

**Proceedings of the Thirteenth 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 30th November, 1943.

PRESENT :

The Hon'ble Mr. Basanta Kumar Das, Speaker, in the Chair, the ten Hon'ble
Ministers and fifty-one hon. Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

Motor Transport Organisation

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked :

*82. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether there are persons in the establishment of the Motor Transport
Controller, Assam, who are not natives of the Province ?
- (b) If so, what is their number and what posts they are holding (to be shown
with their respective pay) ?
- (c) The reason why those outsiders have been appointed ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

82. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The hon. Member is referred to the statements given in reply to un-
starred question No. 80 (h) asked by Maulavi Namwar Ali Barbhuiya in this Session of
the Assembly.

(c)—In the absence of qualified candidates from the Province. It is the
intention so far as practicable to train up natives of the Province who show aptitude
for the Organisation and operation of Motor Transport in Assam in the future.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, the reason has been given that due
to scarcity of qualified men in the Province outsiders are being employed. May I
know from the Hon'ble Premier how he came to the conclusion that there was scarcity
of qualified men in the Province in the absence of any advertisement ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have already
replied to this question, Sir. But I will again repeat what I have said early that to
fill up 30 posts, we advertised and more than 300 applications were received. We
separated the list of these candidates into two: those from the Province and those
from outside the Province. A sub-committee presided over by me in which
Mr. Whittaker, Mr. Patton and Mr. Adamson were also present, selected 50 candidates
of the Province with the communal ratio to services and these 50 candidates were
examined by Mr. Adamson. Of these only about 7 could pass the examination and
they were engaged in this Department. Some of those who showed some aptitude but
were not fit to be given independent charge have been taken in as trainees. These
trainees after 6 months would be re-examined and if found fit they will be employed
ousting the present incumbents who were appointed from outside.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I would allow no further supplementary questions of this nature to be put now. I shall give ample opportunity for further supplementary questions to be put to the next set of questions on this matter of Motor Transport Organisation of hon. Mr. Mookerjee that have been put down for to-day and would soon come up for answers. There are also some unstarred questions on this matter that have been answered on previous days which would be called out for supplementary questions.

(Starred question No. 83 was not put and answered as the questioner as well as the hon. Member who was authorised to put the question on his behalf were absent).

Assam-Bengal Cement Company

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked:

*84. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) On how many occasions Government requisitioned Steam and Motor Boats from the Assam-Bengal Cement Company, Chhatak, and the reason for their doing so each time?
- (b) The amounts they paid to the said Company each time for making the said requisitions?
- (c) When the period of settlement with the Assam-Bengal Cement Company Limited expires?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

84. (a)—One small steamer was hired in April last for use by the Special Officer, Rice Control and one motor boat in August for rice control work in Habiganj.

(b)—Bills for hire charges have not yet been received.

(c)—31st October, 1958.

Settlement of land with ex-garden labourers

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN asked:

*85. Will Government be pleased to state whether they have taken any steps to allot some waste lands or some reserve forest lands for cultivation by *ex-tea* garden labourers in order to grow more food?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

85. No, as there is no restriction on the settlement of land with *ex-garden* labourers.

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN: May I know from the Hon'ble Minister in charge whether Government is going to look after those tea garden labourers who are landless and who have settled in Assam so that they may get sufficient land for their cultivation?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Yes. This is the policy of this Government to look after the landless people and if any specific instance is brought to my notice and impediment shown in the ways of the tea garden labourers getting land I will look into it.

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN: If they apply for some waste lands or some reserved forest lands to grow more food will they be allowed to have any?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Certainly. Taking all circumstances into account we shall try to do what we can.

Damage done by Earthquake in Sibsagar

Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAİN asked :

*86. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The number of deaths and other casualties among the civilian population in the Sibsagar District due to the earthquake shock which took place in the night of the 23rd October last ?
- (b) The extent of damage to public and private properties so far ascertained ?
- (c) The nature and measure of relief given by the authorities to the sufferers ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

86. (a)—A report from the Deputy Commissioner, Sibsagar, shows that the casualties were 3 civilians killed, nine badly hurt out of whom one died later and about 100 received minor injuries.

(b)—The Deputy Commissioner, Sibsagar, reported that varied damages were caused to Government and private buildings. In Sibsagar the Jail building, Circuit House, Dak Bungalow, Assistant Surgeon's quarters and other buildings were damaged. In Golaghat the damage was superficial. In Jorhat Messrs. Doss and Company's shop was very badly damaged and so was a brick house occupied by the Army. Some small houses also were almost completely wrecked and one Toklai Bungalow was badly damaged. The Income-tax Office, the Operation Theatre and one Ward of the Hospital and some of the Jail buildings appear to be unsafe.

(c)—Rescue works, *i. e.*, rescuing, removing and giving first aid treatment to the injured was done promptly. No financial relief has yet been recommended by the Local Officers.

Assam Motor Transport Organisation

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked :

*87. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether the Assam Motor Transport Organisation is a public concern within the special cognisance of the Ministry ?
- (b) Whether the whole establishment is a Government one ?
- (c) Whether the rules and procedure that are applicable to other Government servants in the matter of appointment, etc., are also applicable in the case of the employees of the said Organisation ?
- (d) If so, whether they have been followed in the cases of appointments that have hitherto been made under the Organisation ?
- (e) If not, under what order or rule the Motor Transport Controller has been authorised to make appointments ?
- (f) Whether there is any limit to the number and value of posts that the Controller is authorised to make without reference to Government ?
- (g) If so, what is that limit ?
- (h) The number and value of posts that have been made by the Controller up till August 1943 (i) without reference to Government and (ii) after making reference to Government ?
- (i) Whether the Controller advertises the vacancies in the local Newspapers or in the *Assam Gazette* ?
- (j) If not, why not ?
- (k) Whether any educational qualification is essential for any one of the ministerial or technical posts of the Organisation ?

(l) If so, whether any open and public endeavour was made to advertise to the public in order to obtain the best available persons in each individual appointment ?

*88. (a) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the number of appointments that have been made till now in the Assam Motor Transport Organisation showing their classes and grades and the initial pay given to each employee ?

(b) Is it a fact that appointments have been made and pay given to the employees as the Controller likes ?

(c) Is it a fact that in some cases increased pay is given to employees after they have served only for a period of one month or so ?

*89. If the answers to Questions 88 (b) & (c) above are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether such action on the part of the Motor Transport Controller is in accordance with any rules or orders of Government ?

(b) Whether such practice is followed in any other Government offices ?

(c) If so, in what offices and under what rules or orders ?

*90. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether there is any standard adopted by Government according to which ministerial staff is sanctioned for a new office or the existing staff of an office is increased on the basis of receipts and issues of the office concerned ?

(b) Whether Government examined the needs and requirements of the Motor Transport Organisation on the said standard and basis and sanctioned the initial staff or its increase to the present number ?

(c) If not, why a deviation has been made in the case of this Organisation ?

(d) Whether Government propose to examine the strength of the ministerial and other staffs of this Organisation on the basis of actual requirement ?

(e) Whether Government propose to put a stop forthwith to its further inflation pending the examination contemplated in the above question ?

(f) Whether Government propose to treat this Organisation as one of the other Government offices and put its staff to the bare minimum on the same basis as in other offices ?

*91. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether the staff of the Motor Transport Organisation and its subordinate offices enjoy the same privileges in respect of their services, pay, prospects, pension, etc., as other Government employees ?

(b) If so, whether they are so treated by their superiors during their daily routine of business ?

*92. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that one Mr. Wall said to have been appointed as the ministerial head of office in the Assam Motor Transport Organisation is only a novice in Government service ?

(b) What is his scale of pay and what pay is he now drawing ?

(c) Whether the said post is a responsible one so far as this Organisation is concerned ?

(d) Whether he was previously an employee of the Batta Shoe Company ?

(e) What are his educational and other qualifications ?

(f) What were his outstanding merits or previous office experience that justified his sudden appointment from a private concern to the said Government post ?

(g) What is his nationality and what Province does he belong to ?

(h) Whether this vacancy was advertised and applications from suitable candidates were called for ?

(i) How many clerks are there under him ?

(j) Whether such number calls for a high salaried post as its ministerial head ?

- (k) Whether Government propose to reduce the scale of this post commensurate with the actual requirements as in other Government offices ?
- *93. Will Government be pleased to state —
- (a) Whether there is a post of Accountant in the said Organisation ?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that one Mr. Barlow has been appointed in this post ?
- (c) What are the duties and functions of this post ?
- (d) What are the educational and Accounts qualifications of the said Mr. Barlow ?
- (e) What is his present age ?
- (f) Whether he ever held any Government or private service as Accountant previous to his present appointment ?
- (g) If so, what was it and what is the length of service he held in any such capacity ?
- (h) What is his scale of pay and what are his initial and present pay ?
- (i) Whether this post was advertised before he was appointed ?
- (j) Whether applications from candidates with Accounts Diploma or S. A. S. qualifications from Comptroller's establishment were called for, for this post ?
- (k) If not, why not ?
- (l) Whether Government propose to advertise the post in order to take in a duly qualified man for this post ?
- (m) How many persons are there in the Accounts Branch of this Organisation ?
- (n) Whether there are such high salaried Accountants in any other Government office having as many clerks in Accounts Section as in this Organisation ?
- (o) If not, why so high a salary has been attached to this post ?
- (p) Whether Government propose to reduce the scale of the post commensurate with the actual requirement and on the basis of Accounts principle in other Government offices ?
- (q) Whether any money security has been attached to this post ?
- (r) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think this set of questions starting from 87-93 are word for word the same as put by Maulavis Namwar Ali Barbhuiya and Muzarrof Ali Laskar. There is no change of a dot or cutting of a 't' between these sets of questions. My reply to the whole range of questions from 87-93 will be: "The hon. Member is referred to the replies to unstarred questions Nos. 80-86 asked by Maulavi Namwar Ali Barbhuiya at this session of the Assembly." Those questions have been already answered and the supplementary questions remain to be put.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Is there any employee in the Assam Motor Transport Organisation who is not drawing any salary but drawing allowance of Rs. 400 per month ?

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

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Is there any rule that the officers under the Motor Transport Organisation would take their lunch at Government expense ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am not aware of this, Sir. This is absolutely a new question.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: I want to put a supplementary question under Question No. 82, Sir. May I know whether there are any Burmese or Anglo-Burmese officer in the establishment of the Motor Transport Controller ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : My Friend has come to Shillong after these unstarred questions were replied to. He had no time to look into the printed list at page 6 where the matter has already been placed before the House. No supplementary question can arise.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : I ask, Sir, is there any Burmese or Anglo-Burmese officer in the Organisation ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I cannot give any more information than what is written there, viz., Chino-Burmese.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : May I know whether there is any Anglo-Burmese among the Area Managers appointed at different places?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Not to my knowledge, Sir.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : May I know whether the posts of Area Managers were advertised before the appointments were made ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Some of them were appointed immediately on the creation of this body. There was an advertisement as regards the rest. No suitable candidates of this Province were available and therefore some outsiders were appointed.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : May I know whether the history of these outsiders were enquired into before their appointments ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, when these people were interviewed by the Provincial Motor Transport Controller, he found some candidates to be fit and referred their cases to Government with the recommendation that as they were found to be qualified, they may be taken in. The Government being satisfied, they were appointed on temporary basis.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : But I want to know whether any enquiry was made as regards their antecedents ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Yes, Sir. In most cases their previous service and experience were enquired into.

†Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : Is it a fact that the time scale is generally given after one year but in the case of the employes of the Motor Transport Organisation time scale was given and there was change of the scale even after a month ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I am not aware whether any time scale has been given for the office establishment excepting two. One is the case of the Accountant and the other is that of the Storekeeper. Both of these appointments were made by Mr. Adamson with the start of this Organisation. Later on, as I mentioned either yesterday or the day previous, a petition was received by me recommended by the Controller that the scales of these two persons should be revised otherwise they had given notice of going away to some better employment. I considered every aspect of that application and then I thought it would be better to give them a scale with some prospects in future and in consultation with the Finance Department fixed a scale, and initial stage at which these people will be put.

†Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : Are Government prepared to consider any specific proposal for testing the efficacy of the staff ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : No. Sir, this has been referred to in reply to Unstarred question No. 83 (d). Sir, we test the number of hands that may be required in a particular office by a certain standard which has been laid down, i.e., the number of issues and receipts in a particular office. Normally a clerk is supposed to handle, about 2,000 receipts and issues in a month but that standard cannot be followed in an office of the nature of the Motor Controller's office because that office combines two different functions.

Issue and receipt of the Assam Transport will be innumerable, at the same time would not take the same time as in the office of the Head of a department. For example, this Assam Transport Branch of the office may receive a return of how many tons of goods have been carried and how much mileage have been done by a

particular lorry in a particular section. This has only to be recorded and no other action is necessary. As the Organisation started growing, new hands had to be taken but if there is an auditing authority and if the auditor says that the staff maintained is more than necessary, Government will axe them.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The question was: "Whether Government propose to put a stop forthwith to its further inflation pending the examination contemplated in the above question". The answer is "No". The work of the Organisation is of intense importance for the welfare of the people of Assam and cannot be stopped without detriment thereto". Here the question has not been properly replied. The intention of the Questioner was not to stop the Organisation but to know whether further unnecessary inflation should not be stopped. Now I want to ask whether further unnecessary inflation will be stopped by Government pending the examination?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I repudiate the insinuation that the number of hands employed in this office at the present moment is unnecessary. The Questioner has asked that pending an enquiry no new hands should be employed. My answer shows that as this is a growing institution and every day we are receiving more number of motor vehicles from the Government of India, the work is increasing, and if we are to lay down a policy that no body should be employed, probably we will lose accounts of working of some of the lorries that are operating every day. Hence my answer is 'No'.

†Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter though it is very important in nature has I think been sufficiently discussed as is evident from the set of questions and answers that have been put during the last three days and an emphatic disapproval of the House has already proved that the present arrangement with regard to the Assam Motor Transport is not according to the approval of this House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not to enter into an elaborate discussion of that point. I am trying to have all the important questions on this matter to be disposed of today.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Unstarred questions as well?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Replies to the unstarred questions have been laid on the table and I shall give an opportunity for supplementary questions to them if time permits.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, please allow us to discuss this matter according to rule 40.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: After all these supplementary questions what is the good of discussing the matter under rule 40? Sufficient time has been given for supplementary questions. I wish to know what is the urgent matter which is required to be discussed in a debate under rule 40.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: This is a question which involves a huge amount of money of the Province and that it is very urgent is proved by the fact that it is agitating the minds of all the people of the Province as is quite evident from the supplementary questions and sets of questions asked by the hon. Members of all the groups of this House. I think, Sir, it is quite urgent and you can very well allow us some time to discuss it. The urgency is that undue interference has been made by some outsiders to the Organisation. How can an outsider get access to the Government files?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: How is this matter a matter of urgent public importance?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: It has been admitted by the Hon'ble Premier also that there is outside influence and interference in the management of this Organisation. I think this is a sufficient ground to show that the matter is very urgent, that the Government affairs should not be treated so very lightly, that those who are not Government employees should not interfere in the matter of Government affairs where such a large amount of money is involved.

†Speech not corrected by the hon. Member.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Very well; after the close of the day's business, under rule 40 the hon. Member will be allowed to raise a debate in regard to the matter of the Motor Transport Organisation on the answers given to the questions in regard thereof. The hon. Members know that the debate is to be only for half an hour and no division will be taken on the matter.

Scarcity of liquor

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV asked:

*94. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that this Province was dry of liquor for several months in 1942-43?
- (b) If so, how long and why?
- (c) Whether it is a fact that the liquor contractors failed to bring supplies in their respective places?
- (d) Whether any step was taken against them?
- (e) If not, why not?
- (f) Whether Government made enquiry about the reasons for the failure of the supplies in this respect?
- (g) If so, with what result?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied:

94. (a)—No. Some warehouses were dry for certain periods from September 1942 to January 1943.

(b)—They were dry for about two months to four months each.

(c)—Transport difficulties were mainly responsible for the partial failure of the contractor to supply country spirit.

(d) & (e)—Do not arise.

(f) & (g)—Government convened a conference at Shillong in November 1942 to which the transport adviser to the Regional Controller of Railway Priorities was invited. The liquor contractor's Agent was present with all papers. The matter was enquired into and after consideration of all the relevant factors Government decided not to take any action against the contractor as the failure of supply was due to causes beyond his control.

Re: Appointments in the Excise Department

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV asked:

*95. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that (i) Abdul Matin Choudhury and (ii) Serajul Hoque Chowdhury, Special Excise Jemadars at Badarpur and Kulaura respectively have been appointed in the Excise Department during the administration of the present Excise Commissioner?
- (b) Whether these posts were duly advertised before they were filled up?
- (c) If so, how many applications were received?
- (d) Whether they were the best candidates among all the applicants?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied:

95. (a)—Abdul Matin Choudhury and one Serajul Islam Chowdhury and not Serajul Haque Chowdhury have been appointed to temporary post of Excise Jemadars.

(b)—No. Excise Jemadars being treated as menial servant the posts are not advertised. Appointments are made when vacancies occur from candidates who submit applications from time to time and a list of the candidates is preserved in office.

(c) & (d)—Do not arise.

Present Commissioner of Excise

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV asked :

*96. (a) Is it a fact that the present Excise Commissioner was present at different Subdivisional headquarters of Sylhet on the dates of settlement of excise shops ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state whether he was present on similar occasions in any other district ?

*97. Will Government be pleased to state the number of time the present Commissioner of Excise was on tour (i) in the District of Sylhet and (ii) in other districts of the Province since his assumption of office ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

96. (a)—No.

(b)—Does not arise.

97.—Information for two years from November 1941 to October 1943 are given below :—

(i) Sylhet	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	8
(ii) Other Plains districts	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	22

Text Book Committee

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked :

*98. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The date of the last Meeting of the Text Book Committee ?

(b) Who convenes the Meeting of the said Committee ?

(c) Whether there is any rule or convention for calling the Meetings of this Committee ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

98. (a)—11th to 14th December 1940.

(b)—The Director of Public Instruction, Assam.

(c)—There is no definite rule as to who will call the Meeting of the Text Book Committee but it is generally done by the Director of Public Instruction.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Is there any time limit as to when these Meetings are to be held ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: No, there is no time limit.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Does it rest on the sweet will of the Director of Public Instruction to call or not to call the Meeting at least once a year ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Generally Meetings are held every year. As a matter of fact since the last Meeting an attempt was made to hold another Meeting on the 19th December, 1941, but as it synchronised with the Assembly Session some of the Members objected and as the *Id-uz-zuha* festival intervened, the Meeting was postponed to a later date. But later on, Sir, Government in pursuance of the recommendation of the Central Advisory Board of Education, and to meet the public demand, decided that there should be no change of text-books on account of scarcity of paper and the economic depression. Hence there was no necessity for any Meeting.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it a fact that in January 1941, invitation was sent to the members of the Text-Book Committee, and as a matter of fact some of the members proceeded some way, but all on a sudden they were informed by wire that the Meeting had been postponed and the members who proceeded some way were not paid the expenses they incurred ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: I am not aware of that.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Was there any correspondence between the Principal of the Habiganj Brindaban College and Government regarding his travelling allowance, because he proceeded up to Sylhet where he received a telegram asking him not to proceed?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: As I was not then the Minister for Education, I am sorry I don't know anything.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Do Government propose to call a Meeting soon?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: If it be the desire of the House and also of the Committee we will consider the matter.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: The Hon'ble Minister was telling the House that practically no new text-books are prescribed owing to scarcity of paper. Probably it is known to the Hon'ble Minister that a set of books, and not particular ones, are approved by the Text-Book Committee, and I don't see any reason why only one publisher should be given the facility for so many years.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. The hon. Member is delivering a speech.

Contract for the supply of bone-meal manure

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked :

*99. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The name of the person who has been given a contract for the supply of bone-meal manure in the Province?
- (b) What is his rate per maund?
- (c) The quantity to be supplied by him according to the contract?
- (d) Whether it is a fact that there were other parties who agreed to supply this manure at lower rates?
- (e) The name of the officer who entered into this contract on behalf of Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA replied :

99. (a)—Babu Kumud Ranjan Roy, Shillong.

(b)—Rs. 9 per maund.

(c)—3,500 maunds.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—The officiating Director of Agriculture (Mr. Handique).

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: With regard to (d), may I know why this particular person was given the contract though lower rates were quoted by others?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: The other parties who quoted lower rates mentioned in their tenders that the rates were subject to alterations without notice; so these could not be accepted.

Forecast statistics of paddy cultivation

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

*100. (a) Will Government be pleased to state the basis on which they publish their forecast statistics of paddy production in the Province?

