more abundantly after the war. To make plans and carry them out requires courage and imagination. Both are visible with some research in the Finance Minister's speech, but I should like them to fill the picture. I think it was Oscar Wilde who once remarked: "We are all in the gutter but some of us are looking at the stars". I hope that at the next Budget some of us will have left the gutter and that we shall all, including the Finance Minister, be looking at the stars. (*Applause*).

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also rise to follow the fashion of joining in the general discussion of the Budget. Sir, the time through which we are passing is an abnormal one—the war being knocking at our door. So this Budget presented before this Legislature for the coming financial year must be of abnormal nature. It is very easy to fish in calm water but true mettle comes out when one finds himself in an embarrassing situation. In these circumstances, I cannot deny the Hon'ble Finance Minister the due share of congratulations which he deserves.

Now, Sir, after the 93 Administration, this is for all practical purposes the first Budget of our popular Ministers and they are now to justify that the Ministerial form of Government is a distinct improvement upon the one man's administration.

Sir, in a trying time like this, legitimate expenditure should not be grudged but injudicious expenditure and wastage on the plea of abnormal

time, should not be encouraged. I will confine my observations on basic principles but shall not dilate over quoting and comparing figures. Look at the page 5 of the printed copy of the Budget Speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister where it is revealed that Assam has been blessed with numbers of additional posts. The multiplicity of appointments and manning of them with retired and costly personnel invite self-condemnation. The Government have found wisdom in appointing age-barred officers who according to medical authority should have well-earned rest.

Four retired officers have been appointed as Additional District Magistrates in the four districts under junior officers to play the second fiddle. The desire for hoarding money must have been the price of self-respect of those officers. We have been told, Sir, that in the spheres of supply, price control and military requirements the works have been increased which necessitated the creation of a number of new posts and appointments there to at a high cost. The sister Province of Bengal, where a similar abnormal condition prevails, created an emergent cadre, to carry on the extra works thus relieving the country from extravagance. Instead of dragging the retired officers in listed post at a very high cost, could not the Government find wisdom in appointing senior Assam Civil Service Officers as the Sadar Subdivisional Officers at a much more lesser cost? There is no dearth of senior Extra Assistant Commissioners who are holding charge of very responsible subdivisions. The appointments in new departments have been made at a cost beyond the means of the province of Assam.

Sir, looking at the Police Budget one will wonder that our Government had to borrow superior officers from Burma and Madras for the administration of this department the work of which according to the Government has been generally expanded. Here also I do not find any wisdom why officers could not be had in this province. Amidst clouds and disappointments the Hon'ble Finance Minister has thrown a ray of hope in his speech in Education Budget where he has said that Government have not allowed themselves to deflect from the policy of steady and gradual expansion of education in the province. It is stated a very large number of new schemes have been included in the Budget to bear eloquent testimony to that. From more additional posts of Assistant Inspectresses—I am told both are going to Non-Muslim candidates. I cannot accord my support for such a scheme as I fail to realise the genuineness of such a necessity. I am glad to see that the status of Lecturers and Professors are going to be equalised but the glaring injustice done to our University youths by way of appointing them as Assistant Lecturers or Tutors in class III of the Education Service needs immediate reconsideration which was strongly recommended by this House. They all do the same work as Lecturers and Professors, but they are paid artificially less. The invidious distinction between them must be removed and the Assistant Lecturers should be paid according to a scale beginning from Rs.150 per mensem.

It is a gratifying feature that the Government found its way to make some provision for the expansion of the primary education. But it is to be lamented that the money is spent without a definite policy or system. The Education Department is spending the money in its stereotyped way. The system by which the primary education is sought to be imparted is seriously defective and more than 2/3 rd of the money is being wasted. The whole system of primary education needs a thorough overhauling. I want a definite scheme to be introduced at once. In the two Government Colleges it is the public demand that Commerce classes should be opened and I urge upon

the Government to examine the question while the country is in acid test for technical education.

Sir, the less is said about the Supply Department, the better it is. I am bound to say that the Supply, the Price Control and things like that have totally been a failure. We expect a radical change in the present arrangement. The policy for controlling of export of paddy, even within the province is another proof of Government's lacking in far-sightedness.

Then again, Sir, in the Budget it has been found that the outstanding agricultural loan in the other Valley has been written off to the extent of Rs.69,000. But in spite of repeated appeals and memorials from the people of the Surma Valley, the Government have not found it necessary to order writing off of the agricultural loan which was invested last year. The people of the Surma Valley did not want that the amount left unrealised should be written off but it was their prayer that in consideration of the severe economic condition prevailing in the country Government should allow them time to repay the loan, but I am sorry to say that Government are quite callous about the prayer or representations which they sent to them. With these observations, Sir, I take my seat, and I hope that the Hon'ble Finance Minister will be pleased to give a suitable reply on these comments.

(At this stage the Hon'ble Speaker vacated the Chair and the Deputy Speaker was in the Chair.)