(b) Is it a fact that these forecast statistics vary almost in every publication?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether they maintain any special staff for the purpose of ascertaining the real statistics of paddy cultivation and paddy production in the Province?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA replied :

100. (a)—The forecasts of paddy production are published on the basis of the reports received from the Deputy Commissioners. These reports are based on All-India Procedure.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—No.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: With regard to (b), may I know the cause of this variation in each publication?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: The cause of the variation is mainly due to the fact that the Deputy Commissioners have to make periodical estimates depending on the then condition of the crop and taking into consideration all the circumstances prevailing in the environment.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Will Government please state on what basis the Deputy Commissioners supply the figures?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: In the temporarily-settled districts these works are done by the Land Records Staff; in the permanently-settled districts, e.g., Sylhet, the estimates are made on population basis and the surveyed areas in the temporarily-settled parts of the district.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: With regard to (c), the reply is "No", but will Government try to do so in future?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Sir, the question of improving the machinery for compiling agricultural statistics was discussed at a meeting in New Delhi by an Inter-Departmental Committee, who have forwarded their recommendations to the Government of India, and we are now in correspondence with the Government of India regarding this matter.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Will the Hon'ble Minister please explain how statistics for rice and paddy cultivation are prepared on population basis?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Sir, I understand the procedure is this: the population is known from the Census figures and in the temporarily-settled parts of the Sylhet District the area under paddy cultivation is known. A ratio is worked out between the population figures and the rice area and that ratio is applied to the whole District.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Will Government please state why "normals" are still not mentioned in the forecasts? We drew the attention of the Government to this in the last Session, and they promised they would put them in the forecasts. Otherwise it is impossible to judge what the crop quantities are likely to be.

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: It is a separate question, Sir.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: It may be a separate question, but it was a Government-promise all the same. Moreover I am making a relevant reference to the matter under discussion, i.e., the question of forecast.

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: I want notice of this question, as I shall have to look into the files.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it a fact that Government have to rely much on these figures in relation to the Food Problem of the Province?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: We admit, it is an important matter. We are in correspondence with the Government of India.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Should not Government come to a considered decision over the matter so that reliable figures can be obtained?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: We are going to prepare a scheme as may be advised by the Government of India, and that scheme will be forwarded to the Government of India for financial assistance.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it a matter for the Government of India?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Our procedure is based on an All-India procedure.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Are we to understand that in all the permanentl -settled areas in India figures are arrived at on population basis?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: That is the procedure laid down by the Government of India.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I remember the Hon'ble Premier explained what is meant by "population basis", on a previous occasion.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The figures for consumption may be arrived at on population basis, but not for production.
(Starred questions Nos.101-103 were not put and answered as the Questioner was absent.)

Chairmen of Debt Conciliation Boards, Sylhet

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked:

*104. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The amount of money drawn by each of the Chairmen of the Debt Conciliation Boards in the District of Sylhet as travelling allowance since the establishment of those Boards?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that the Chairmen have no official function to discharge in the mofussil?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

104. (a)—Nothing was drawn apart from the usual daily allowances for attending the meetings of the Boards.
- (b)—Yes, except as Chairmen of the Boards wherever its sittings are held.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister state me whether any such occasion could arise within the functions of the Act?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Yes, Sir. An occasion may arise and two of the hon. Members of this House who are also Chairmen of the Debt Conciliation Boards have mentioned to me that they were about to go on an inspection of a question about which two parties stressed in two different directions. They still say that they will take advantage whenever an occasion arises.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Is the hon. Questioner one of them?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Yes.

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Inspection of what?

(No reply.)

Supply of Quinine to Government Dispensaries and Hospitals

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked:

*105. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The total quantity of quinine supplied to the Government controlled dispensaries and hospitals of the Province from 1st April 1943 to 31st October 1943?
- (b) The total quantity supplied to them for the same period during the years 1940, 1941 and 1942?
- (c) The total quantity supplied to them during the years 1939-40, 1940-41, 1941-42 and 1942-43 (Figures to be shown separately year by year)?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied:

105. (a)—A total quantity of 1,804 lbs. of quinine and 1,355 lbs. of cinchona alkaloids were supplied to the Government controlled dispensaries and hospitals of the Province during the period from 1st April 1943 to 31st October 1943.

(b) & (c)—The information is not readily available and is being collected.

Re: Divisional Forest Officer, Sylhet

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked:

*106. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether the Divisional Forest Officer, Sylhet, called for some contract works from May to August last?
- (b) If so, what was the nature of works for each of those contracts?
- (c) The names of the successful tenderers in each of the said contracts?

- (d) Whether it is a fact that to some of those contractors Government advanced money from Government fund ?
 (e) If so, what was the reason for this ?
 (f) Who are those contractors ?
 (g) What action has been taken against the present Divisional Forest Officer of Sylhet since after the serious allegations made against his conduct during the last Budget Session of the Assembly ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

106. (a)—Yes.
 (b)—First contract for the supply of bamboos and cane and the second contract for the supply of cane, bamboos shingles, thatch, bamboos and chatai.
 (c)—The hon. Member is referred to the statement placed on the library table.
 (d)—No.
 (e) & (f)—Do not arise.
 (g)—Conservator of Forests has been to the Division and looked into contracts and other matters.

Re. Ahom Community

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAIN asked :

- *107. (a) Whether the Ahoms have been regarded as a separate Community by Government since November 1941 ?
 (b) If so, do Government propose to issue any circular to the Local Bodies regarding the Ahom Community's allocation of posts under those Bodies supplementing their earlier circular issued in 1940, on the subject of communal allocation of posts among the different communities ?
 (c) If not, do Government propose to consider this question early ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

107. (a)—Yes.
 (b)—Yes.
 (c)—Does not arise.

Water Rally at Ajmiriganj

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

- *108. (a) Are Government aware that a Water Rally was held at Ajmiriganj in the Habiganj Subdivision, on the 29th August, 1943 under the auspices of the National War Front Organisation, Assam ?
 (b) What amount of money was spent for the purpose ?
 (c) Will Government be pleased to state who of the Hon'ble Ministers as well as of the Government officers attended the function ?
 (d) Is it a fact that a Conference was held in that connection at Ajmiriganj ?
 (e) Is it a fact that only few hundreds of people together with some National War Front Workers attended the said Conference ?
 (f) Will Government be pleased to state the amount of money drawn as travelling allowance by the officers attending the said conference ?
 (g) Is it a fact that the "Khurshid Boat Race" was also performed on that date ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

108. (a) A River Rally was held at Ajmiriganj in the Habiganj Subdivision on 28th August, 1943 (and not on 29th August, 1943 as stated in the question) under the auspices of the National War Front, Assam.

(b)—Rupees 7,440-5-3 was spent on the occasion.

(c)—The Hon'ble Prime Minister, the Hon'ble Ministers in charge of Medical and Civil Defence, the Publicity Officer, Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet, the Superintendent of Excise, Sylhet, the Additional District Magistrate, Sylhet and a number of local officers attended the function.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—No. About one lakh of people attended the function according to the Organizer's report, in the afternoon, and some five thousand in the forenoon.

(f)—The National War Front Officers drew travelling allowances amounting to Rs.414-6-0. Government have not the information about drawal of travelling allowances by other officers, but will collect it.

(g) Yes, to get the advantage of the big concourse of people attending it, the National War Front Rally was fixed for the same date.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Was the amount spent from the Provincial exchequer?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, from the National War Front Fund.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: With the concurrence of the Government of the Province?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Central Government.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is this money in the hands of the Provincial Government?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Money is now spent in the ordinary way and the funds form part of the Provincial Budget.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it a fact that many of the high officials attended the function? Did they belong to the National War Front Organisation?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have already given details.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Whether these officers drew their travelling allowance from the Government?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Government are trying to collect the information.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Whether they are entitled to draw travelling allowance for their journies performed there?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I will look into the matter.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Whether they went to see the fun out of their own accord or they were invited by the Government?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: There was no invitation. I made a detailed statement yesterday about it.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Many of the high officials such as I. P.'s of other districts, Subdivisional Officers and others also attended the function. May I know whether these gentlemen were asked by the National War Front Leader to join the function?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I do not know of a y other Subdivisional Officer except that of Habiganj, but later on in the afternoon the Subdivisional Officer of Sunamganj came. I asked him why he came. He said that as rice policy would be discussed there, he came because he said there would be repercussion in his Subdivision.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Whether Mr. Alban Ali, Superintendent of Police, went to Ajmiriganj?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, I saw him there. He is the Provincial Officer-in-charge of the Collective Responsibility Scheme.

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURY: Did the hon. Questioner join the boat race?

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Otherwise how he could put the question.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Joined or attended?

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Attended.

Assam Sanskrit Board

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked:

*109. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they have recently received any memorial from the clerks of the Assam Sanskrit Board for revision of their scales of pay?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state what action they have taken or propose to take in the matter?

(c) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the present scales of pay of the clerks of the said Board?

(d) Is it a fact that their present scales of pay are much lower than the scales of the employees of the local Bodies?

(e) Are Government aware that these clerks are over worked?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied:

109. (a)--Yes.

(b)—Government are not prepared to consider the revision of the scales of pay till the conditions return to normal at the end of the war.

(c)—Head clerk—Rs.40—2—60—2—80.

Second clerk—Rs.35—2—55—3/2—70.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—So it has been recently represented to the Government.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: What steps do Government propose to take in that connection so far as (e) is concerned?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Government proposes to strengthen the staff next year.

A. R. P. Personnel in Assam

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked:

*110. Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing (i) the names of A. R. P. Officers of Assam drawing a monthly salary of Rupees one hundred and above, (ii) their home districts, (iii) present pay and (iv) present place of posting.

The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI replied:

110.—A statement is laid on the table.

Statement showing the names of A. R. P. personnel in Assam drawing a monthly salary of Rupees one hundred or above

Name	Present pay Rs.	Home District	Present place of posting
1. G. P. Walden, Esqr...	1,200	Isle of Wight, England	Shillong.
2. Mr. S. K. Dutta	300	Sylhet	Ditto.
3. Mr. A. S. Lyngdoh	300	Khasi and Jaintia Hills	Ditto.
4. Mr. N. B. Dubois	200	Ditto	Ditto.
5. Mr. C. R. Davidson	150	Ditto	Ditto.
6. Mr. G. Misra	135	Sylhet	Ditto.
7. Mr. R. Hill	105	Khasi and Jaintia Hills	Ditto.
8. Mr. H. Carlingson	110	Ditto	Ditto.
9. Mr. S. Jashi	115	Ditto	Ditto.
10. Mr. T. Lyngdoh	100	Ditto	Ditto.
11. Mr. P. Jyrwa	100	Ditto	Ditto.
12. Miss M. Kharsati	100	Ditto	Ditto.

Name	Present pay Rs.	Home District	Present place of posting
1. Mr. N. Ahmed Chowdhury	350	Sylhet	Gauhati.
2. Mr. Iqbal Hussain Chowdhury	300	Ditto	Ditto.
3. Dr. D. K. Barua	165	Kamrup	Ditto.
4. Srijut Haladhar Chowdhury	150	Ditto	Ditto.
5. Srijut Madhab Chandra Barua	135	Goalpara	Ditto.
6. Maulavi Guljar Rahman	110	Kamrup	Ditto.
7. Maulavi Aftab Hussain	105	Ditto	Ditto.
8. Srijut Bidyut Purkayastha	100	Sylhet	Ditto.
1. Mr. H. N. Dutta	350	Sylhet	Tezpur.
2. Babu K. P. Ghose	150	Domiciled in	Ditto.
3. Srijut U. N. Saikia	135	Darrang	Ditto.
4. Dr. P. Bharali	120	Ditto	Ditto.
1. Mr. F. Ahmed	350	Sylhet	Silchar.
2. Mr. A. Sami Chowdhury	300	Ditto	Ditto.
3. Dr. A. C. Dutta	150	Ditto	Ditto.
4. Mr. Mehrab Ali Laskar	150	Cachar	Ditto.
5. Mr. S. R. Chakravarty	135	Sylhet	Ditto.
6. Mr. S. M. Endow	100	Cachar	Silchar
7. Babu Vanamali Sengupta	100	Sylhet	Ditto.
8. " Ramendra Deshamukhya	100	Cachar	Ditto.
9. Abdul Wahed Barlaskar	100	Ditto	Ditto.
1. Md. Imdadul Haque	300 <i>plus</i> 50 C.A.	Sylhet	Dhubri.
2. Srijut Animesh Lachan Chakravarty	150	Goalpara	Ditto.
3. Mr. Surendra Nath Sarkar	135	Mymensing (Bengal)	Ditto.
4. Dr. Satyendra Mohan Das Gupta	100	Goalpara	Ditto.
5. Srijut Ananta Kumar Seal	<i>plus</i> Spl. pay 20 75 <i>plus</i> Spl. pay. 25	Ditto	Ditto.
1. Mr. A. N. Kidwai, I.C.S.	500	U. P., Lucknow	Sylhet.
2. Maulavi R. Bari Chowdhury	300	Sylhet	Ditto.
3. Maulavi A. Sabur	150	Ditto	Ditto.
4. Dr. H. K. Chowdhury	170	Ditto	Ditto.
5. Babu Prabhat Chakravarty	135	Ditto	Ditto.
6. " Phanindra Kr. Roy	120	Ditto	Ditto.
7. " Satyabrata Bhattacharyee	115	Ditto	Ditto.
8. Maulavi Samsul Islam	100	Ditto	Ditto.
9. Babu H. B. Dhar	100	Ditto	Ditto.
10. Maulavi A. Sattar	300	Nowgong	Jorhat.
1. Mr. D. M. Goswami	150	Sibsagar	Ditto.
2. Srijut Nakul Chandra Kakati	135	Kamrup	Ditto.
3. " Lalit Ch. Bora	100	Sibsagar	Ditto.
4. " Chidananda Saikia	100	Ditto	Ditto.
5. Dr. C. Bezbarua	<i>plus</i> Spl. 20		
1. Mr. S. R. Chowdhury	300 <i>plus</i> 50	Sylhet	Dibrugarh.
2. Mr. M. Rahman	300	Lakhimpur	Ditto.
3. " P. K. Chakravarty	150	Sylhet	Ditto.
4. " J. N. Mukherjee	140	Lakhimpur, Domiciled	Ditto.
5. " E. S. Dey	100	Sylhet	Ditto.
6. " B. L. Chowdhury	150	Kamrup	Ditto.
1. Mr. Nikhil Ch. Chowdhury	350	Mymensing	Tinsukia.
2. " Abdur Rahman	150	Sylhet	Ditto.
3. " Jogesh Ch. Banerjee	100	Dacca	Ditto.
4. " Premkanta Mahanta	135	Darrang	Ditto.
5. " Sidheswar Burgohain	175	Sibsagar	Ditto.
1. S. C. Barbarua	300	Sibsagar	Digboi.
2. P. K. Chakravarty	150	Sylhet	Ditto.
3. A. Ahmed Tarapdar	135	Ditto	Ditto.
4. Dr. M. Ahmed	150	Sibsagar	Ditto.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(to which answers were laid on the table)

Assam Motor Transport Organisation

Maulavi NAMWAR ALI BARBHUIYA asked :

81. (a) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the number of appointments that have been made till now in the Assam Motor Transport Organisation showing their classes and grades and the initial pay given to each employees ?

(b) Is it a fact that appointments have been made and pay given to the employees as the Controller likes ?

(c) Is it a fact that in some cases increased pay is given to employees after they have served only for a period of one month or so ?

82. If the answers to questions 81 (b) and (c) above are in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether such action on the part of the Motor Transport Controller is in accordance with any rules or orders of Government ?

(b) Whether such practice is followed in any other Government offices ?

(c) If so, in what offices and under what rules or orders ?

83. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether there is any standard adopted by Government according to which ministerial staff is sanctioned for a new office or the existing staff of an office is increased on the basis of receipts and issues of the office concerned ?

(b) Whether Government examined the needs and requirements of the Motor Transport Organisation on the said standard and basis and sanctioned the initial staff or its increase to the present number ?

(c) If not, why a deviation has been made in the case of this Organisation ?

(d) Whether Government propose to examine the strength of the ministerial and other staffs of this Organisation on the basis of actual requirement ?

(e) Whether Government propose to put a stop forthwith to its further inflation pending the examination contemplated in the above question ?

(f) Whether Government proposed to treat this Organisation as one of the other Government offices and put its staff to the bare minimum on the same basis as in other offices ?

84. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether the staff of the Motor Transport Organisation and its subordinate offices enjoy the same privileges in respect of their services, pay, prospects, pension, etc., as other Government employees ?

(b) If so, whether they are so treated by their superiors during their daily routine of business ?

85. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that one Mr. Wall said to have been appointed as the ministerial head of office in the Assam Motor Transport Organisation is only a novice in Government service ?

(b) What is his scale of pay and what pay is he now drawing.

(c) Whether the said post is a responsible one so far as this Organisation is concerned ?

(d) Whether he was previously an employee of the Bata Shoe Company ?

(e) What are his educational and other qualifications ?

(f) What were his outstanding merits or previous office experience that justified his sudden appointment from a private concern to the said Government post ?

(g) What is his nationality and what province does he belong to ?

(h) Whether this vacancy was advertised and applications from suitable candidates were called for ?

(i) How many clerks are there under him ?

- (j) Whether such number calls for a high salaried post as its ministerial head ?
 (k) Whether Government propose to reduce the scale of this post commensurate with the actual requirements as in other Government offices ?

86. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether there is a post of Accountant in the said Organisation ?
 (b) Whether it is a fact that one Mr. Barlow has been appointed in this post ?
 (c) What are the duties and functions of this post ?
 (d) What are the educational and Accounts qualifications of the said Mr. Barlow ?
 (e) What is his present age ?
 (f) Whether he ever held any Government or private service as Accountant, previous to his present appointment ?
 (g) If so, what was it, and what is the length of service he held in any such capacity ?
 (h) What is his scale of pay and what are his initial and present pay ?
 (i) Whether this post was advertised before he was appointed ?
 (j) Whether applications from candidate with Accounts Diploma or Superior Account Service qualifications from Comptroller's Establishment were called for, for this post ?
 (k) If not, why not ?
 (l) Whether Government propose to advertise the post in order to take in, a duly qualified man, for this post ?
 (m) How many persons are there in the Accounts Branch of this Organisation ?
 (n) Whether there are such high salaried Accountants in any other Government office having as many clerks in Accounts Section as in this Organisation ?
 (o) If not, why so high a salary has been attached to this post ?
 (p) Whether Government propose to reduce the scale of the post commensurate with the actual requirement and on the basis of Accounts principle in other Government offices ?
 (q) Whether any money security has been attached to this post ?
 (r) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

81. (a)—The reply to question unstarred 80 (h) may be referred to.

(b)—No.

(c)—In some cases pay has been provisionally fixed, and subsequently altered to a time scale.

82. (a)—The rules are in process of framing for the approval of Government. The action hitherto taken has been with the general approval and under the supervision of Government.

(b) & (c)—There is no similar Organisation under Government and therefore no parallel exists.

83. (a)—There are different standards for different services and offices.

(b)—Yes, and the matter is constantly under review and every addition has to be justified. At the outset the only material to go upon was the experience of private transport enterprises, with which the Controller has been in touch.

(c)—Does not arise.

(d)—Government are prepared to consider any specific proposals for testing the adequacy of the staff. They rely of course largely on the advice of the Controller as to the success of the operations.

(e)—No. The work of the Organisation is of intense importance for the welfare of the people of Assam and cannot be stopped without detriment thereto.

(f)—The suggestion is undoubtedly what Government aim at.

84. (a)—No. As the objects are quasi-commercial, the staff is non-pensionable and works under conditions aiming at maximum output of work consistent with fair treatment.

(b)—The question is not understood.

85. (a)—He is new to Government service.

(b)—He draws Rs. 300 per mensem. The future scale of the post is under consideration.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—No.

(e) & (f)—Senior Cambridge certificate and thirteen years with private firms, he was trained at an Officer Cadets' Training School, but found medically unfit for active Military service.

(g)—European settled in India.

(h)—No. He was engaged after interview by the Controller for the purpose of starting the office.

(i)—At present five.

(j)—His present post is Manager of the Personnel Department dealing with staff and labour. He deals with recording and statistics of staff and labour which are not yet fully developed branches of work.

(k)—Government propose to watch the development of the work of the Organization, the scope of which has only recently been fixed. They will certainly bear in mind whether the branch is fully justified for the work it is accomplishing from time to time.

86. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Control of financial and cash accounts.

(d)—Senior Cambridge certificate, articles with a qualified accountant and 11½ years' practical office experience.

(e)—Forty-five years.

(f)—No Government service but over 15 years' private service.

(g)—Reference is invited to the answer to question (d).

(h) Rupees 600 in the scale Rs.175—175—200—50/2—400—400—450—50/2—600—600—650—50/2—750.

(i)—No.

(j) & (k)—The Comptroller was unable to recommend anyone with the necessary experience. The work of the Accounts section has grown to a degree beyond the capacity of the staff and the assistance of the Auditor General and the Comptroller has been called for in procuring qualified men.

(l)—No. Qualified accountants have been absorbed in various Central Departments, and special arrangements must be made to secure reliable men.

(m)—Fifty-seven clerks at present.

(n)—There is no parallel post in Government service.

(o)—Does not arise.

(p)—Cost accounting does not arise on this scale in any Government service. It should be appreciated that this is a special emergency branch of Government work operating on commercial principles.

(q) & (r)—The proposals of the Controller are under consideration.

Assam Motor Transport Organisation

Maulavi MUZARROF ALI LASKAR asked :

87. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The academic qualification of Mr. Wall, said to be the office Manager in the office of the Controller, Provincial Motor Transport Organisation, Assam ?
- (b) The previous office experience which entitled him to be appointed in the said post ?
- (c) The amount of pay which is at present being drawn by him ?
- (d) Whether it is a fact that the said Mr. Wall had no previous office experience of any Government Office before he was so appointed ?
- (e) Whether it is a fact that he was employed with the Bata Shoe Factory prior to his joining his new appointment at Shillong ?
- (f) Whether the post was advertised before it was filled up by the said Mr. Wall ?
- (g) If not, why ?
- (h) The scale of pay of the said post ?
- (i) Whether Government are aware that the said Mr. Wall does not behave well with his subordinates ?
- (j) If so, what action has been taken against him ?
- (k) If not, whether Government propose to enquire into the matter ?
- (l) Whether it is a fact that several complaints against his bad behaviour with his subordinates were made to the Controller, Provincial Motor Transport Organisation in the month of August, 1943 ?
- (m) If so, what action has been taken against the said Mr. Wall in the matter ?

88. (a) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing the (i) number, (ii) scale of pay of different posts sanctioned up till now in the Assam Provincial Motor Transport Organisation, (iii) names of persons appointed in each of these posts and (iv) community to which each of them belongs ?

(b) How many non-natives of the Province have been appointed in the said Organisation ?

(c) Is it a fact that the communal ratio fixed by Government for the representation of various communities in public services has not been adhered to by the Controller, Provincial Motor Transport Organisation ?

(d) If so, why ?

89. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) In what particular post, under the Provincial Motor Transport Organisation Mr. S. K. Mukherjee, late of the Commercial Carrying Company, has been appointed recently ?
- (b) The amount of pay last drawn by the said Mr. S. K. Mukherjee while he was in the Commercial Carrying Company ?
- (c) The initial pay on which the said Mr. Mukherjee has now been appointed in the Assam Provincial Motor Transport Organisation ?
- (d) Whether it is a fact that he is not a native of the Province of Assam ?
- (e) Whether the post was advertised before the appointment was made ?
- (f) If not, why ?
- (g) Whether Government propose to advertise the post now and fill it with a qualified person who is a native of the Province ?
- (h) The qualification of the said Mr. S. K. Mukherjee for holding the present appointment ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

87. (a) to (h)—The hon. Member is referred to the replies given to similar questions (unstarred questions Nos. 80-86) by Maulavi Namwar Ali Barbhuiya at this session.

(i)—No.

(j)—Does not arise.

(k)—Government will investigate any specific allegations against the officer.

(l) & (m)—Government are informed that one complaint of a petty nature was investigated and dealt with by the Provincial Motor Transport Controller.

88. (a) & (b)—The information is being supplied in answer to similar questions by other hon. Members at this session.

(c)—The communal ratio is observed to the extent to which qualified candidates are available.

(d)—It must be understood that this is a temporary Organisation built up to provide for very important purposes concerning the War effort and the economic well-being of the Province, and it is not possible to deal with it on a long term basis like an ordinary department. Qualified and experienced men are necessary, but others are also being taken for training and in respect of these particularly every effort is made to give due opportunities to all communities.

89. (a)—Chief Technical Officer.

(b)—Government understand that his monthly earnings were about Rs.825 per mensem.

(c)—Rs.1,300 per mensem, which was fixed in recognition that he was leaving a permanent employment for a post which will only be likely to last a few years.

(d)—Yes. He has served for eleven years in the Commercial Carrying Company.

(e)—No.

(f)—This is a temporary specialist post for which a person of known experience and capacity was required, and it had to be filled as soon as such a person become available.

(g)—Government do not propose to advertise the post afresh.

(h)—He has more than 22 years' experience as Workshop Foreman, Workshop Superintendent and Engineer with the Howrah Municipality, the E. B. Railway and private Firms.

Forest Divisions of Haltugaon and Kachugaon

Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB of Sidli asked :

90. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The total number of coupes (Sal and soft wood) sold to contractors in the two Forest Divisions of Haltugaon and Kachugaon in the District of Goalpara during the period beginning from April 1940 to March 1943 ?
- (b) The value thereof (to be shown separately) ?
- (c) The total amount of Royalty realised uptill now from the contractors ?
- (d) The total outturn during the said period ?
- (e) The area of (i) Haltugaon and (ii) Kachugaon Forest Divisions ?
- (f) The number of ranges in each Division ?
- (g) The number of staff working therein during last year and this year in each Division ?
- (h) Whether the work in those Divisions has increased at present ?
- (i) If so, whether the staff has been increased ?
- (j) Whether it is a fact that the contractors working in the Haltugaon Division do not at present get Forest passing, transit pass, depôt passing and reply of letters in time ?

- (k) If so, why ?
 (l) Whether the contractors working in these two Divisions are allowed to despatch timber outside the Province of Assam ?
 (m) If so, under what conditions ?
 (n) The quantity allowed for (i) private sale inside the Province and (ii) for despatch outside Assam ?
91. Will Government be pleased to state—
 (a) Whether Government have allotted any forest block under Haltugaon and Kachugaon Forest Divisions to any contractor without putting it to public auction ?
 (b) If so, why ?
 (c) Whether the bridge pile contracts were proportionately distributed among the contractors in 1943 ?
92. Will Government be pleased to state—
 (a) What privilege, if any, has been given to the contractors working in Haltugaon and Kachugaon Forest Divisions with regard to supplying rations, kerosene, etc., to their labourers ?
 (b) Whether any arrangement has been made to provide railway accommodation for bringing labourers from outside to extract timber from the Forest in Haltugaon Division ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

90, 91 & 92.—The information has been called for.

Allotment of food-stuffs at controlled rate during festivals

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

93. Will Government be pleased to state—
 (a) Whether any special allotment of Atta, flour, sugar, etc., was made to the public at controlled rate in the District of Sylhet during the last Shab-i-Barat, Manasa Pooja, Idul Fitr and Durga Pooja festivals ?
 (b) If so, who are the persons received those allotments in the Habiganj Subdivision ?
 (c) Whether petitions were received by the local authorities of Habiganj from individual persons between July and September 1943 for the issue of special quota of the said articles on account of religious festivals ?
 (d) Whether it is a fact that some Muslims of Habiganj did not receive any special allotment of these articles during Shab-i-Barat, Idul Fitr and other festivals ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

93. (a)—Yes generally for Idul Fitr and Durga Pooja and on special application for other festivals according to stock available.
 (b)—Those who applied for it.
 (c)—Yes.
 (d)—May be as some, like the hon. Member, did not take the allotment on the ground that it was inadequate.

Political prisoners in Nowgong Jail

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA asked :

94. Will Government be pleased to state—
 (a) Whether some political prisoners and under-trials lodged in Nowgong Jail complained to the Hon'ble Minister of Jails during his last visit there as regards their classification and procedure adopted in this respect by the district authorities ?

- (b) Whether Government propose to direct the District Magistrates to ascertain the status, social position and mode of living of the political prisoners and under-trials through some agencies other than the police ?
95. Will Government be pleased to state—
- (a) Whether any steps have been taken to improve the diet and other facilities of prisoners in jail particularly those of "C" Division prisoners ?
- (b) Whether Government have recently received complaints from "C" Division prisoners convicted for political activities to the effect that the quantity of salt, condiments, oil, fish, soda or soap for washing and vegetables supplied to them are quite insufficient ?
- (c) Whether Government propose to extend the facilities and privileges as regards diet now enjoyed by the "B" Division security prisoners to the "C" Division prisoners—convicted for political activities ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA replied :

94. (a)—Yes, but the complaint related to the classification and not to the procedure adopted.

(b)—The initial recommendation is made by the trying Magistrate on the basis of facts emerging in the course of the trial and after hearing the accused and his pleader. Government have no reason to believe that the District Magistrate's recommendation is not largely based on facts thus ascertained, and do not see the necessity of the suggested orders.

95.(a)—Yes. Government are exploring all feasible methods of improvement—particularly of diet, which raises difficulties owing to the dislocation of supply in respect of certain items. They have decided to make every effort to expand the production of vegetables in the jail gardens for the benefit of the prisoners and have for that purpose relaxed the rules relating to extra-mural gangs. They are also considering the feasibility of certain other measures such as doubling the daily ration of mustard oil, and increased supply of vegetables on days when *dal* cannot be supplied in full, and increasing the number of days on which fish is to be served and so on.

(b)—Not recently. Only one complaint was received more than a year ago.

(c)—No. It cannot be supported on any principle to differentiate between prisoners of the same category and class, sometimes convicted under the same provisions of the law. In the view of Government wherever such differentiation is justified on the grounds of status, education or mode of living of the convict the proper course is to classify such convict in a higher division and Government have already asked Deputy Commissioners sometime ago to review the cases of all convicts who claimed and were not given "B" class and to reclassify the prisoners in "B" class where this appeared justified.

Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan, M.L.A., now a Security prisoner in Tezpur Jail

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA asked :

96. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan, M. L. A., now a security prisoner in Tezpur jail, has been suffering from various ailments such as phirinties, gastrities, heart-troubles, chronic dysentery, tonsillities, etc. ?
- (b) What steps have been taken for his treatment ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

96. (a)—No. Last year Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan complained of chronic bowel trouble. Government called for a medical report, which was submitted after a detailed medical examination of all organs as well as microscopic examination, and disclosed no disease apart from occasional constipation. His weight in jail had increased from 103 to 132 lbs. and his general health was good,

(c)—It is difficult to say how many of the applicants were immigrant Muslims as the fact of their being immigrant muslims or not was not mentioned in the applications. Two Bengali immigrant muslims were appointed as Kamdars in the Goalpara district but one did not join his appointment.

Books selected for M. A. Examination in Assamese language

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

98. (a) Will Government be pleased to enquire and state the names of books selected by the Calcutta University for the M. A. Examination in Assamese language ?

(b) Are Government aware of the books, (i) Brittamonjuri by Mohamohapadhya Dhireswar Bhattacharjee, (ii) Kothabhagabot by Vatta Dev, and (iii) Dharmopuran by Kabi Chandra Dwija ?

(c) If so, do Government propose to recommend to the Calcutta University to prescribe them as Text books for the M. A. Examination in Assamese language ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

98. (a)—The hon. Member is referred to pages 1232-1233 of the Calcutta University Calendar 1942.

(b)—(i) Yes. It is still in manuscript.

(ii) Yes.

(iii) Government have no information.

(c)—Brittamonjuri being a work on Sanskrit prosody is not suitable.

Katha Bhagabata is already in the list, Dharmapurana by Kabi Chandra Dwija when available in print will be considered if found suitable.

Deaths at Baniyachong

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

99. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they have received a few telegrams and representations from or on behalf of Baniyachong public regarding the recent death havoc at Baniyachong due to starvation and malaria ?

(b) If so, what action has been taken by Government in the matter ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether they made any enquiry as to the cause of such unprecedented deaths at Baniyachong ?

(d) Is it a fact that over five thousand people have died there till now ?

(e) Do Government propose to appoint a special officer to enquire into the matter immediately and suggest remedial measures for prevention of such deaths in future ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

99. (a)—Yes.

(b)—All possible steps to render medical aid to the sufferers were and are being taken.

(c)—On enquiry it has been found that the infection has been brought from Dimapur and other Malarious places by the labourers of the locality who went to work there. It is reported that the infection was of the type, called cerebral malaria which does not generally yield to treatment and so the death rate was very high.

(d)—Figures of deaths from other diseases are not readily available and information is being collected but the number of deaths from Malaria for the period April to October 1943 is 1,700 approximately as reported by the Sub-Assistant Surgeon in charge Baniyachong dispensary.

(e)—Director of Public Health, Assistant Director of Public Health and Assistant Surgeon, Public Health Department, are all constantly visiting the locality. They have reported and will surely report further remedial measures, if necessary, and Government will take action accordingly.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The question was:
 "Will Government be pleased to state whether they have received a few telegrams and representations from or on behalf of Baniyachong public regarding the recent death havoc at Baniyachong due to starvation and malaria? The reply is "Yes".

Then in (b) it was asked:
 "If so, what action has been taken by Government in the matter?" The reply is:
 "All possible steps to render medical help to the sufferers were and are being taken".

What about starvation, Sir? What step has been taken by Government so far as starvation is concerned?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: Sir, the question of starvation is dealt with by the Hon'ble Prime Minister who is in-charge of Supply and so I hope he will reply to the question.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we had a full dress debate on this matter the other day regarding the steps taken to counteract the spread of the epidemic and also to alleviate the distress of the suffering people. The question of starvation and mal-nutrition were fully discussed and every step taken by the Supply Department was also made known to the House.

Damage done due to recent Earthquake Shock

Srijut RAM NATH DAS asked:

100. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether they are aware that there was a severe shock of earthquake on the night of 23rd October last in the Upper Assam area mainly in the Sibsagar district?
- (b) Whether they are aware that many buildings were totally damaged and that some buildings have become unfit for habitation?
- (c) If so, whether Government propose to arrange some building materials immediately to repair the buildings damaged by the shock?
- (d) The number of casualties due to the earthquake shock in the said district?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied:

100. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes, they are aware of the damages.

(c)—Government have under consideration the feasibility of obtaining cement and if necessary, other materials not available locally and of their distribution under the control of the Deputy Commissioner.

(d)—The latest advice indicate a mortality of 18. The number of injured is not definitely known, but in Jorhat town some 100 were injured, of whom eight were severely hurt.

Security Prisoners lodged in Jorhat Jail

Srijut RAM NATH DAS asked:

101. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, a security prisoner in the Jorhat Jail, is at present lodged in a room which has been greatly damaged and made unsafe by the last earthquake?
- (b) Whether they are aware that the life of Mr. Ahmed in that room is not safe?
- (c) Whether Government propose to transfer him immediately to some other Jail of the Assam Valley?

102. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that most of the security prisoners who have been granted allowance have not received the same as yet?
- (b) If so, whether Government propose to send their allowance immediately and regularly?

- (c) Whether Government propose to increase the rate of allowance granted to these prisoners in view of high price of food-stuffs ?
 (d) Whether Government propose to raise their allowance immediately ?
 (e) Whether it is a fact that many security prisoners even though they are supporters of their family have not yet been granted any allowance ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA replied :

101. (a) to (c)—Government have received a report that the quarters have been badly damaged and that arrangements have therefore been made to transfer the security prisoner.

102. (a)—Government have no reason to believe so: if any specific case can be cited an enquiry will be made as to the reason for delay.

(b)—In every instance where an allowance has been sanctioned authority for drawal has been conveyed to the Deputy Commissioner of the district: it is not possible for Government to make the remittances from Shillong.

(c)—Government have taken account of prices when fixing the allowances and in a number of instances have increased them recently in view of the rise which has occurred.

(d)—Government will examine any instance where it is claimed that rise in prices has rendered the allowance given inadequate.

(e)—Every case is examined on its merits. Government are not prepared to sanction allowances where they are not really necessary.

Debt Conciliation Board at Dhubri

Srijut JOGENDRA NARAYAN MANDAL asked :

103. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The amount of establishment cost per month for clerks, peons and menials engaged by the Debt Conciliation Board at Dhubri ?
 (b) The amount of rent paid per month for the office building of the said Board ?
 (c) The number of cases that were received by the said Board and that were refused on grounds of jurisdiction since the month of January, 1943 to September, 1943 ?
 (d) The number of cases that were conciliated through the said Board during the above period or otherwise disposed of, or dismissed ?
 (e) The hour of sitting each day and the number of sittings each month of the aforesaid Board during the above period ?
 (f) The number of cases disposed of each day and the average number of cases disposed of, in the last three months by the said Board ?
 (g) The amount of monthly allowance received by each member and the Chairman of the Dhubri Debt Conciliation Board since the month of January to September, 1943 ?

104. (a) Are Government aware, that the public abhor the Debt Conciliation Board on the ground of duplication of justice ?

(b) Do Government propose to take necessary steps to give to the Civil Courts, a greater latitude regarding the exercise of discretion in the matter of allowing time in execution cases ?

(c) Is it a fact that there are complaints about dilatoriness in the procedure and unsatisfactory result of Debt Conciliation Boards ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :—

103. (a)—Rupees 57 per month.
 (b)—Rupees 30 per month.

(c)—79. There were also 171 cases pending from the previous year making a total of 250.

91 cases were refused on grounds of jurisdiction.

(d)—77 cases. Of these 46 were disposed of, under section 12(1) and 31 dismissed under section 14.

(e)—At 11 A. M.

						Number of sittings
January	...	...	...	...	...	14
February	...	...	...	...	...	14
March	...	...	...	...	...	10
April	...	...	...	...	...	8
May	...	...	...	...	...	10
June	...	...	...	...	...	8
July	...	...	...	...	...	9
August	...	...	...	...	...	9
September	...	...	...	...	...	9

(f)—The average number of cases disposed of in the three months ending September, is 14 per month or 1.6 per day.

(g)—The amount of monthly allowance received by each member and the Chairman of the Board is given below:—

	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1. Khan Saheb Maulavi B. Muhammed (Chairman)	80	80	50	40	50	40	45	45	60	=490
2. Srijut Kumar Golap Sing ..	33	45	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	= 78
3. Maulavi Kasimuddin Sarkar	42	54	36	24	39	36	39	42	39	=351
4. Srijut N. N. Roy Mandal	54	45	36	27	27	30	9	33	12	=273
5. Srijut Gopal Chandra Sarnakar.	54	48	36	..	..	..	..	..	..	=138
6. Maulavi Muhammed Abdus Samad.	36	18	12	24	9	24	12	12	12	=159
7. Maulavi Ghashuddin Ahmed.	33	39	27	18	18	24	27	15	6	=207
8. Srijut Bhabendra Ch. Saha	..	..	..	18	15	..	12	27	21	= 93
										Rs. 1,789

104. (a)—No.

(b)—No.

(c)—No complaints have been received, rather the contrary is the actual state of things to what the hon. Member suggests.

Damage done by recent earthquake to paddy and crops

Srijut RAMNATH DAS asked:

105. (a) Are Government aware that the last earthquake shock has damaged the paddy crops and particularly pulses in Majuli of Jorhat Subdivision?

(b) If so, do Government propose to enquire the extent of damage done and arrange for relief?

(c) Do Government propose to grant remission of land revenue in suitable cases?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

105. (a)—No report regarding damage to crops, has been received.

(b) & (c)—Enquires will be made and relief granted, if necessary, by the Local Officers under the Rules at pages 180-184 of the Assam Land Revenue Manual, Volume 1.

Provincial Motor Transport Organisation

Maulana ABDUL HAMID KHAN asked :

106. (a) Will Government be pleased to state the total number of appointments made so far under the Provincial Motor Transport Controller ? (figures for different services to be shown separately.)

(b) How many of them are Muslims, Hindus and persons belonging to other communities and the salary drawn by each of them ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

106. (a) & (b)—The hon. Member is referred to the statements laid on the table in connection with the replies to unstarred questions Nos.80(h) and 81(a) asked by Maulavi Namwar Ali Barbhuiya in the current session of the Assembly.

Reservation and settlement of land with Professional Graziers, immigrants and indigenous people

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

107. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The total areas in Bighas of land reserved for Professional Graziers in the districts of Kamrup and Darrang separately ?

(b) The total number of cattle-Buffaloes and Cows separately in each of the above districts ?

108. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The total area in Bighas of available Khas land fit for cultivation in the Barpeta Subdivision ?

(b) The total area in Bighas of Patta land, encroached by the immigrants during the period of last six years in the said Subdivision ?

(c) The total area in Bighas of land encroached in the professional grazing reserves by the immigrants during the period of the last five years ?