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir. It is said that under the existing machinery of Government even when an Opposition Leader occupies a seat in the Treasury Bench, he is bound to undergo a change beyond recognition, nay by his action proves himself only but a limb of the bureaucratic machinery and has no independent part to play. Our Hon'ble Finance Minister, with all his past views, is not an exception to this general loss, to the public life of the Province. Sir, in rising to give my criticisms over the Budget for the year 1943-44, I am reminded of the saying of the late Hon'ble Finance Member—Mr. Botham—who in course of the presentation of the last Budget of the old Council remarked "Had it been in the ordinary course of business, the most straight-forward course for the Government of Assam would have been to file a petition of bankruptcy in an Insolvency Court." His remarks still hold good in respect of the Assam Government Budget for the year 1943-44 so far as the figure portion of the Budget is concerned. The Budget is also a bankrupt one with regard to ideas and policies. Sir, it may not be taxing the patience of the House if I go to draw a contrast between the old form of Government that was in vogue before the introduction or inauguration of the Provincial Autonomy and the present Government. The future historians will certainly try to find out whether the change has been for the good; but it at least goes to the credit of the present Government that there are multiplicity of appointments in various Departments. A Province which could be governed by only one Chief Secretary, now under the boon of the Provincial Autonomy, we have lots of Secretaries, Under-Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and 10 Hon'ble Ministers with their establishments. While we had only one Inspector-General of Police, we have now one Deputy Inspector-General of Police in addition. While we had one Conservator of Forests, we have now two. While we had one Director of Public Instruction, we have now got two Assistant Directors of Public Instruction, so on and so forth. It goes to show that under the Provincial Autonomy we have got multiplicity of appointments in various departments. Exigency and efficiency are suitable and flexible terms that

could always be exploited for the top heavy administration, and now the province being nearer the enemy occupied territory, the term abnormal time is oftentimes also advanced. Sir, it is anything but wise to ignore one's own purse and incur unnecessary expenditure. This will, no doubt in my opinion, mortgage the future of the province. Sir, speeches have been made and repeated on the floor of this Hon'ble House against the top heavy administration. But our cry is in the wilderness; prior to 1918, before the 'Lee-loot' came into force, officers were paid graded salaries and the number of officers drawing a salary of Rs.1,000 and above could be counted on one's finger, but now they are a legion. May we know from the Hon'ble Ministers the consequent benefits, the Province derived therefrom? The appointments of retired and superannuated officers unmistakably showed that the members of the existing services and even of heaven born services could not rise up to the occasion and carry out the administration efficiently. The members of the covenanted service are the privileged ones; and if one fails as a Price Controller or Controller of Supplies, he finds a district. If again the same officer is a failure in the district he finds a special job in the Secretariat. Our Ministers are helpless in this matter. Sir, the appointment of retired and superannuated officers to play the second fiddle under their sometimes junior officers is unworthy of their own self-respects and unwarranted by facts. Had there been really demands for increased officers it could have easily been done by the existing members of the services by their promotions and the resulting vacancies thus created begin filled up by junior officers. This would have cost Government much less. Sir, whenever the question of retrenchment is raised, only to side-track the issue a committee is formed and we have observed the actual amount retrenched is less than the cost of the committee itself. However, the committee sits and sends its recommendations and after that interested persons sit in judgment to declare the recommendations "not accepted." We have heard that a special officer was appointed for the separation of the judiciary from the executive, but this question has indefinitely been shelved. We do not know why; but probably our Government may put forward this argument that it is abnormal time, and we must wait. May I ask the Government whether the administration of justice in Assam is of a secondary importance? Sir, if we are really living in abnormal time, what is the necessity for normal administration? We understand some 10 Extra Assistant Commissioners have been recruited sometime back for judicial works exclusively at the salary of Rs.400 per mensem. Did the Government care to know how the first class B.L.s under the High Court of Judicature at Fort William are appointed? There under the Calcutta High Court or the High Court of Judicature at Fort William experienced first class B.L.s are appointed at Rs. 175 per mensem but what fascination our Government had in the figure Rs. 400? In my opinion, those works could also be done by the existing staff who were actually doing that work without direct recruits. Sir, there is hardly any justification to do things in an abnormal way on the plea of abnormal time. We fail to understand if the personnel recruited to the A.R.P. for Civil Defence possess mature understanding, an original mind, capacity for work and sympathy for the people. Could not these outside recruits be had of at a salary less than Rs. 300 per mensem? The Government of Bengal with great resources considered it wise to combine economy with efficiency and created an emergent cadre of the Bengal Junior Civil Service for the purpose manned by officers, recruited from various departments by promotion. Why the same procedure was not followed in our province? This would have been much more economical.

Sir, now I come to education portion of the Budget and I want to say a few words regarding Mass Literacy. The spectacular propaganda of mass literacy is a colossal failure. It was not a well-conceived programme and perhaps it was only a device to attract the imagination of the people. No one but a mutual self-admiration society can be proud of that campaign. As regards other heads the Budget is as stereotyped, so to say, as before. Sir, almost all the Members of the Surma Valley—both Hindus and Muslims—are trying for the last 6 years for the opening of the Medical School which was started a few years back at Sylhet. Though money has been found for granting kit allowance to police (subordinate police officers), to increase the fees of the Government Pleaders, etc., yet for the purpose of this school not a single farthing could be found. What can be more deplorable than this?

Sir, in conclusion, I say that the Budget for the year 1943-44 is not at all for the benefit of the people of the province it also lacks in ideas and principle. With these words I resume my seat, Sir.

The Deputy SPEAKER: If no other hon. Member likes to participate in the Budget discussion to-day I would adjourn the House.

What is the sense of the House?

(The sense of the House was for adjournment.)

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 11 A. M., on Thursday, the 11th March, 1943.

SHILLONG:

The 3rd April 1943.

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam.