(d) The total area in Bighas of khas land settled with (i) the immigrants and (ii) the indigenous people separately in the last five years in the Barpeta Subdivision ?

109. (a) Is it a fact that in the districts of Kamrup and Darrang, the indigenous people should look to the mountainous areas for future expansion and further settlements and that the land obtained dereserving the lands reserved for professional grazing reserves just behind the hearth and home of the indigenous people is to be settled with the immigrants ?

(b) Is it a fact that in the districts of Sibsagar and Lakhimpur the available land from the surplus reserved areas and waste lands will be settled with the indigenous people only ?

(c) If so, what are the reasons for these different treatments in the different districts ?

110. Will Government be pleased to state the number of Colonisation Officers appointed up to date in the Assam Valley and the community to which each of them belongs ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

107. (a)—*Barpeta Subdivision*.—1,21,087 bighas. The figures for Gauhati Subdivision are not available.

Darrang District.—1,38,642 bighas.

(b)—The total number of cattle for which grazing fees were paid last year is as follows :—

Barpeta Subdivision.—7,056. Separate figures for cows and buffaloes are not available.

Gauhati Subdivision.—No figures are available.

Darrang District.—Buffaloes 10,736, Cows 17,875.

No information is available as to the number of cattle which are grazed elsewhere than in professional grazing reserves.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Is it a fact that some portions of this area are covered up by *pits, khals, rivers* and sandy configuration?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Is it regarding the areas reserved for professional graziers?

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Yes, Sir. I want to know whether in Kamrup district, some portions of these grazing reserves are covered up by *beels, khals, rivers* and sandy configuration?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Does the hon. Member insinuate that the entire area is covered like that?

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Some of the areas, Sir.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: I admit, Sir, that is so because it is natural that it should be so.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Can Government give us the information whether deducting the portions covered up by *beels, khals, rivers* and sandy configurations the areas as stated will stand the same amount?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: No, Sir, it does not.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Will Government inform me whether cows and buffaloes of any other district come to the grazing reserves in the Barpeta Subdivision for grazing?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Is not that entirely a separate question, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, the question was:

"Will Government be pleased to state the total number of cattle-buffaloes and cows separately in each of the above districts?" Now the question is:

"Whether the cows and buffaloes from other districts come to the Barpeta Subdivision?" So this question does not arise.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied:

108. (a)—No figure for the subdivision is available but it has been calculated that roughly 3 lakhs of acres may be taken as an estimate of the cultivable waste land available in the Kamrup district.

(b) & (c)—The information is not available.

(d)—Figures for the separate subdivisions are not available. District figures shown below are taken from the Land Revenue Administration Reports and show progressive totals of the areas settled respectively with immigrants and indigenous persons.

Year	Total area settled with immigrants		Total area settled with indigenous people	
	Acres	...	Acres	...
1938-39	193,795	...	775,046	...
1939-40	199,608	...	784,125	...
1940-41	206,275	...	790,386	...
1941-42	206,593	...	835,801	...
1942-43	209,345	...	849,499	...

109. (a)—There are no mountainous areas in Kamrup and Darrang. It has been found in the past that the immigrants prefer land close to the Brahmaputra river most of which was not occupied by the local people, and a good deal of which was reserved for professional graziers. It is the policy of Government to afford protection to the tribal people who for the most part occupy the areas further north (which have been termed sub-montane) and to avoid throwing open large areas in these sub-montane tracts for colonization by immigrants, who also are less inclined to go there.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Hitherto immigrants have not been admitted to settlement in the Sibsagar district and the Dibrugarh subdivision of Lakhimpur, and it is Government policy to encourage extension of cultivation in those districts rather by indigenous than by immigrant cultivators.

110.—The following three officers belonging to the Muslim community have been appointed up-to-date as Colonization Officers in the districts noted against each :—

1. Maulavi Md. Ali—Kamrup.
2. Maulavi Talmizur Rahman—Darrang.
3. Maulavi Md. Abdul Latif—Nowgong.

Local Board Teachers

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN asked :

111. Will Government be pleased to state what steps have been taken by the Local Bodies in Assam to maintain their poorly paid teachers during the present abnormal rise in the price of food-stuffs and other necessaries of life ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

111.—Some Boards have granted advance of pay and many, dearness allowance of 40 per cent. of the cost being met from Boards' income, 60 per cent. being supplemented by Government, while some have also postponed recoveries of advances from Provident Fund deposits.

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN: Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Local Self-Government see that all the Local Boards' school Teachers are given maintenance allowance ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: It is a matter for the Local Boards to deal with and they are, I think, taking proper steps.

Supply of country spirit and ganja

Srijut RAM NATH DAS asked :

112. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether there has been a regular supply of country spirit and Ganja in the Province during the present financial year ?
- (b) If not, why ?
- (c) The amount of loss sustained on each account by the Government ?
- (d) Whether Government have taken steps to ensure the requisite supply every year ?
- (e) The quantity of each of the aforesaid articles consumed from April 1942 to October 1942 and the quantity received during the same period of 1943 ?
- (f) Whether Government propose to cancel the license of the present supplier ?
- (g) Whether it is a fact that the present contractor has been given a further license to bottle up and deal in India-made foreign liquor ?
- (h) Whether Government are aware that country spirit can be manufactured by the Assam Distilleries at Madarkhat ?
- (i) The amount of revenue received from the Madarkhat Distillery on account of the permission given to it for the manufacture and supply of India-made foreign liquor, up to the end of October 1943 ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

112. (a)&(b)—The supply has not been regular due to transport difficulties and various restrictions imposed by several Governments for export of raw materials, country spirit and ganja.

(c)—The loss in revenue in six months from 1st April 1943 to 30th September 1943 as compared with revenue derived in the corresponding period of the last year is Rs. 65,990. There has not been any loss of revenue from ganja.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—Country spirit consumed from 1st April 1942 to 31st October 1942—105,499 L. P. G. Country spirit received from 1st April 1943 to 31st October 1943—63,841 L. P. G. Ganja consumed for seven months from 1st April 1942 to 31st October 1942—184 maunds 27 seers. Information about ganja received from 1st April 1943 to 31st October 1943 is not available in the office of the Excise Commissioner. The Deputy Commissioners have been asked to supply the information.

(f)—There is no ground for cancellation of the license of the present liquor contractor. In the case of ganja, the question does not arise, as no license is issued by Assam Government.

(g)—No.

(h)—Country spirit could be manufactured if raw materials were available.

(i)—Figures are not available in the office of the Excise Commissioner. Information has been called for from the Deputy Commissioner, Lakhimpur.

Bhowanipur High English School

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

113.(a) Is it a fact that the Bhowanipur High English School has been amalgamated with the aided Middle English School of that locality ?

(b) Is it a fact that a sum of Rs.15 is being contributed by Government as a grant-in-aid for that School for the last seven years ?

(c) Do Government propose to increase the grant-in-aid of the Bhowanipur High English School up to Rs.100 per month ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

113.(a)—Yes.

(b)—No. The amalgamation of the Bhabanipur Middle English School with the Bhabanipur Venture High School took effect from 1st June 1942, and the grant of Rs.15 per mensem to the Middle English School was transferred to the High School with effect from the same date.

(c)—An additional monthly maintenance grant of Rs.5 and a non-recurring grant of Rs.50 have been given to the school this year. The question of giving a further increased grant to the school may be considered during the next financial year if progress of the school justify and funds permit.

Managing Committee of the Maulvibazar Government High School

Maulavi ABDUL AZIZ asked :

114. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The number of Hindu and Muslim members of the Managing Committee of the Maulvibazar Government High School ?

(b) Whether Government propose to increase the number of Muslim members of the Managing Committee of the said Board ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

114.(a)—Six Hindus and two Muslims excluding the Inspector and the Assistant Inspector of Schools, who are *ex-officio* members.

(b)—No.

Maulavi ABDUL AZIZ: Sir, as regards question No. 114(b), we find that the reply given by Government is 'No'. May I know the reasons for the answer being in the negative ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: The matter will be considered, Sir.

Malaria epidemic in Habiganj Subdivision

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

115. (a) Are Government aware that many people died of malaria epidemic in the Habiganj subdivision recently ?

(b) Are Government aware that the areas under the Baniyachong and Lakhai Thanas were badly affected by the epidemic ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the number of people (i) attacked with malaria, (ii) who were given medical aid by the Public Health Department and (iii) who died of that disease from July 1942 to September 1943 in areas under each of the Thanas of Lakhai, Baniyachong, Chunarighat, Habiganj and Nabiganj in the subdivision of Habiganj ?

(d) Is it a fact that in Baniyachong village people are dying like cats and dogs for the last few months ?

(e) Is it a fact that owing to starvation medicine has failed to bring an effective result ?

(f) Will Government be pleased to state whether the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Public Health visited the effected areas ?

(g) Will Government be pleased to state whether any of the Hon'ble Ministers visited Baniyachong to study the situation arising out of the malaria epidemic ?

(h) Is it a fact that some of the Hon'ble Ministers including the Public Health Minister recently went to Ajmiriganj to attend a Boat race ?

(i) What steps Government have taken to prevent the outbreak of the disease in the Subdivision in future ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

115. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Information is being collected.

(d)—It is reported that about 1,700 Malaria patients died there from the 1st April to the 31st October, 1943.

(e)—Assistant Director of Public Health remarks that mal-nutrition has considerably reduced the power of the resistance to disease of some of the patients.

(f)—No.

(g)—No Hon'ble Ministers visited Baniyachong for the purpose.

(h)—Two Hon'ble Ministers attended the River Rally of the National War Front, with its Leader at Ajmiriganj.

(i)—Adequate measures were taken and will be taken as recommended by Government expert staff.

Imposition of Grazing Tax in Jowai Town

Rev. L. GATPHOH asked :

116. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether a hillman owning cattle in his district or village is liable to pay Grazing Tax ?

(b) Are Government aware that Grazing Tax has been levied from one person only in Jowai Town ?

(c) Do Government propose to enforce Grazing Tax in the Town of Jowai gradually ?

(d) If not, why the Grazing Tax has been imposed on one person only in the Town of Jowai ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

116. (a)—Yes, if he grazes his cattle in the non-exempted Unclassed State Forests and deals in dairy produce on a business scale.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Rules already provide for the levy of tax in appropriate cases.

(d)—Does not arise.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : Is it a fact that the residents of any municipal town keeping cattle are not required to pay cattle tax ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : Yes Sir, that is so. The reply to question No. 116(a) has made it quite clear. The reply is 'Yes, if he grazes his cattle in the non-exempted Unclassed State Forests and deals in dairy produce on a business scale.' Of course, with this exception the tax is not levied.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : Are there no rules or regulations for the realisation of cattle tax in town or Municipal areas ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : Yes, the tax is realised only in case the residents use grazing areas and deals in dairy produce on a business scale.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : Are Government aware that there is no imposition of cattle tax in Tura and Haslong ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : That is not within our purview.

Officers and men of A. R. P. Services

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI asked :

117. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether there have been cases of officers and men of the A. R. P. Services in Assam being employed for duties other than A. R. P. duties ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state the nature of such work and the period for which they were employed in each case ?

The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI replied :

117. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The services of the A. R. P. are utilized in any case of catastrophe or other incident in which in the opinion of the Controller or the A. R. P. Officer, their work will be useful and can be carried out without detriment to their readiness for air raid duty.

Government are aware of the following instances : in addition, it is known that assistance has frequently been rendered in minor matters such as motor car accidents.

(i) The Tinsukia Casualty Service rendered assistance at a serious accident on the 27th January 1943 on the Bengal and Assam Railway.

(ii) On the 22nd April 1943, the Silchar A. R. P. were instrumental with the assistance of the Fire Brigade in controlling and extinguishing a serious fire which broke out in Silchar Bazar.

(iii) On the night of 23rd October 1943, all Jorhat A. R. P. Services including Wardens, Casualty and Rescue, gave assistance in rescuing and attending to casualties in the Earthquake which occurred at that time.

The A. R. P. Services have been and are engaged in enumeration duties in connection with the Government Food Rationing Scheme. In addition, A. R. P. transport is utilized for carrying supplies for the Supply Department and assists the Publicity Department.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Sir, the reply at 117(b) (iii) is that : "The A. R. P. Services have been and are engaged in enumeration duties in connection with the Government Food Rationing Scheme. In addition, A. R. P. transport is utilized for carrying supplies for the Supply Department and assists the Publicity Department." I cannot follow the reply, so will the Hon'ble Minister make it more explicit ?

The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI : When the Publicity Department requires help in giving publicity of a certain matter the A. R. P. Service occasionally helps them.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Is A. R. P. Department in-charge of the rationing scheme, Sir ?

The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI : They are only doing the enumeration duties.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : What about the carrying of supplies, Sir ?

The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI : Yes, the A. R. P. Transport is sometimes utilised for carrying supplies to the Supply Department.

Opening of Out-patient Dispensary in Raliang Illaka

Rev. L. GAT+HOH asked :

118. (a) Are Government aware that the people of Raliang in the Subdivision of Jowai have recently offered to build necessary houses, with whatever sum Government may sanction for opening an out-patient Dispensary in Raliang Illaka ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the earliest possible date when the Dispensary is proposed to be opened ?

(c) Is it a fact that recently the people from Jowai have again represented to Government the urgent need for opening an out-patient Dispensary at Jowai ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

118. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The matter is still under the consideration of the Government.

(c)—Yes.

Deputy Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Schools in the Assam Valley Division

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

119. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The total number of Deputy Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors of Schools in the Assam Valley Division ?

(b) How many of them are from the Kamrup district ?

(c) How many of them are from the Barpeta subdivision.

(d) Whether at the time of filling up appointments of Sub-Inspectors of Schools Government consider the question of subdivisional representation ?

(e) If so whether any person from Barpeta subdivision has been appointed as Sub-Inspector of Schools during the period of the last 25 years ?

(f) If not, whether Government propose to consider the case of candidates from Barpeta subdivision when vacancies occur in future ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

119. (a)—Thirteen Deputy Inspectors and 32 Sub-Inspectors.

(b)—Five Deputy Inspectors and 10 Sub-Inspectors.

(c)—Two Deputy Inspectors but no Sub-Inspectors.

(d)—No.

(e)—Does not arise.

(f)—Does not arise.

Grow More Food Campaign method and agencies

Babu LALIT MOHAN KAR asked :

120. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The method in which and the agencies by which the "Grow-More-Food Campaign" is being carried on ?

(b) How far the campaign has been successful ?

(c) What arrangements have been made by Government for (i) supply of better seeds to the cultivators, (ii) introducing better method of cultivation (iii) improving the fertility of the soil ?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DATTA replied :

120. (a)—The campaign is carried on by adopting the method of supplying seeds to the cultivators at concession rates, rice irrigation and propaganda, under the guidance and supervision of the Agricultural staff.

(b)—It is too early to say at this stage now.

(c)—(i) Seeds from both inside and outside the province have been distributed to the cultivators at concession rates after certified by the departmental officers.

(ii) For better method of cultivation a provision has been made for 220 minor irrigation projects on condition of paying half the cost by Government. Larger engineering projects of drainage and irrigation, etc., will be done by the Public Works Department.

(iii) Bone meal and oil cake are being distributed at concession prices for improving fertility of the soil.

Grow-More-Food Campaign Scheme

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

121. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Government has been approached for taking up the following works in this year for facilitating the grow more food scheme of Government—

- (i) To construct a Bund with sluice gate in Kolkolia near Bolunpur under Police Station Derai to grow more Buro crops in Kaliguta Haor ?
 - (ii) To strengthen the Rutla Bund and to construct a sluice gate on Krishna Khal near Ulukani under Police Station Sachna to grow more Buro crops in the Halir Haor ?
 - (iii) To dig canals near Bhimkhali Bazar and Kalakatha under Police Stations Sachna and Sunamganj for enabling the villagers of Sakhaity, Kasobpur, Mohunpur, Dhanpur, Sardarpur etc., for growing more Buro crops ?
 - (iv) To construct the Abua Bund near Fatepur to enable the villagers of Beheli, Mashalghat, Radhanagar, Chadipur, Morala, Gopinather, Noagao, Padup, Mamudpur and many other villages to grow more Buro crops in Sanirhaor and other haors under Police Stations Tahirpur and Sachna ?
 - (v) To construct the Basar Bund with a sluice gate, one mile North West of Khagaura to enable the villagers of Khagaura, Binajura, Lalpur, Kamergaon, Bhatipura, Alinagar, Daulatpur, etc., under Police Station Derai to grow more Buro crops ?
 - (vi) To construct a Bund and a Khal in Chagaia Haor to enable the villagers of Ramjibpur, Sojonpur, Samipur, Khagaura, Bhatipara, Alinagar, etc., under Police Station Derai to grow more Buro crops.
 - (vii) To construct a small Bund in Gul Dubir Haor east of Ramjibpur to enable the villagers of Ramjibpur to grow more Buro crops ?
 - (viii) To construct two Bunds in Kharchar Haor under Police Station Sunamganj to enable the villagers of Harinagar, Amritsri, Borghat, Jagannathpur, Noagao, Tahirpur, Niamatpur, Safela, Kaua, Kalaya, Bishambarpur, Pyarinagar, Dhurerpur, and other villages around Kharcha Haor to grow more Buro crops ?
 - (ix) To supply water pumps in Luvar Haor to enable the villages around that Haor to grow more Buro crops ?
- (b) Whether any of the aforesaid works have been taken up by Government in this year ?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DATTA replied :

121. (a)—Yes.

(i) & (iii) to (ix)—These schemes are not likely to be taken up this year because sufficient engineering staff to supervise the works in addition to sixteen schemes already in hand (seven in Assam Valley and nine in Surma Valley) is not possible.

(ii)—Tenders for the Krishna Khal work have already been called for by the Executive Engineer, Embankment and Drainage Division, Shillong and it is expected that the work may be completed by January 1944.

(b)—Yes.

Grow-More-Food Campaign in Sylhet

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

122. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The total area (in acres) brought under cultivation in the district of Sylhet since the Grow More Food Campaign was started by Government ? (Figures to be shown Subdivision by Subdivision.)
- (b) The total area of Ilam lands thrown open by Government for cultivation to make the above campaign a success ?
- (c) Whether it is a fact that the vast area of cultivable land in the Subdivision of Habiganj are lying waste in the Government Forest area ?
- (d) If so, whether Government propose to throw open those lands for cultivation ?
- (e) The number of applications received recently by Government from the people of Habiganj Subdivision for settlement of Government forest reserve waste lands for the purpose of cultivation ?
- (f) If so, what orders have been passed on their applications ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

122. (a) & (b)—The information has been called for.

(c)—Forest reserves cannot be properly said to lie waste.

(d)—There is no proposal for dereservation of forest in the Habiganj Subdivision at present pending. A representation regarding the Raghunandan Hills has recently been sent to the Conservator for examination.

(e)—No record is available of applications for settlement in forest reserves. Such applications are sent to the local officers for disposal, since no settlement can be made in a reserve.

(f)—Does not arise.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Are Government aware that within the Forest Reserve area there are vast areas lying waste where there are no forest produce which Government can easily turn into cultivable land ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : The area which the hon. Member has in mind is also Forest area, Sir.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Will the Hon'ble Minister tell me, Sir, which area is in my mind ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI : The hon. Member appears to have separated some areas from the Forest area but those areas which the hon. Member has in mind are also forest areas.

Devastation of village Dolibari in Kamrup by fire

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI asked :

123. (a) Is it a fact that the entire village of Dolibari under Hajo Thana in the district of Kamrup was burnt to ashes in October 1942 ?

(b) Is it a fact that the only relief granted to the inhabitants of the said village by Government was by way of remission of land revenue and a loan of potatoes worth Rs.500 ?

(c) Is it a fact that most of the potatoes thus lent were useless and yielded no crop ?

(d) Is it a fact that potatoes lent to the adjoining villages of Rowmari under Hajo Thana met with the same result ?

(e) Is it a fact that the loan to Rowmari village has been remitted and loan to Dolibari village is going to be realised soon ?

(f) Is it a fact that there was no calamity in Rowmari village ?

(g) Do Government propose to remit the loan granted to Dolibari village ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

123. (a)—Houses of 89 villagers were totally burnt.

(b)—In addition to the remission of land revenue and the distribution of potato seeds worth Rs.3,500 on loan, the Divisional Forest Officer was also asked to help the people with sal posts, thatch and ekra as far as possible.

(c) to (f)—Government have no information but have called for it from the local officers: no complaints about the potatoes have been received by Government.

(g)—Under rule 17 at page 8 of the Loan Manual local officers have powers to sanction remission of loans upto Rs.1,000 in the case of anyone loan where the recovery in full would occasion serious hardship. Application should therefore be made to local officers if there is a case for remission.

Ferry Service between Silghat and Tezpur

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI asked :

124. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) What is the present position of the Ferry Service between Silghat and Tezpur ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to refer to the replies given by the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge in reply to unstarred question No 34 asked by Srijut Kamala Prosad Agarwalla, M.L.C., and its supplementaries during the June-July Session of the Assam Legislative Council, 1943 and state how the matter stands now ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

124. (a) & (b)—Government in the Public Works Department are taking steps to sell the ferry under the Public Works Department for 15 years with effect from 1st April 1944. Tenders have already been invited.

Silchar Municipal Board's affairs

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV asked :

125. (a) Is it a fact that Mr. Rabindra Kanta Sen, an elected member of the Silchar Municipal Board since resigned has recently brought a damage suit against the Municipal Board of Silchar and against Rai Bahadur Rukmini Kumar Das, its Chairman, for launching a false and malicious criminal case against him ?

(b) Is it a fact that in the said damage suit Mr. J. S. Gupta, Sub-Judge of Cachar has awarded a decree for Rs. 310 as also for proportionate costs against Rai Bahadur Rukmini Kumar Das in his personal capacity ?

(c) Do Government propose to take any steps against the said Chairman, Silchar Municipal Board ?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state the amounts spent from the rate-payers' funds (i) in the criminal case brought by the Silchar Municipal Board against Mr. Rabindra Kanta Sen and (ii) for contesting the damage suit brought against the Board and its Chairman by Mr. Rabindra Kanta Sen ?

(e) Do Government propose to realise the whole amount of costs in the two cases from Rai Bahadur Rukmini Kumar Das, Chairman, Silchar Municipal Board ?

126. (a) Is it a fact that three declaratory suits were recently filed by some rate-payers of the Silchar Municipality against the general assessment of the Silchar Municipal Board ?

(b) Is it a fact that the Sadar Munsif, Silchar, decreed in favour of the plaintiffs in those declaratory suits ?

(c) Do Government propose to set aside the whole assessment of the Silchar Municipal Board and order for a fresh one ?

(d) Is it a fact that Rai Bahadur Rukmini Kumar Das, Chairman, Silchar Municipal Board has got his own-taxes reduced by about 25 per cent. ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY replied :

125. (a)—There was a charge of theft against Babu Rabindra Kanta Sen for removal of a drop gate—Municipal property and though removal was admitted, the charge of theft failed as from the evidence and circumstances the court was led to the finding that although Chairman's formal order in writing was not there the accused must have acted on his tacit consent and in the matter of removal and use of the drop gate the intention and conduct of the accused did not disclose any element of theft. Thereafter Rabindra Kanta Sen brought a suit for damage for malicious prosecution against the Board and the Chairman.

(b)—The suit was decreed jointly against the Board and the Chairman for Rs.310 with proportionate cost. The matter is now pending in appeal.

(c)—No.

(d)—(i) Rupees 86-7-0, (ii) Rs. 75 advanced to pleader to meet costs.

(e)—No.

126. (a)—No suit was filed against general assessment of the Board ; but three individual rate-payers filed three suits against assessment of their own holdings.

(b)—Yes, the matter is now pending in appeal

(c)—No cause has arisen for such a step.

(d)—No.

Purchase and sale of Quinine by Government

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

127. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The quantity of quinine in terms of lbs. purchased by Government both for free distribution and sale this year ?

(b) The quota of quinine allotted both for sale and for free distribution in charitable dispensaries separately, for the Barpeta subdivision this year ?

(c) To whom the quota of quinine has been supplied for distribution by sale in the Barpeta subdivision this year ?

(d) Whether any rules have been framed for distributing the quota of quinine in the subdivisions of the Province ?

(e) If so, what are they ?

(f) Whether any rules or regulations have been framed for selecting a wholesale dealer of quinine in the subdivisions of the Province ?

(g) If so, what are they ?

(h) Whether any instructions have been issued by Government to the wholesale dealers of quinine in the matter of distributing quinine by sale in the subdivisions of the Province ?

- (i) If so, what are they ?
 (j) At what rate per lb. Government supply quinine to the whole-sale dealers and at what rate per oz. the latter is to sell quinine to the public ?
 (k) On what considerations dealers are selected to stock quinine for distribution by sale to the public ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

127. (a)—A total quantity of 3,837 lbs. of quinine sulph., 1,000 lbs. of Cinchona Febrifuge and 800,000 tablets of Mepacrine (equivalent to 800 lbs. of quinine in efficacy) have been purchased this year for use in dispensaries and for sale. Quinine is distributed free during epidemic.

(b)—Quota of quinine for sale in each subdivision has not yet been fixed. The Civil Surgeons of the districts have been asked to report the requirements in consultation with the Deputy Commissioner and their replies are awaited. About 30 lbs. of quinine and 52 lbs. of Cinchona have since been supplied for dispensaries in the Barpeta subdivision and more will be sent shortly.

(c)—Doss Pharmacy, Barpeta.

(d) & (e)—No such rules have yet been framed. But none but registered medical practitioners are allowed to buy quinine from the agents appointed for sale of Government quinine and quinine is supplied to the general public on a doctor's prescription.

(f)—The reply is in the negative. On the recommendation of the Civil Surgeons of the districts honest and reliable chemists and druggists have been appointed as agents for sale of Government quinine.

(g)—Does not arise.

(h) & (i)—The following instructions have been issued for the guidance of the agents :—

(1) The maximum quantity of quinine which should ordinarily be issued to an individual buyer should not exceed 100 grs. which is the normal amount required for one treatment on a doctor's prescription. Exception should however be made in case of Private Medical Practitioners and Chemists and Druggists. But strict economy should be exercised in the issue of this drug owing to its acute shortage.

(2) Quinine should not be sold to Tea Gardens as the Member Gardens of the A. V. B. I. T. A. & S. V. B. I. T. A. will get their supply from the Political Secretary, Planting and Commerce Group, Assam Legislature, Shillong and the non-member gardens will be supplied direct from the Public Health Laboratory, Shillong. Chemists and Druggists should get their requirements of the drug from the agents appointed for the sale of quinine.

(3) Calculating the rate per lb. of quinine fixed by Government from time to time, quinine should be sold per oz. and dr.

(4) The stock books, etc., will not be supplied by Government. These should be purchased by the Agents themselves at their own cost. Two stock registers should be maintained—one for sale of quinine showing the name, address and signature of every buyer and another stock register showing receipts and issues of the drug. The registers should be made available for inspection by the Officers of the Medical and Public Health Departments. The Private Medical Practitioners should also maintain such registers.

(5) The agents should sell quinine to the public of respective subdivision and a rough estimate for each month's requirement should be made and indented for as it is not possible to furnish an accurate estimate which may vary according to the incidence of malaria.

The agents should not refuse to sell the drug unless they have no stock or the quantity asked for is in excess of genuine needs. They should present every month or whenever they apply for recouplement of quinine, a correct and true date-war abstract of sales as taken from the register of sales and state what stock they have in hand, false declaration is punishable.

(j)—Quinine is now supplied to the agents at Rs.42 per lb. and the agents sell the drug to the public at Rs.45 per lb., i.e., at Rs.2-13-0 per oz.

(k)—Reliable and honest Chemists and Druggists are appointed as agents on the recommendation of the Civil Surgeons.

Persons arrested, detained and convicted under the Defence of India Rules

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA asked:

128. Will Government be pleased to state district by district—
- The number of persons arrested in connection with political activities since August 1942 ?
 - The number of persons convicted in connection with political activities since August 1942 ?
 - The number of persons detained till now under the Defence of India Rules ?
 - The number of persons detained till now under the Defence of India Rules after the expiry of their terms of imprisonment ?
129. Will Government be pleased to state who are the authorities that are responsible for ordering the detention of persons under the Defence of India Rules ?
130. Will Government be pleased to state—
- Whether the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Home Department has scrutinised the materials against all the persons detained under the Defence of India Act or Rules ?
 - Whether any opportunity is given to the persons so detained for going through the materials and refuting the charges made against them ?
 - Whether the Hon'ble Minister in charge is consulted prior to making such detention ?
 - If so, whether he has agreed to the recommendation of officials in all cases of such detention ?
 - If not, whether he has advised release of any person or persons so detained ?
 - Whether his such advice has been acted upon ?
 - If not, why not ?
131. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The number of persons detained under the Defence of India Rules in the district of Nowgong since August 1942 ?
 - The names of persons who have been so detained and granted allowances and the amount of such allowance granted to each of them ?
 - The names of persons for whom no allowance has been granted and the reasons thereof ?
 - The procedure adopted and followed for sanctioning of allowances ?
132. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The names of persons interned in or externed from the district of Nowgong in connection with the last political activities ?
 - Whether any allowance has been granted to such persons ?
 - If not, why not ?
133. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The number of occasions in which the Military or police had to resort to firing since August 1942 up to August 1943 (figures to be shown district by district) ?
 - The names of persons killed and injured if any, thereby ?
 - Whether any enquiry is held in such cases of firing ?
 - If so, by whom such enquiries are held ?
 - Whether any witness or witnesses were examined in such cases ?
 - In how many such cases Judicial enquiries were held ?
 - The findings and results of all enquiries in such cases ?
 - Whether any compensation has been granted to any of the persons injured or members of the family of the deceased ?

134. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Srijuts Haladhar Bhuyan and Purna Chandra Sarma, Members of Legislative Assembly were convicted by a Special Magistrate?
 (b) Whether their convictions were set aside and re-trials were ordered?
 (c) Whether they were re-arrested for re-trial?
 (d) Whether they have been detained under the Defence of India Rules for an indefinite period since their convictions were set aside?
 (e) Whether they will be tried afresh?
 (f) If not, why not?

135. Will Government be pleased to state district by district—

- (a) The amounts of collective fines imposed since August 1943?
 (b) The amounts realised so far?
 (c) The agencies through which the fines were realised?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

128.(a) to (c)—The figures up to the end of September are shown in the annexed statement—

	Arrests	Convictions	Detentions
Nowgong	576	484	65
Lakhimpur	311	246	19
Darrang	430	142	8
Kamrup	955	114	43
Goalpara	7	6	...
Sibsagar	347	287	236
Cachar	11	11	3
Sylhet	508	329	31
	3,145	1,619	405

(d)—The figure required is not readily available.

129.—The authorities empowered, so far as Provincial are concerned, are the Provincial Government and the District Magistrates.

130.(a)—Yes.

(b)—No.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—No.

(e)—Yes.

(f)—Yes.

(g)—Does not arise.

131.(a)—Sixty-five.

(b) & (c)—Government are not prepared to disclose names. Applications were received in respect of 33 persons. In 14 cases allowances have been given for maintenance of families and personal expenditure and 4 personal allowances only. In all cases where the prisoner has no means of procuring his personal needs a sum of Rs.5 per month may be expended for meeting those needs. Allowances for maintenance of families were refused in 17 cases and two cases are pending for report.

(d)—All applications are referred for report to the Deputy Commissioner of the applicant's home district and if necessary to other Deputy Commissioners, and Government make their decision on the whole facts as related in the applicant's petition and the reports.

132.(a)—Government regret they are not prepared to disclose names of persons who are subject to restrictive orders. Altogether 31 persons have been subjected to such orders by the District Magistrate. One has been externed from the district at his own suggestion.

(b)—No.

(c)—No application appears to have been received from such persons.

133. (a)—The police were compelled to open fire—
 in Darrang district, twice ;
 in Kamrup district, twice ;
 in Nowgong district, once, and
 in Goalpara district, once.

Government are not in a position to give particulars about military forces, which serve under the Central Government.

(b)—Government are not prepared to give names ; the number involved in the instances mentioned in reply to question 6(a) was :—

in Darrang 12 killed, 26 injured (including 12 police officers) ; in Kamrup 2 killed, 6 injured ; in Nowgong none killed, none injured ; and in Goalpara 1 injured.

(c) to (g)—In one case a judicial enquiry was held by two magistrates jointly at which evidence was taken ; in other cases departmental enquiry was made. In all cases Government were satisfied that the firing was justified by the circumstances. The finding of the judicial enquiry was that the police party was repeatedly attacked and was compelled to open fire in self-protection.

(h)—No. So far as Government are aware no application for compensation has been made.

134. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—They were re-arrested and detained under orders of the Provincial Government.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—No.

(f)—Government are not prepared to discuss the reasons for their orders, except that they are satisfied that the persons named cannot in present circumstances be set at liberty without prejudice to law and order, and that no useful purpose would be served by re-trial after a substantial part of the sentence inflicted by the original court had been undergone.

135. (a) & (b)—The following are the figures up to the end of September :—

District	Imposed		Realised		
	Rs.		Rs.	a.	p.
Sylhet	2,000	...	1,899	0	0
Lakhimpur	10,000	...	9,713	2	0
Sibsagar	1,43,200	...	78,970	0	0
Nowgong	87,500	...	59,916	0	0
Darrang	82,200	...	68,678	2	0
Kamrup	70,587	...	25,045	15	9
Goalpara	15,000	...	5,356	12	0

(c)—In some cases the amounts have been collected by the people of the areas concerned ; in others the agency of the police was employed.

Re His Holiness the Adhikar Goswami of Garamur

Srijut RAM NATH DAS asked :

136. (a) Are Government aware of the strong feeling of public resentment for the continued incarceration of His Holiness the Adhikar Goswami of Garamur and the Deka Goswami of the said "Satra"?

(b) Are Government aware that the absence of the Adhikar Goswami has vitiated the performance of the daily puja of the Idol "Gopal Dev"?

(c) Are Government aware that thousands of Hindu disciples of Garamuria Satra have remained un-initiated due to His Holiness's absence?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state whether they have received a

representation from His Holiness the Adhikar Goswami of Dakhinpat for the release of the Adhikar Goswami of Garamur ?

(e) If so, what steps have the Government taken on that representation ?

(f) Is it a fact that the Adhikar Goswami of Garamur has not been granted any interview with his officers as yet ?

(g) Are Government aware that the said Goswami is a celibate and that he has no members of his family ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

136. (a)—Government have had no indications that feeling is strong on the subject. They are aware that the conviction of the Goswami is regretted, but that there is also a considerable volume of opinion which regrets that the head of a religious community should have occupied himself with activities leading thereto.

(b) & (c)—Government have no information.

(d)—Yes, such a representation was received by His Excellency the Governor.

(e)—Government issued instructions that if the Goswami furnishes an undertaking to avoid any political propagandist activity without the approval of the Deputy Commissioner the suspension of the sentence might be considered.

(f)—Government have no information, but they are not prepared in the case of convictions in connection with the Civil disobedience movement, to allow interviews except with members of the convicted person's family or under special orders, or with his accredited lawyer.

(g)—Government are aware that the Goswami is a celibate. They have no particulars about his relations.

Staff in connection with Mass Literacy Campaign

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

137. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Assistant Mass Literacy Officer of the Lower Assam Division has recently resigned his post ?

(b) If so, what is the reason for his resignation ?

(c) Whether it is a fact that the said Officer was not allowed to join his duties during the month of August last ?

(d) If so, what were the reasons therefor ?

138. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The number of Mass Literacy Schools functioning at present in the Assam Valley Division ?

(b) Whether they are functioning well ?

(c) If not, why ?

139. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The reasons for the creation of the post of the Mass Literacy Officer ?

(b) The difference of status, if any, between a Mass Literacy Officer and a Deputy Inspector of Schools ?

(c) How the order of the Mass Literacy Officer is communicated to the Mass Literacy Schools in the subdivision ?

140. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The number of Mass Literacy Schools visited by the Mass Literacy Officer in the Gauhati and Barpeta subdivisions during the year ending 31st March 1943 ?

(b) Where are they located ?

(c) The strength of students of each school ?

141. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they consider the results commensurate of the Mass Literacy Campaign with the expenditure of Rs. 2,15,000 that has been incurred ?

(b) If not, do Government propose to devise its improvement ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

137. (a)—Yes.
 (b) to (d)—He was absent from duty without permission and pending enquiry he was not allowed to join. But before formal enquiry was taken up, he tendered resignation which was accepted.
138. (a)—Up to date figures are not available the figures for the term ending 31st August 1943 show that 48 female and 439 male schools were functioning in the Assam Valley.
 (b)—The results show that these were functioning well.
 (c)—Does not arise.
139. (a)—For efficient organisation and supervision of the Mass Literacy Campaign.
 (b)—There is no difference in the status of the officer excepting that the Mass Literacy Officer's jurisdiction covers the whole province while that of the Deputy Inspector's jurisdiction is limited to a district.
 (c)—Through the Deputy Inspectors of Schools.
140. (a), (b) & (c)—Informations have been called for and will be communicated to the hon. Member in due course.
141. (a)—Yes.
 (b)—Does not arise.

Scheme for the Grow-More-Food Campaign at Jowai

Rev. L. GATPHOH asked :

142. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) What steps were taken by the Subdivisional Officer of Jowai to notify to *bona fide* cultivators in that Subdivision of the Government offer to help them financially to grow more food ?
- (b) The total number of applications received either by Government or by the Subdivisional Officer, Jowai for grants out of Rs.10,000 to enable cultivators to bring more land under cultivation in the Subdivision of Jowai ?
- (c) The last date fixed for submitting such applications?
- (d) The date or dates on which the Recorders started their works of inspection for report ?
- (e) The number of applications recommended ?
- (f) The number of applications rejected ?
- (g) The number of Government servants or semi-Government servants recommended for grant ?
- (h) The tests according to which recommendations were made ?
- (i) Whether the Subdivisional Officer of Jowai had any other facts to rely upon, besides the reports submitted by the Recorders, before decision was made ?
- (j) Whether the grants will be given on the completion of work undertaken or before ?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DATTA replied :

142. (a)—It is understood that the Subdivisional Officer collected requirements for irrigation projects (for which a grant of Rs.10,000 was provided to the Subdivisional Officer) and for Bone Meal (for which a provision of 2,300 mds. has been made) through the Dolois, etc.
 (b) to (i)—The information has been called for.
 (j)—The principle is that grants will be paid on completion of work, divided into portions.

Statement re: vacation of the seat of Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan on account of absence for 60 consecutive days

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. I am to announce to the House that no Motion under Regulation 2(a) of Appendix E to the Assam Legislative Assembly Rules to declare the seat of hon. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan, Member, representing the South Sylhet (East) Muhammadan Constituency, vacant has been received from any hon. Member for consideration to-day.

Under Regulation 2(d) of Appendix E to the said rules, I, therefore, take it to be the decision of the Assembly that the hon. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan's seat in this Assembly shall not be declared vacant (*Loud applause*) for the reason that he remained absent without permission, from all meetings of the Assembly for a period of more than 60 consecutive days, computed in the manner provided in sub-section (4) of section 68 of the Government of India Act, 1935, within the period from 17th March 1941 till the 25th of March 1943.

I see that the hon. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan is present in his seat. He is hereby accordingly informed of the decision of the House that he is to continue to be a Member of this Hon'ble House.

Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I have your permission to say a few words in this connection? Sir, I am really sorry, I had to remain absent, from some of the sessions of this Assembly in the past. I can assure the hon. Members that it was not intentional, but unavoidable. However, Sir, I am really glad to find to-day that the hon. Members, though they had the right of declaring my seat vacant, have not done so. I am really very grateful to them and thank them for their kind decision (*Applause*).

Re Supply of Assembly Proceedings to M. L.As. in Jail

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I enquire, Sir, about the promise which the Hon'ble Judicial Minister made the other day that he would enquire and inform us about the supply of the Assembly proceedings to some of the hon. Members of this House who are now in Sylhet Jail? May we know, Sir, the result of his enquiry?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on that very day I sent an intimation to the Chief Secretary for making enquiry; but I have been informed by the office that it will not be possible now to have any detailed information. Anyhow, Sir, I will again look into the matter and take proper steps.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: From the reply that I have heard just now. I think, Sir, that Government is not quite sure whether these proceedings were supplied to the hon. Members whose names I have already mentioned. Sir, it is a question of privilege to the Members of this Hon'ble House. So, may I request you, Sir, to make an enquiry as I think that the privileges enjoyed by us according to the decision of the Privileges Committee which was accepted by this Hon'ble House has been breached and I hope that you would kindly make an enquiry into the matter or you may be pleased to form a committee to enquire into the matter, namely, whether there has been any breach of privilege.

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: I have already stated, Sir, that I will look into the matter.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister says that he is enquiring into the matter and has not yet been able to ascertain whether copies of the proceedings which are published as a part of the Gazette were sent to the hon. Members who are in detention. I quite see that if the copies of the proceedings were not supplied to the hon. Members who are in detention, there may arise a question of a breach of a privilege of the House; but before considering whether that is a breach of privilege or not it will have to be established that the omission, if there be any, on the part of Government in the matter of sending copies of the proceedings to the hon. Members was deliberate and intentional. Unless that is proved, it cannot be regarded as a breach of privilege. However, as I have been requested, I will look into the matter and take up the question with Government in order to ascertain what really were the circumstances under which the hon. Members in detention were not supplied with the proceedings of the Assembly.

The Assam Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land) Bill, 1943

Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAİN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land) Bill, 1943, as passed by the Assam Legislative Council, be passed.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Assam Hindu Women's Rights to Property (Extension to Agricultural Land) Bill, 1943, as passed by the Assam Legislative Council, be passed."

(After a pause)

Then I am putting it as a question before the House.

The question was put and adopted.

***Discussion RE: Food situation in the Province**

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Sir, the other day in a question put by my Friend, Mr. Aditya, regarding an economic holding of a person in Assam, the Hon'ble Revenue Minister replied that he was not aware of it. But he has proposed to allot 35 Bighas of land to an average family of landless people. It is indeed a staggering information given out by a Minister holding the portfolio of Revenue Department. Sir, my objections to this scheme are as follows—Government, I mean the Assam Government, is not under any obligation to provide the landless immigrants from Bengal with land. It is the primary duty of the Bengal Government to provide them with land. Sir, vast areas of cultivable waste lands are still available in the Jalpaiguri and the Arakan frontier and all the reserves and shooting grounds in Bengal can be laid open to them. It is the duty of the Assam Government to convince the Central Government that these lands in Assam are not sufficient even to meet the demand of the landless people of Assam, the indigenous people I mean.

There is no prospect of any gain whatsoever in adopting such a policy. The immigrants are without any resources. It is unlikely, Sir, that he will be of any help to the Grow More Food Campaign. His immediate concern is to feed himself and his

***MOTIONS**

1. Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY to move:—

"That this Assembly do proceed to consider the food situation of the Province".

2. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:—

"That this Assembly is of opinion that the extremely grave situation arising out of the acute shortage of foodstuffs and the abnormal prices thereof in the Province be taken into consideration".

3. Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN to move:—

"This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do constitute a special Committee of seven members consisting of officials and non-officials, with non-official majority to be nominated by the Government to draw up definite programme to deal with the economic and food problems of the Province and to regulate the supply policy".

Amendments to Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chnudhury's motion on the food situation of the Province to be discussed on 23rd November 1943.—

1 Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE to move:—

"Taking the food situation into consideration this Assembly is of opinion that in order to effectively tackle the present food situation and to improve the economic condition of the province the Government do take the following measures amongst others at once:—

(1) To open registers in villages immediately throughout the province with a view to record (a) the name of each cultivator, (b) the area of his land under paddy cultivation, (c) total quantity of

family. Moreover, Sir, I apprehend one thing. These immigrants are not without means ; they had lands which they have sold and have come to Assam on invitation to invade Assam and Government is helping them and if they are without resources, Sir, they cannot get land because they cannot hold it. They will sell it or cultivate it under the dependency of a "matobor" and these will create new Zemindars in Assam.

The immigrants are always an unwelcome neighbours to the graziers and a latent hostility exists between these two classes of people. It is undesirable that cultivation by immigrants should be allowed in the neighbourhood of grazing reserves.

Sir, another ground of my objection is this. The Unclassed State Forests which the Ministry is going to throw open to the landless people are capital assets, which the Province possesses in its Forest Estates. Already there has been a substantial reduction in its area as due to the encroachment and I think, Sir, that any attempt at further reduction should be strictly prohibited in the interests of indigenous population and their further expansion.

Another ground of my objection is this. Sir, with a good deal of insecurity of harvest due to complete dependence on nature, a man must have not only plenty of land for purpose of subsistence but also he should be able to stand the strain of lean years. An agriculturist's holding in Assam is much below the marginal limit and is fragmented out and scattered in tiny plots. It leaves no marginal profit and does not give enough for subsistence.

As Darling says, "Even in the richest part of England it is considered that 10 acres is the smallest holding in which a man can support his family without any other industry

crop when harvested, (d) number of members of dependents in the family of each cultivator below and above 12 years of age separately.

(2) To prevent export from the province before knowing the actual surplus, if any, and to allow inter-district export of foodgrains within the province.

(3) To pursue vigorous anti-hoarding drive.

(4) To prevent profiteering by all possible severest means.

(5) The Grow-More-Food Campaign be properly handled by an expert and qualified officer.

(6) To set up Regional Food Advisory Boards throughout the province to regulate the production, supply and price.

(7) To introduce ration cards throughout the province.

(8) To make adequate arrangements for supplies of all kinds of essential foodstuffs and other necessities of life".

2. Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAIN to move:—

"That after the word 'Province' at the end of the original Motion the following be added:—
'and that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government do take the following amongst other measures without delay:

(a) Introduction of rationing all over the Province including the rural areas; and

(b) Fixation of price of all essential foodstuffs including milk, meat, eggs and fish'".

3. Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV to move:

"That after the word 'Province' at the end of the original Motion the following be added:—
'and that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do refrain from making any purchases of rice or paddy on their own account'".

Amendment to Maulavi Abdur Rahman's motion regarding constitution of a Committee to draw up a programme to deal with the economic and food problem of the Province, to be discussed on 23rd November 1943.—

1. Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAIN to move:

"That for the original Motion the following be substituted:—

"That this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do set up a Standing Committee of seven members of the Assam Legislature, five to be elected from this House, one to be nominated by the Government from among the members of the Legislative Council and the Minister-in-charge of Supply to act as its Chairman, to advise the Government from time to time on problems and policy connected with civil supply of the Province'."

2. Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY to move:

"After the word 'Government' in the fourth line the following shall be added:—
'and to be taken from all parties of the Province'."

to help him" whereas an average economic holding in Assam does not exceed even 3 acres of land. Sir, in contemplating an economic holding of 35 Bighas for the immigrants without ascertaining the needs of the indigenous population is certainly a suicidal policy which will culminate in perpetuating a crisis.

Sir, I do not like to take any more time of the House by a lengthy speech and I shall presently conclude with a word of appeal to the Ministry.

The profitableness of agriculture or for the matter of that the present Grow More Food Campaign depends largely on the intensity of farming, use of technical inventions, marketing organisations and development of co-operation. The need of the hour is a national agricultural policy and planning, national in the true sense of the term, in which the Government and the people may work together in a spirit of amity and co-operation. Higher interest of national life should rise above the egoism of classes and groups. I would therefore request the Ministry not only to abandon the idea of growing more food by throwing open the reserves, but to concentrate on holding what we have and making the very best use of existing lands that are already under the plough. The Assamese cultivator is primarily a rice grower and for nearly six months he is idle. Any attempt that will help him to raise a double crop from his land is indeed worth experimenting.

Sir, my Friend, Srijut Lakshesvar Boroah, has sufficiently said in this matter. So I do not like to deal with this matter any more. Still I may tell Government that in Upper Assam nearly all cultivators take to one crop only. They may be encouraged to raise two crops, and this may help them in growing more food rather than throwing open reserves and other lands to the immigrants.

Sir, in a word or two I shall speak about the supply policy of Government. The supply policy of Government has created a feeling of distrust and helplessness in the minds of the public. It is a puzzling question to me when I think whether the Government exists for the people of Assam or for themselves, and whether this Government exists independently or is dependent on their agents who are managing the supply. I will refer to one instance only. Sir, in the month of August last when there was no Ata and flour in the Barpeta subdivision I approached the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup when he was at Barpeta on tour and I referred the matter to him saying that at Barpeta there was no Ata and flour. Sir, the Deputy Commissioner with the collaboration of the Subdivisional Officer, Barpeta, purchased one instalment of Ata from Messrs. Dada Hussain Kasim Khadem & Co., of Gauhati. They purchased the instalment of Ata and flour at a higher price than the controlled price and when it reached the station of Barpeta it was found that each bag of Ata and flour was less by 10 to 15 seers and the quantity of this Ata was so bad that it was not fit for human consumption. But this Ata was sold at 14 annas per seer and flour at 15 annas per seer when Ata should have been sold at 8 annas per seer and flour at 9 annas per seer. Sir, if the Deputy Commissioner and the Subdivisional Officer gave higher price in purchasing Ata and flour for the people and if they ordered to sell Ata and flour at more than the controlled price who is responsible for this? Will not the people distrust the Government policy. The people think that there is no rule now-a-days. Sir, I think no action was taken against Messrs. Dada Hussain Kasim & Co. If Steel Brothers & Co. purchase rice at higher price, and Messrs. Hussain Kasim & Co. sell Ata and flour at higher price than the controlled price to the Subdivisional Officer of Barpeta and the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup then what is the value of the various price control orders? Are these agents in a position to do whatever they like? Then under these circumstances, Sir, if the Government do not take any action should they not be held responsible for these things? Sir, as Mr. Chaudhuri said the other day, "he steals, I steal, every body steals". To this I may add "চুৰি বিদ্যা বাজ বিদ্যা যদি নপৰে ধৰা যদি পৰে ধৰা প্ৰাণে মৰা"। A man may thrive by stealing undetected. If he be caught by any way he should be punished. Man may steal, everybody may steal, but these agents steal and rob. So, Sir, these things should not be allowed to happen any further. This is my appeal to the Government.

Babu AKSHAY KUMAR DAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the food debate in this House has sufficiently been discussed. I think, I shall not be able to add any new things to the debate. Still I feel an urge in me to speak something about the food problem prevailing in this Province. I heard our Government saying that our Province is a surplus one. We have also heard from the Hon'ble Premier that our people are destined to die. If our Province is a surplus one why our people should be destined to die of starvation? Sir, if the Government cannot maintain its people, why the Government should exist? What is the necessity of this Government? What the Government officers of the Supply Department are doing? I say that our Government is determined to see their people die of starvation. Sir, the paddy which has been grown in our Province are being taken to the foreign countries. There are so many companies. There are Steel Brothers. There are Ishpahanis. There are Shaw Wallace and Kilburn & Co. who are purchasing rice and paddy from this Province at a very higher rate leaving the people of the Province to starve. Sir, a particular area of Sunamganj is famous for the growth of Buro crop. I can assure the House that the crop of this year was a bumper crop in the subdivision of Sunamganj, but I can cite many cases of deaths due to starvation in Sunamganj. If the things are allowed to go on in this way, I do not see any reason why our Government should exist? Sir, the Government is going on without any plan. They have got their Economic Advisory Board which owes its existence to the 93 administration. I may request the Hon'ble Premier to revise or to reorganise this Board. I have heard from our friends of the Assam Valley that their people will very soon see that there is no land for them. I have just now heard from Mr. Ghanashyam Das that the people of Mymensingh have sold their land and have come to Assam in search of land or rather to invade Assam. Sir, our people are also very poor and in most cases landless.

As regards the daily necessities, I can say before this House that the people of the villages and of the countryside are feeling the acute shortage of their daily necessities. Kerosene is a thing of the past. People are living in darkness. Even a child has got no sugar to eat. Children have forgotten what is sugar. It is not available in the countryside. The authorities concerned supply bags of sugar to their fancy men who take them and sell then in the black market at an exorbitant price. We have heard that some of the Hon'ble Ministers are also encouraging black market. They also purchase rice from the black market. Sir, if it is supplied from Government stores why there should be black market? Some of the college students of Sylhet told me that they cannot get good rice from the ordinary market and what they get they cannot eat as it is full of stones and dust. They do not get sugar even for tea, they cannot read for want of kerosene. So, I urge upon the Government to look into the matter and see things themselves. I request the Hon'ble Ministers to make extensive tours in the interior and see things themselves. They should not rely upon their local officers. They should see things personally because they are the elected representatives of the people and they are to look to the interests of their electorate. They should not sit idle in the hill station. I see they are quite comfortable here, but they should also look to the comfort of the population who have sent them here. So, I request them again to go to the countryside to see things themselves and see whether the cries of the people are really genuine.

Sir, there is a strong rumour that some of the traders get assistance from the Government and its officers and they are selling things whimsically according to their choice, and are making bargains and huge profiteering. So I think, Sir, the whole country is almost given up to the vagaries of these lucky profiteers.

Sir, I do not like to take the valuable time of the Hon'ble House as I think there are many hon. Members who would speak on the subject.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi MAHMUD ALI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the world war has broken out and it has given chance to millions of men to make fortune. For some this is a great opportunity to make money and for some it is time to die. Sir, we are partly responsible for those who are destined to die. These unfortunate

creatures have been attacked by malaria, they have no food to take, no clothes to wear. Our Government has started the Supply Department and also made arrangement for supply of standard cloths and granted other facilities. But, Sir, whether the people who require these things are getting them or not that is the question to be seen. If they do not get, who is responsible for it? Majority of the people do not get the facilities granted by the Government. I do not say that Government is not keen in the matter, they are doing all they can, but still people are dying. Sir, partly we the Members of the Legislature are also responsible for the misery of the people. Sir, we find there are activities outside from the Members and politicians who claim to be the supporters and protectors of the people. In this connection I remember a Persian verse which means that all which we do are for personal ends and motives can never be kept concealed afterwards and they ultimately put us to disgrace. The sum and substance of the verse is this and I may not have translated it quite correctly.

Sir, I find there are some Food Committees in each district and subdivision and there is also an Economic Advisory Board. But when we attend the Committees in the subdivision we find that the Subdivisional Officer really requests us to co-operate with him and give him proper advice. Due to our selfishness or some other motives we do not give him proper advice. There is some reason why we cannot do justice to him. We find that many Members of this House are interested in money making. So the Subdivisional Officer is in difficulty; the Deputy Commissioner is in the same position. So, Sir, I do not make the officers responsible. The Members are also responsible (*hear, hear*).

Sir, competition is going on in the food grains business and there is no control or check although we find that Government has passed a Control Order. It is not respected. When there is an order for controlling goods there is slackness from the side of the Government. Hence I say that Government is responsible. My request is that they should see that their Price Control Order is respected by every one. For my part, I do not think that Government cannot run the administration for the good of the people.

Then, Sir, we find that Government has made a plan for rationing in the municipal areas, but there is no plan or scheme for the rural areas. Moreover, in many places the things rationed are unfit for human consumption. What is the use of supplying such bad quality articles? Sir, I personally think that there can be no solution of this food problem without comprehensive rationing of food grains. Sir, in the subdivision of Karimganj at a meeting held in May last, at which Mr. Sultan the Subdivisional Officer, also was present, the Defence Committee of Karimganj requested Mr. Sultan to take up rationing and after some discussion he agreed to take up rationing of kerosene. That scheme is working nicely at Karimganj. Sir, Mr. Whittaker is absent to-day; he said that it was impossible to make a survey and ration the whole Province. I say, Sir, that I can take the responsibility of the Karimganj subdivision, and if I am helped by five other Members of this Assembly, one Sub-Deputy Collector and two or three clerks, and if Sarpanches and Chaukidars are instructed to co-operate with us, this survey can be done in course of a week (*hear, hear*). It is not a difficult matter, Sir. You have only to tell the people that unless they give their particulars within such and such date they won't get anything—rice, dal, etc. and even standard cloth—and I am sure they will forthwith give all details about themselves. Then we have only got to check the figures and find out how many adults there are, how many children, etc. This is not such a difficult job. I can finish the survey of my constituency within three days provided I get the co-operation of officials (*hear, hear*). We may distribute amongst them what we have in our stock.

Sir, I do not like to discuss what happened in the past; let bygones be bygones, the people were destined to suffer. But for the future, I want Government should take time by the forelock and being wiser by experience they should make effective plans for the future.

Sir, though it is doubtful whether our Province is a surplus one, but the ban on export of rice and paddy having been withdrawn, our people had to suffer much. There are many people in my subdivision who took one or two meals per day though they were in the habit of taking three meals a day. On the last occasion, just before the withdrawal of the ban, Government seized some hoarded stocks. The people got panicky as they were not given to know why those stocks were seized and they were harassed by some police officers. We now realise how wise that step was, and to what extent other parts of the Surma Valley were saved from the fate of Baniyachong. But the reason was not explained to the people, and they got panicky.

Sir, though our people are in distress, they sent food to the starving Bengal out of their love for humanity (*hear, hear*) and out of regard for God. Sir, if the Government who are in the helm of affairs extended their sympathy for these suffering people of Bengal and Baniyachong there would not have been trouble and misery at all.

I may say, Sir, that God has granted them nice paddy this year. I did not see such a good harvest in our side really in my life. I say to my people that Providence is there. They should not expect help from this Government. It is not in human strength to save them. It is the hand of Providence. If Government disturbs this paddy by their agencies, trouble will again be created. There must be no export. Government servants have learnt many arts from war activities. They have learnt how to make money by corruption. They have learnt how to deceive others. I request Government to stop it if they can. If they fail to do so they should not at all handle this matter. In that case it will take its own course and it will be better.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think that the debate should close now but I would like to know whether the hon. Members who tabled their Motions want to say anything in reply.

Srijut BEPIN CHANDRA MEDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the acute food problem in our country is mainly due to mal-administration and mal-distribution. The prices of every article during this war time has gone so high that all are hard hit. Government has not been able to tackle the situation and people's misery knows no bounds. The controlled rice given especially to the public of Shillong is unfit for human consumption. People should be given better rice so that they can live without being attacked by diseases. In villages there is practically no kerosene, no *atta*, no flour and no sugar. It is true that most of our village people can abstain from taking *atta* and *Maida*, but they cannot manage without kerosene and sugar. The substitute for sugar, I mean molasses, has become very costly. In some localities the prices shot up to Rs.1-8 per seer. The Deputy Commissioner of Darrang has fixed the quota of kerosene, both in the towns of Tezpur and Mangaldai and in the villages of the whole district. The town people are getting their quotas in full—three seers a month if the family members do not exceed six and six seers in case of there being more than six family members. The quota for a village family is just half of the town people. But are the villagers getting their quotas? In my subdivision most of the families are managing even with $\frac{1}{2}$ seer, $\frac{1}{4}$ seer a month. There are families in our place consisting more than 30 family members who have been put into extreme difficulties. My request to the Government is that they should take the matter promptly.

The present crop in my subdivision is satisfactory. The authority should see that our people keep their required quantity and can dispose of the surplus at a reasonable price. The Beparies commit mischief in purchasing paddy in measurement whereby they take in excess some 4 to 5 seers a maund. They are so cunning that the villagers cannot detect it. At Khoirabari station the Beparies use to purchase paddy from village people by night only and the village people are being cheated always. The practice of purchasing paddy by night should be stopped immediately.

The hoarders must be dealt with deterrent punishment. They cheat the Government and deprive the public. A very large number of small coin hoarders have been detected and punished but in case of food stuff, very few hoarders have been punished.

The Congress leaders behind the prison bar would have been the best helpers both to the Government and the general public during this period of acute food problem. Will Government please see to this and consider their release immediately so that the poor people of this Province get relief of their distress ?

Regarding issue of licenses for paddy stock and sale, the authorities in our subdivision are doing injustice to the local people. My information is that about 130 licenses have been issued in my subdivision and the case of the local traders have been totally neglected. Out of 130 licenses only 15 licenses have been issued to traders of the subdivision. The licensing authority, it is said, has issued licences to the traders having 3 years' standing business in paddy and rice. But I know particular instances where men, without business of any kind have been favoured with paddy and rice licenses. I hope Government will direct the authority concerned immediately to this effect.

Regarding bribery, I need not say anything as it has become an open secret.

With these few words I resume my seat.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Members who have taken part with all sincerity in the discussion that was ushered by me. In his first reply the Hon'ble the Premier said that the cultivators could not stock Buro paddy due to extreme humidity and therefore, they were willingly giving paddy to Government while seizing and procurement operation was going on in Sunamganj. I beg to submit that the facts, Sir, are quite otherwise. The Hon'ble Premier might have learnt it from papers, but in the locality the facts are quite different. However, Sir, what I want by ushering this discussion in this House is that not a single soul in this Province should starve. (*Hear Hear*).

We are giving all our best food, vegetables, butter, *ghee*, milk etc. to the Military. I think, Sir, that we should see that our civil population do not feel any want of these things. When the Military will be demobilised, they will come to the civil people, and it is the civil population who will give them food.

Now, Sir, the time is coming for the Aman crop to be harvested. Before the harvest begins, I will ask the Hon'ble Premier to take proper steps so that this crop is not smuggled away from the Province. As regards the supply of food in the rural areas, it was the opinion of almost all the Members who took part in the debate that the arrangement was not satisfactory. I hope, Sir, that the Hon'ble Premier will take note of it and make such arrangement that the people of rural areas do not go without proper supply. With these words, Sir, I beg to resume my seat.

Adjournment

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

After lunch

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Maulavi Abdur Rahman can now speak in the exercise of his right of reply. He is not in his seat. I think, he is not going to reply. The Hon'ble Premier may now begin his final reply.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the fact that we have discussed the food situation in this House for four days and the fact that as many as over 20 hon. Members have taken part in it, clearly prove that the problem is a very complicated and complex one. I am obliged to all those hon. Members who have given their considered views on the matter and if I do not touch on any individual point raised by them, they should not take that I have ignored their criticisms. I do not want to follow in the wake of those who have placed before the House their parochial difficulties, like black salt in the Sibsagar district or some such things, but I will confine myself to the general policy which the Government under my guidance have been following for the solution of the food problem in the Province and I will try to show that the main recommendations which I have analysed into seven, made by the various hon. Members in their speeches have already been followed by me. It may be that the angle of approach is different, but the aim is the same.

My Hon'ble Friend Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri.....

Khan Bahadur Maulavi MAHMUD ALI: Starting with Mr. Chaudhuri !

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Thereby giving him credit.

My Hon'ble Friend Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri never spoke a truer word than when he urged that the Government should follow a rational food policy, that they should make up their mind quickly and carry it out, as far as possible. I will try to show, Sir, that I have acted on the light of those remarks of the present Leader of the Opposition. But before I go into my own propositions and the statements, I would like the House to remember three fundamental things which guide our policy.

The first one is that the Government of India of their own volition and also on the recommendations of the Long Term Food Committee adopted the formula that economically India is one, that is, if there is any deficit of any food-stuff in any Province that deficit should be made up from imports from the surplus Provinces producing them. Secondly, if any Province has got a surplus of one commodity which is one of the staple articles of food, that Province has been made, on a calculation of its capacity, to surrender to other Provinces on a certain plan which goes by the name of basic plan. Thirdly, Sir, this is our own motto that "self first, others afterwards".

On the day of my first reply, I stated, which have been emphasized by many hon. Members since then, that we must see that our own people do not starve, that the people of the two valleys under the hills of Assam get their square meals and if after that we get any surplus that surplus must be used to the best interest of all concerned viz., the people of Assam as well as the people of the rest of India.

On these three basis, Sir, we have adopted a policy which I am going to relate and if our policy is correct, and I am emboldened to say that my policy is correct, since almost all the hon. Members who have taken part in this debate have urged the very same thing, then, Sir, I claim the little credit that we deserve. If on the other hand after the facts and figures that I have placed and will place before the House my Friends come to the conclusion that I have bartered away the morsel of food from the mouths of the people of Assam for a cheap popularity, then not only I deserve your condemnation but before you condemn me, I will myself condemn and stand condemned.

During this debate, I have heard certain hon. Members giving me slight credit that we have tried a little patch work here and there, while others have poured vituperation on me for my policy and while a third opinion has been expressed on the floor of this House that Government is resting on their assurance and that they have become complacent and they have made no plan or programme to solve the food situation of the Province. A rational food policy means that everyone in the country is fed, that there is no distress in any part and that we have got sufficient for a fair and equitable distribution amongst the people of the Province. This naturally brings me to the question of questions, namely, whether this Province has got a surplus to spare or whether we have kept sufficient stock and whether the Province is really a deficit one. Some hon. Members have taken great trouble in collecting figures and tried to prove that my estimate of the Province being a surplus is wholly wrong. This question has been discussed threadbare on many occasions, as also in the Upper House. But as the point has been raised again, I should very reluctantly meet the charge.

Then the same hon. Member who has laboured on this point has given the House certain figure the figure being that there are 50 lakhs acres of land under rice cultivation in this Province. I, as one of those who have got no paddy cultivation of their own, have also been compelled to eat uneatable rice, sample of which was placed before the House. But I am perfectly sure, at least 50 per cent. of the hon. Members here have got their own cultivation and they are in a better position than myself to tell us what is the average production of rice per Bigha in Assam. I pause for a minute for information from any quarter (Voices 5-6 maunds). One hon. gentleman says that it is 5-8 maunds of paddy and my hon. Friend from Sunamganj says it is 5-6 maunds of paddy. Then I think, Sir, when the production in the barren hills of the Garo people as well as the Subdivision of the Sunamganj which is on the foot of that hill, has got very nearly the same average, I can very well take that it is 6 maunds of paddy, grown in every Bigha of Assam's rice cultivation. If we convert this into rice I will not be far out of the mark if I say the average production per Bigha in terms of rice is 4

maunds. Sir, I have roamed throughout the country, discussed this in every corner, from Dibrugarh right up to Habiganj and in every meeting, I have been given this information that on an average we get 5 maunds of rice per Bigha—all those who gave me this figure were non-officials. Our Agriculture Department also base their calculation on 5 maunds per Bigha. But I will calculate on the basis of 4 maunds of rice per Bigha. I am not unaware of the fact that those lands which produce two crops in a year, one crop gives only 3 maunds of rice per Bigha, but the main crop yields over 5 maunds per Bigha. Similarly, I am not unmindful of the fact that the average yield per Bigha of Buro crop in the Buro growing area is from 13-14 maunds of paddy. (Voices from Babu Akshay Kumar Das—No, Sir, that is not so, as I have my own Buro cultivation.) I have got this figure not only from the Agriculture Department, but from many of my friends who live in Sunamganj and Habiganj. My Friend who interrupts me does not say anything from his personal knowledge. While making his speech we repeatedly heard him say “I have learned”, “I am informed”, “I have heard”, and so on. (Laughter). His source of information was only hearsay. Any way, on our basis of 4 maunds of rice per Bigha our total annual output is 6 crores maunds.....

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, according to Government statistics the yield is 715 lbs. per acre and this figure is supplied by the Provincial Government to the Government of India.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am taking first hand information on the floor of the House. So, Sir, we get a crop of 6 crore maunds of rice in the Province.

If we take the population to be one crore I am giving up two lakhs extra which is the total population of Assam. According to the census of 1941, each man gets half a maund per month. I am calculating on the basis that everyone is an adult and I am not considering the children whose requirements are less than that of a full adult. On this basis hon. Members may calculate whether we have a little surplus after feeding the population. This figure is controversial, but up till now, in spite of the heavy drainage from the Province during the current year, there has never been any acute shortage of rice in any part of the country. The fact that the Government agents in the Assam Valley have been able to purchase on an average one and half lakh maunds of rice per month clearly shows that people have got surplus which is going to the markets for sale. Sir, after consideration of every fact that came to the knowledge of the Central Government through the statistics collected by the Director of Commercial Intelligence, they decided that Assam has got a surplus of ten thousand tons which could be spared for Bengal. We protested that our surplus has been eaten up by our supply to the Military and we have not got the stock to deliver this quantity to Bengal (*hear, hear*). After discussion with the then Additional Secretary, Major General Wood, and after the Regional Food Commissioner's discussion with the Economic Advisory Board, we came to a compromise and agreed to deliver to Bengal 7,500 tons of rice. One may question that what was the advantage which Assam derived thereby. I have already stated, Sir, that each Province has been made by the Government of India to deliver to a neighbour the extra foodstuffs she possesses and in return those Provinces that do not produce other kinds of foodstuffs, *e.g.*, flour, sugar, etc., got their share of these from surplus Provinces. On account of the surplus of rice given to Bengal, Assam got a share or quota of such commodities like wheat, Atta, flour, sugar and Dal which have been permitted by the Government of India to be imported by us. I read while a small student a saying which goes to this effect. “Do unto others as you want to be done to yourself.” So my appeal to my countrymen is that if we want wheat, if we want sugar, salt, Dal and things which come into the dietary of every human being in Assam but of which we produce very little or nil, we must, not merely out of generosity, but of which we humanitarian principle but for our self-interest, forthwith give what little surplus of rice we have.

One hon. Colleague has accused me of being complacent. Although it was meant as an accusation, I find there is an indirect compliment. A man becomes complacent after he has achieved his end. He cannot be complacent without completing his task. Therefore the hon. gentleman has paid the compliment that the task which I set before me, according to him has been well done. Therefore he is encouraging me to push on further for the greater benefit of the country. That this is no idle boast, Sir, will be evident from the fact that we are pursuing the same policy which the hon. Members of this House have suggested and with the added experience of the present year, we have to be very careful with our stock of rice and paddy in the future. We should feed our people and the surplus, if any, should be sold to others. I have to hear the same criticism which I heard on the first day of its discussion that the price of the present crop of rice and paddy has fallen very heavily simply because Government has banned an export outside the Province and simply because Government made no arrangement to buy the stock. This is another argument in favour of holding that there is surplus in the Province. Like my hon. Friends, we in the Supply Department and the Ministry have also tried to locate the reason and according to us, Sir, there are three main reasons which are pressing down the price of the coming crop. The first reason, that we think is valid, is that a large stock of rice and paddy has been unloaded by traders now, who were formerly under the impression that our price control system would not work and if they could keep back the stock for some time, they will be able to sell at an advantage. When after a few months of experience, they found that the price control of Government is working and working satisfactorily, though not to the cent per cent expectation, they have been compelled to unload their stock in the market at the present moment. For a very different reason our cultivators have been compelled to disgorge their unutilised stock of rice and paddy, for they have no space for the new crop that they are harvesting or will harvest very soon. These two are the normal causes. But the third and the sinister factor is also working and that factor is a dangerous one. It is the mischievous act on the part of the traders to force down the price of the new crop as much as they can, with a view to corner the supply and ultimately sell it at higher price later on. This last factor can only be met by Government entering into the trade and buying as much of the new crop as is available. For this reason we are appointing procurement agencies in both the valleys and for the same reason we are determined to continue our price control. And the price control to be effective there must be a large stock in the hands of Government. We have been told, Sir, that in order to arrest this downward trend of the price of rice Government should fix a bottom or floor price. This suggestion has drawn the attention of Government and now that the majority of the Members of the House are urging Government to fix a bottom price, I will only be too happy to do so should there be need. I earnestly request every hon. Member of the House to see that our cultivators get at least the bottom price, if not a higher price, and that they are saved from the machination of the mischievous tradesmen.

The suggestions advanced are so vast and so variegated and we have heard so much of contradictory views during the course of this debate that I do not know whom to follow. There had been a Motion which recommended that Government should keep away from the trade, they should not buy a single grain of foodstuff and that the entire distribution and destination of foodstuff should be left to private trading people. This view did not find favour with any one both inside and outside this House and as a matter of fact there was very vehement protest against this proposition of Mr. Deb. Similarly, Sir, I remember to have heard from the different speakers that it is the bounden duty of Government to buy as much of the surplus as possible so that they can effectively check all channels of profiteering and remove the upward trend of prices by releasing to the market their own stock, when necessary.

There is again the question of competitive buying which raised the price of foodstuffs. On the first day of this debate, I told the House that we have tried as far as possible to stop competition between the big buyers. I have got to complain of one thing—that either my faulty language does not convey my ideas or through the

inattention of the hon. Members who subsequently spoke vehemently—a statement has been fathered upon me saying that I have alleged that Government want competition. But I have never uttered such words. You, Mr. Speaker, Sir, were pleased to pull up some hon. Members who were misquoting me or who were imputing statements which I have never uttered. One such statement was made by one hon. Member that I stated on the floor of this House that for one maund of rice that is given to the Military the Planting Industry is to receive the same amount. I never said so. On the other hand, my statement had been to the effect that when, after the introduction of free trade in parts of Assam by the Central Government, there was a panic among the big industrialists and the tea industry and there was feverish buying of rice at any price, this had the baneful effect of forcing up price of rice and paddy, even in that area which was saved from the inroads of free trade. Government at once sat in a conference with the representatives of the Industries, the Military and our own agents and ultimately we evolved a formula that out of every 5 maunds purchased by Government agents, one maund will go to the Tea Industry. To implement the said arrangement our hon. Friend Mr. Blennerhassett was dragged from his plantation, posted at the Circuit House, Gauhati, where, he had to suffer every kind of privation and he stuck to the post and saw that the quota allotted for the Tea Industry reached them. It has been shown that this arrangement which was come to, with the Assam Valley planters, was objected to, in the Surma Valley. I cannot say why it has been objected to, for both the Surma Valley as well as the Assam Valley planters are the members of the Indian Tea Association and our arrangement is with the Indian Tea Association. We will endeavour to see through the Indian Tea Association, that the Surma Valley planters who are also members of the Indian Tea Association approve of this arrangement and get their necessities of life, specially rice, from Government agents and not compete with them in the open market. Sir, while I am on this subject, I also pay the compliment to the Tea Industry because without taking a share from the imported foodstuffs they have arranged with Messrs. Shaw Wallace to buy their own requirements—to that extent relieving a part of the Government stock for our indigenous population.

Sir, we have tried to stock rice and paddy by buying so that the price level will not soar and people like myself who have no cultivation may not buy at a price which is beyond the means of a middle class man. We have tried to have every food-grain in the Province by stopping export and by checking smuggling of rice and paddy out of the Province. I have been told that the protectors of the law have been the murderers of the law.

Here, Sir, I am reminded of a Bengali saying “ঠগা বাহতে দেশ উজার”; if all the rumours that are being told to me are correct, then there will hardly be one person who is honest enough to tackle this subject, in the whole Province.

Sir, everywhere I have sought public co-operation, and nowhere is public co-operation more necessary than in this matter. Be it said to the credit of at least one gentleman of the Goalpara district who, instead of pocketing the bribes offered to him by some rice smugglers, took the money straight to the Deputy Commissioner. We find in answer to a certain question that two such sums, one nearing Rs.5,000 and another nearing Rs.2,500 were deposited in the Government treasury. I hope the example of this hon. gentleman will be widely published and followed in all parts of the country (*Hear, hear*).

Sir, I have talked about fair distribution of the available foodstuff in the country; the fairest distribution can only be by rationing. From various quarters in this House we have been urged to introduce the system of rationing throughout the Province. This is a task much too gigantic to take at one step. But we have taken the right way; we have started rationing the municipal areas and I hope with the New Year every municipal town in Assam will be rationed so far as imported stuff is concerned. It is after consolidating our position there that I want to start it in selected rural areas—some selected area which is either a trade centre or a big village like Baniachong. In this

way, we want to map out the whole Province where we can start rationing. To start rationing we must have three things: first, the willingness of the people, who are rationed, to submit to the quantity that is allotted and the allotment would only be made according to the supply that is available; secondly, we must have a regular supply of the articles rationed for rationing presupposes that however small the quantity of the commodity allotted to an individual or a family may be, the commodity will be available during the period of rationing. Therefore, Sir, we must have an assured source, and as all the stuff which we have rationed so far comes from outside the Province, we are dependent upon the transport system to help us in the matter. Here, Sir, I must acknowledge with thanks the support and sympathy which we have received from the War Transport Department of the Central Government, from Mr. Vipin, the Adviser, and the Members of the Railway Priorities Committee at Calcutta, and also the Steamer Company who have done yeoman service in transporting civilian goods when the railway wagons were monopolised by the Defence Department. In spite of this help and support from all quarters, for some reason we did not get more than 8,000 maunds of sugar during the whole month of October from the factories from which we import, whereas we expected 10 times that quantity during the time. These are mentioned simply to point out that rationing would have worked very well if we had the stuff grown in our own country, but not sufficient to give full quota to everyone. At the present moment, we are entirely dependent upon the transport system, we are dependent upon the Government of India to give us a fair and equitable quota, and in this matter we had been urging upon the Government of India that our normal requirements had not been given to us, but we were met with the reply that in war time, when supplies are short, we could not expect to get our normal requirements. Nevertheless, the Assam Government have been doing their level best, and fighting with the Government of India to get a better quota than was allotted in 1942, and in this connection I am glad to say that the Government of India have listened to our reasonable prayer; in many cases they have increased our quota of different foodstuffs that we import.

One other matter which I will deal at this stage is that there has been complaints about the quality of rice that was supplied to the various parts of the country by the Government buying agents. As I had to depend upon this very quality of rice myself, I know the stuff that is being sold to the public. From many quarters it has been urged that the stuff is uneatable. Sir, in the generality of the case, the stuff is full of unhusked paddy, and that is the only defect in it. But for this, neither the Assam Government nor their buying agents are responsible. One hon. Friend—I am referring to Mr. Kedarmal Brahmin—spoke to the House about the Undermilling of Rice Order issued by the Central Government, to be followed by each Provincial Government. The experts, at the Centre calculated that the total shortage of rice throughout India was only 5 per cent., and that if we under-polished the rice we could get back 4 per cent. of the shortage. An experiment was made in Madras which proved to be very successful, that is, instead of putting full pressure on the machinery while husking, half pressure was used and thereby not only conserving the full vitamin value of rice, but also getting an extra volume of rice. The result so encouraged the Government of India that they asked every Province to follow this example. We were compelled to issue orders to all the rice mills in the Province to adopt the same process and the result has been that the rice that has been milled by our millers contains 3 to 5 per cent. of unhusked paddy.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, on whose order stones were mixed?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: By traders themselves. As my Friend is in the trade, he will be in a better position to judge.

When I went to the last Food Conference in Delhi in October, I took samples of this under-milled rice and asked the experts of the Government of India to issue fresh orders and give us permission to go back to our former process. I asked the

representative of the Madras Government and I learnt that their machinery is most up-to-date and they have got very few grades of paddy unlike the 300 varieties that grow in Assam, with the result that some of them got even results when put into mill. Whether full pressure or half pressure, the machine works evenly. As against that, Sir, in our Province we know that the rice which is called Bar. Dhan is so big that if it is mixed with smaller varieties of paddy and put to half pressure the result is that the small grains remain in tact and unhusked. This difficulty was brought to our notice about two months back and since then we have appealed to the Government of India to permit us not to follow the Madras example. I handed over samples of rice, one milled under full pressure and the other of half pressure. Both were kept by the Hon'ble Food Member and up till now we have not received any order. Just before this session, I sent another wire reminding Government of India to pass order on our prayers. Another fact has been brought to my notice that Government has forced many of the retired Government officials and well-to-do people to go to the black market. In fixation of controlled price we have not taken into consideration the finer grades of rice. Sir, I have done it deliberately and I remain unconvinced by all the arguments that have been advanced. Everyone knows, Sir, that 95 per cent. of our people eat common coarse rice. It is the 5 per cent. of the upper class and upper middle class who indulge in the finer type of rice which is called Joha or Kalijira.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, I question this. 95 per cent. of our villagers do not eat the kind of rice supplied by Government. They hate that rice.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I never interposed hon. Members when they got up to make their speeches in spite of the fact that they were misquoting me and giving wrong statements. I hope my hon. Friend, the present Leader of the Opposition, will not interrupt me like this or I can put tooth-breaking reply.

Not a single cultivator goes to Steel Brothers for rice. It is Messrs. Steel Brothers who are buying through some body else from the cultivators of the Province.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: On a point of information, Sir,...

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am not giving way.

My deliberate aim was to see that our people in the country—side do get the common rice which they are habitually used in taking and if we wanted a gradation of different varieties and fix different prices it would have thrown open the door to all kinds of corrupt practices. Traders who are dishonest will pass on coarser rice for finer rice and there will be nobody to check it. Similarly, there will be attempts on the part of some people to pass on intermediate quality as finer quality. There would be such business transactions which no power on earth could stop. I ignore the five per cent. of the people who indulge in fine rice. I heard a complaint from the hon. Member that he cannot subsist with five seers of sugar. He said that he could not have the sweet course in his daily menu for want of sugar. We have to submit to this inconvenience to see that everyone gets some quantity of that stock. I may be a rich man, I may buy as much as I like; but rationing is introduced in order to prevent the rich to reap the harvest and the poor being pushed to the wall.

Now, Sir, in order to show that we are not complacent I need hardly mention that long before the Government of India started their Grow More Food Campaign, we in Assam started this policy. We were told by an hon. Member instead of importing foodstuffs from outside it should be the endeavour or should have been the endeavour of the local Government to increase the cultivation of those foodstuffs of the Province. I am glad to be able to tell the hon.

Member that we are at one with him in this matter and in our Grow More Food Campaign, we have distributed 7,000 maunds of seeds of pulses to our local people as pulse which falls into our daily necessity, is very little grown in Assam. We have distributed 2,000 maunds of seed of wheat or barley; one thousand maunds of mustard seed. Then we are also trying to help those who are improving their cultivation by issuing 27,000 maunds of improved rice seeds. All these have been distributed. We have undertaken 37 projects of irrigation. Then we have also proposed to issue 35,000 maunds of potato seeds of which 14,000 have already been distributed up-to-date.

We can increase our foodstuffs by two means which have been mentioned by most of the hon. Members—one by extension of cultivation and the other by intensive cultivation or scientific cultivation. From the method of extension of cultivation, the question of land-settlement policy of the Government had cropped up and if five Members had vehemently opposed it, there had been also perhaps an equal number who had been more vocal that the Government of Assam are not doing their job in withholding settlement of this land or growing any foodstuff therein. I want my hon. Friends in this House to listen to this part of my statement very carefully. The question has not only been agitating our mind but it has gone higher up and it is the Central Government who has taken this matter up, *i. e.*, Assam should not be allowed to keep her culturable waste lands as fallow lands. During the Long Term Food Committee in which our Friend Mr. Whittaker represented the Province of Assam, the Minister of Agriculture, Bengal, raised this question and the imagination of the Members in that conference went so far that Mr. Whittaker was literally heckled to press the Government of Assam not to take up a negative policy; Mr. Whittaker sent S.O.S. or an urgent request to supply him with up-to-date figures of how much lands were available and how much had been already settled. I sent him a very comprehensive and detailed statement to show not only to the Government of India but also to other Members or Representatives from other provinces that Assam had done their bit in this matter. In reply to a certain question, my Hon'ble Friend the Minister for Revenue gave figures to show that if two hundred thousand bighas of land have been settled with immigrants, four times more of these lands have been settled with the indigenous people during the course of last five years. As a matter of fact, I gave a detailed history of the whole system of land policy that we have adopted not from the present moment but ever since the reforms were ushered into this Province. It is up to the hon. Members of this House to tell me whether they would like the policy which the Government of Assam adopted—a policy which was shared by many Members of this House from either side. I refer to the Conference of 1940 wherein the Members of the Congress Group, Tribal People, Schedule Castes and Hindus and Moslems sat together for three days and the result was that the policy came out in 1942. This policy was that certain quantity of our waste lands should be reserved for future expansion. All the available waste-lands, in big blocks were to be settled amongst the four communities, namely, caste Hindus, Scheduled Caste, Tribal and Moslems. In my opinion, Sir, this policy was adopted by every section of the House and it is best fitted to meet the requirements of the people who want to make Assam their own home. I was told, while I was at Delhi last month by Mr. B. R. Sen, *i. c. s.*, Director General of Supply whose guest I was, that he had been asked by Hon'ble Sir Jawala Prasad Srivastava to put up to him a note how best Assam's waste lands could be brought under plough. Mr. Sen happens to be brought up at Dibrugarh and therefore he has got some knowledge of the condition of Assam. He is at present the Additional Secretary to the Government of India in the Supply Department. The Food Member himself suggested to me that Government of India wants to come to Assam and cultivate Government waste lands—which for political reasons, we have not settled with any people—with the Auxiliary Pioneer Corps. I know because I have seen with my own eyes that most of the Auxiliary Pioneer Corps come from Travancore who are generally Christians and the

others come from the Punjab who are generally Moslems. So, now I want to know from hon. Members whether it is to the benefit of the Province of Assam to keep the reins in our own hand and settle the lands according to our necessity or to allow the Government of India to do whatever they like with their Pioneer Corps. I appeal to every thinking Member to consider this point very carefully, and say whether it is better that the immigrants from Bengal should come and make this place their own home as has been done by as many as three lakhs of people or whether it is better that the people from Travancore and the Punjab should come and cultivate and after exploiting the land should go away. In one case it will be within our own control and in the other case, we will be at the mercy of the Central Government. Sir, in my humble opinion, I should say that we should not allow the Government of India to step in on this matter on the plea that the war is on.

As regards intensive cultivation, Sir, I don't know if the hon. Members had noticed some statements published by the Department of Agriculture that they are trying their level best to introduce new variety of paddy. They have started the work in Tea gardens because probably they thought that the great organisation of the Tea Industry will see to it that the Departmental activities are pushed on. They have issued sufficient improved varieties of paddy seeds to two hundred thousand acres of rice land that is owned by the Tea Industry. This entire land is now growing improved rice. The Economic Botanist, Dr. Nandi, who saw me a few days ago, stated that he has been able to evolve two varieties of paddy recently—one yields as much as 48 maunds per acre and the other 50 maunds per acre. If we had sufficient farms to grow these heavy yielding varieties and issued to all the cultivators we would not be charged that we have been complacent in the matter. As a matter of fact, how best to increase the produce of the foodstuffs of the Province has been agitating my mind ever since I took up the charge of Food Supply Department.

Sir, I am obliged to you for having given me an hour and a few minutes more on this general statement of the case. I will take up, therefore, very shortly the recommendations of the House as was expressed by the very many hon. Members in their speeches. I find a family resemblance in all the facts that cropped up in the very many speeches. I find that their recommendations may be classified under seven heads. The first suggestion not only of my Friend Mr. Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury but also of Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee is to find out method rather to apply methods to find out the surplus. Both the hon. Members who have given great thoughts to this subject recommend that a survey of all paddy lands under rice cultivation should be immediately taken up. We have heard, Sir, that the total area under rice cultivation is 50 lacs of acres. Even if we say that the average holding is 5 acres, we will have to check 10 lacs of holdings in this survey. The amount of time that will be necessary and the expenditure that will be involved may well be judged. I may be told why not take the trouble of appointing amins and mandals? Ask the cultivators, as recommended by my Friend Mr. Mookerjee to show what he has. The best refutation of the process that was recommended by him came from an unexpected quarter, viz., my Friend Mr. Rabindra Nath Aditya. A little stock-taking in his Sub-division of Karimganj, not under the orders of Government but probably as an experiment by the Deputy Commissioner, started such a panic among the cultivators that they refused to disclose their stock. If we start an all-wide survey of this nature and ask the cultivator what the area under his cultivation is, he, an illiterate one, will either not give the proper area, or at best his replies will be a guess work. It has also been suggested by the same hon. Member that measures should be taken; I think, I better quote his words because this is important:—

(1) To open registers in villages immediately throughout the Province with a view to record (a) the name of each cultivator, (b) the area of his land under paddy cultivation, (c) total quantity of crop when harvested..... How can the poor cultivator tell an enquirer what is the quantity of crops he has harvested unless he takes recourse to actual measurement by weighing it? If without any weighing, he gives out a figure that will be his guess work as the statistics which the Government produces before the House and the House refuses to take them as mere guess work.

Sir, I started by saying at an earlier stage that our aim is the same but our method of approach is different. Their aim as well as my aim are to see whether there is a surplus or not. The road which they want to follow is long, tortuous and difficult whereas I go by the admitted figures. Their next recommendation, Sir, is an anti-hoard drive, a phrase which catches the eyes but carries very little meaning. In the first place, those who recommend this, declaim very stoutly that there is any hoard at all. As a matter of fact, they say there is no surplus and therefore there cannot be any hoard. So you can't bring out a non-existent thing.

Sir, the experience of my Friend as well as everyone in the country is that with the prospect of this bumper crop, which in certain places they are harvesting and in other places they will be harvesting in a fortnight, they are now bringing out whatever they had stocked in their granary before to make room for the new crop. Therefore, without any drive we have achieved the object which my hon. Friends recommend.

Then their recommendation is to prevent all exports. In this matter I have already said, Sir, that we are at one with them and we have tried our level best by putting up all kinds of orders under the much malign Defence of India Rules. It is the greed of our people, the trading class, that our endeavours are set at naught in this matter. I have already sought the collaboration of my Friends and I hope it will be forthcoming in this matter.

Fourthly, they say, Sir, grow more food. I have just now told the House that we adopted this policy of grow more food long before the Government of India started and within the limits of our funds, we have done our level best. There was certain criticism that our entire scheme has not been adopted and that we receive step-motherly treatment from the Government of India. To a certain extent, this criticism is correct. But in order to give the true fact I will just tell this much that my Hon'ble Colleague, the Agriculture Minister went upto Delhi and by his sweet reasonableness he got Rs. 9 lacs as interest-free loan and Rs. 4 lacs as free gift from the Government of India. This does not satisfy us or does not meet our requirements but this is a matter so vital for the people that we should pursue this policy with the amount that we have already got.

The fifth suggestion, Sir, that comes from my hon. Friend is "supply all rice wherever is needed and control the price of all kinds of food-stuffs". We are already following this very method, Sir. Our procurement agency is employed not merely for sending anything which is meant for export but also to see that deficit areas within the Province or even within a District are supplied with rice. We have done our level best to control price of all kinds of food-stuffs and here to a certain extent we have succeeded. But to a smaller extent, there has been instances where goods meant for sale at controlled price has found its way to black-market. To avoid this nefarious practice of sale and profiteering, we have done our utmost. But it has fallen short of entirely stopping such black marketing. We have now taken the help of the Co-operative movement. I mentioned, Sir, that already 200 co-operative consumers' societies are functioning and papers for registration of 300 more are lying with the Co-operative Department and there is every hope that all these 300 societies will be registered and they will be functioning; and I request the hon. Members of this House to advise the people of their own constituencies and localities to start consumers' societies on co-operative basis so that they will be able to earn some little money for themselves and get a sure supply of food-stuffs. Government is at one with them in this matter.

My Friend, the Leader of the Communist Party, Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy, has urged that his party should be taken advantage of. As Provincial Leader of the National War Front of Assam, I also like to utilise this National War Front Organisation for the same purpose and I welcome every kind of help in this matter so that this very bad practice of sale in the black market can be stopped.

The Sixth recommendation is about the introduction of rationing throughout the Province. This also we have started. My own idea is to flourish the growth in the normal way. We have planted the seed and the plant is growing and it will take time to have a full grown tree. My hon. Friend suggests to uproot the mature tree and plant it in Assam by starting rationing throughout the Province. This is essential

and we want to do things cautiously and not speedily, as my Friend wants us to do. Let us avoid the pitfalls by experimenting in the towns and then we hope to introduce it in the rural areas.

The last but not the least recommendation, Sir, is that there should be a central body, call it anything you like, to deliberate on the question of production, distribution and to control price of foodstuffs, composed of Members of this House as well as the Upper House. I have already stated, Sir, that in this matter I will follow the dictates of the House. If they want that on the top of the Economic Advisory Board where both the Houses are represented, one whole time body composed of Members of Legislature only be constituted, I will give this my due consideration. But, as I have stated the other day, hon. Members will consider my suggestion that the same set of members should not be in both the Boards.

As regards the Regional Food Board, I have already passed orders immediately after the Food Conference of August last. Government machinery always move slow with their redtapism. I am not in a position to mention before the House any of the names of Food Committees so far formed. My hon. Friend Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy urged that there should be People's Food Committees. I can tell him that the difference between him and myself in this matter is only in name. I would also like to tell my Friend Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy that I want him in my Regional Food Committee not only as a representative of the people of Sunamganj but also as an hon. Member of this House. To constitute the Regional Food Board, I have also ordered that every Member of this House as well as Upper House and a representative of the people in the person of the Chairman of a Municipality and Local Board should be in that committee. And I think if this body takes up the matter seriously, they will be bound to influence the democratic heart of our Deputy Commissioners and some of their officers. If they cannot crack their nut, there is another swift democratic heart; let them approach me and I will see whether I cannot crack the nut for them.

Sir, I think, I have touched every point that have been raised. I again give all my hon. Friends the assurance that I will look into all their criticisms and suggestions and will give my best consideration to them. I have been able, I think, to persuade the House to see that our aims have been the same though our methods may have been different.

With these words, Sir, I resume my seat with an offer of thanks to my hon. Colleagues of the House who have spent about 85 minutes of their time in listening to my speech.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. There are three Motions* before the House. One was moved by hon. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury, and one by hon. Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury. These two Motions are practically the same. There are three amendments† to the first Motion moved by Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury. The third Motion was moved by Maulavi Abdur Rahman and to this Motion there are two amendments**. So far as the first and second Motions are concerned, according to well known Parliamentary practice regarding Motions of this nature, there is no necessity of putting them to the vote of the House. Their object was to discuss the food situation in the Province. And they have really achieved their object by starting the discussion which gave scope to some hon. Members to put forward proposals in the shape of the three amendments

*1. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury to move:—

“That this Assembly do proceed to consider the food situation of the Province”.

Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury

2. Maulavi Naziruddin Ahmed to move:—

Maulavi Abdur Rahman

“That this Assembly is of opinion that the extremely grave situation arising out of the acute shortage of food-stuffs and the abnormal prices thereof in the Province be taken into consideration”.

3. Maulavi Abdur Rahman to move:—

That this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do constitute a special Committee of seven members consisting of officials and non-officials, with non-official majority to be

moved by hon. Mr. Mookerjee, hon. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy and hon. Srijut Buragohain. So these three amendments to the first Motion have practically become substantive Motions and I shall put them to the House as such. I shall first take up the Motion of hon. Mr. Mookerjee. Now that Motion has placed a scheme for improving the food situation in the Province before the House consisting of 8 parts each of which is a distinct proposal. Therefore, having listened to the debate, I think it would be proper for me, in order to give full freedom of vote to all the Members, to

nominated by the Government to draw up a definite programme to deal with the economic and food problems of the Province and to regulate the supply policy".

†Amendments to Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury's Motion on the food situation of the Province.—

1. Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE to move:—

"Taking the food situation into consideration this Assembly is of opinion that in order to effectively tackle the present food situation and to improve the economic condition of the province the Government do take the following measures amongst others at once:—

(1) To open registers in villages immediately throughout the province with a view to record (a) the name of each cultivator, (b) the area of his land under paddy cultivation, (c) total quantity of crop when harvested, (d) number of members of dependents in the family of each cultivator below and above 12 years of age separately.

(2) To prevent export from the province before knowing the actual surplus, if any, and to allow inter-district export of foodgrains within the province.

(3) To pursue vigorous anti-hoarding drive.

(4) To prevent profiteering by all possible severest means.

(5) The Grow-More-Food Campaign be properly handled by an expert and qualified officer.

(6) To set up Regional Food Advisory Boards throughout the province to regulate the production, supply and price.

(7) To introduce ration cards throughout the Province.

(8) To make adequate arrangements for supplies of all kinds of essential foodstuffs and other necessities of life."

2. Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAIN to move:—

"That after the word 'Province' at the end of the original Motion the following be added:—

'and that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government do take the following amongst other measures without delay.

(a) Introduction of rationing all over the province including the rural areas; and

(b) Fixation of price of all essential food-stuffs including milk, meat, eggs and fish!'"

3. Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV to move:

"That after the word 'Province' at the end of the original Motion the following be added:—

'and that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do refrain from making any purchases of rice or paddy on their own account.'"

**Amendment to Maulavi Abdur Rahman's Motion regarding constitution of a Committee to draw up a programme to deal with the economic and food problem of the Province—

1. Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAIN to move:

"That for the original Motion the following be substituted:—

"That this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do set up a Standing Committee of seven members of the Assam Legislature, five to be elected from this House, one to be nominated by the Government from among the members of the Legislative Council and the Minister-in-charge of Supply to act as its Chairman, to advise the Government from time to time on problems and policy connected with civil Supply of the Province!'"

2. Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY to move:—

"After the word 'Government' in the fourth line the following shall be added:—
'and to be taken from all parties of the Province.'"

put each of these proposals separately to the vote of the House. Therefore, I shall first put to the vote of the House the first item of Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee's amendment.

The question is :

"Taking the food situation into consideration this Assembly is of opinion that in order to effectively tackle the present food situation and to improve the economic condition of the Province, the Government do take the following measures amongst others at once :—

(1) To open registers in villages immediately throughout the Province with a view to record (a) the name of each cultivator, (b) the area of his land under paddy cultivation, (c) total quantity of crop when harvested, (d) number of members or dependents in the family of each cultivator below and above 12 years of age separately".

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: May I rise to a point of order, Sir. In view of the fact that Mr Mookerjee's amendment represents one constructive scheme, will it be better to put the scheme as a whole ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: No ; this is no doubt a constructive scheme which contains several parts and as from the debate it appears that all Members do not agree on all parts, the same number of votes may not either accept or reject each of the items. Therefore, in order to give free latitude to each of the hon. Members to express his opinion on each of these parts of the amendment, I am adopting this procedure.

The Assembly then divided.

AYES—10

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| 1. Babu Akshay Kumar Das. | 6. Srijut Jadav Prasad Chaliha. |
| 2. Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee. | 7. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy. |
| 3. Srijut Beliram Das. | 8. Srijut Lakshesvar Borooah. |
| 4. Srijut Bepin Chandra Medhi. | 9. Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri. |
| 5. Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri. | 10. Babu Nirendra Nath Deb. |

NOES—30

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| 1. The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhamad Saadulla. | 10. Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf. |
| 2. The Hon'ble Mr. Naba Kumar Dutta. | 11. Maulavi Dewan Muhammad Ahabab Chaudhury. |
| 3. The Hon'ble Maulavi Munawwar Ali. | 12. Maulavi Dewan Ali Raja. |
| 4. The Hon'ble Srijut Hirendra Chandra Chakravarty. | 13. Khan Sahib Maulavi Muhammad Amiruddin. |
| 5. The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri. | 14. Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali. |
| 6. The Hon'ble Dr. Mahendra Nath Saikia. | 15. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali. |
| 7. The Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri. | 16. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury. |
| 8. The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur Rahman. | 17. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mufizur Rahman. |
| 9. The Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn. | 18. Shams-ul-Ulama Maulana Abu Nasr Md. Waheed. |
| | 19. Mr. F. W. Blennerhassett. |

20. The Hon'ble Srijut Rupnath Brahma.
21. Babu Bipin Behari Das.
22. Rai Sahib Doulat Chandra Gohain.
23. Srijut Surendra Nath Buragohain.
24. Khan Bahadur Hazi Abdul Majid Chaudhury.

25. Mr. R. A. Palmer.
26. Srijut Bhairab Chandra Das.
27. Srijut Bideshi Pan Tanti.
28. Mr. Binode Kumar J. Sarwan.
29. Mr. C. Goldsmith.
30. Srijut Karka Dalay Miri.

The question was negatived.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: On a point of order as regards the other items....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: As regards other items, from the trend of the debate I find it is only item No. 7 which is a bit contentious. All other items are non-contentious. Is it not so? Do the hon. Members think that item No. 7 is a bit contentious?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: As the views expressed by the hon. Member are the same as the views of the Hon'ble Premier what is the use of killing the time of the House? I think they may be withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: No. Having put one part of the Motion to the vote I think it is necessary for me to put the other parts to the vote of the House. I take it then that all other parts of the Motion are non-contentious. I am putting them together.

The question is:

“That the Government do take the following measures amongst others at once:—

- (2) To prevent export from the Province before knowing the actual surplus, if any, and to allow inter-district export of foodgrains within the Province.
- (3) To pursue vigorous anti-hoarding drive.
- (4) To prevent profiteering by all possible severest means.
- (5) The Grow-More-Food Campaign be properly handled by an expert and qualified officer.
- (6) To set up Regional Food Advisory Boards throughout the Province to regulate the production, supply and price.
- (7) To introduce ration cards throughout the Province.
- (8) To make adequate arrangements for supplies of all kinds of essential foodstuffs and other necessaries of life”

(A division was claimed by the Hon'ble Premier.)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: When I told the House that the other parts of the Motion were non-contentious, my statement was not challenged. So I do not see what is the meaning in asking for a division now. However, I am allowing the division.

The Assembly then divided.

AYES—21.

1. Raja Ajit Narayan Dev of Sidli.
2. Babu Akshay Kumar Das.
3. Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee.
4. Babu Balaram Sircar.
5. Srijut Beliram Das.
6. Srijut Bepin Chandra Medhi.
7. Babu Bipin Behari Das.
8. Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri.
9. Srijut Ghanashyam Das.
10. Srijut Jadav Prasad Chaliha.

11. Srijut Jogendra Narayan Mandal.
12. Babu Kamini Kumar Sen.
13. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy.
14. Srijut Lakshesvar Borooah.
15. Babu Lalit Mohan Kar.
16. Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri.
17. Babu Nirendra Nath Deb.
18. Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya.
19. Srijut Ram Nath Das.
20. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan.
21. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali.

NOES—29.

1. The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhammad Saadulla.
2. The Hon'ble Mr. Naba Kumar Dutta.
3. The Hon'ble Maulavi Munawwar Ali.
4. The Hon'ble Srijut Hirendra Chandra Chakravarty.
5. The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri.
6. The Hon'ble Dr. Mahendra Nath Saikia.
7. The Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri.
8. The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur Rahman.
9. The Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn.
10. The Hon'ble Srijut Rupnath Brahma.
11. Khan Bahadur Hazi Abdul Majid Chaudhuri.
12. Maulavi Abdur Rahman.
13. Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf.
14. Maulavi Dewan Muhammad Ahabab Chaudhury.
15. Maulavi Dewan Ali Raja.
16. Khan Sahib Maulavi Muhammad Amiruddin.
17. Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali.
18. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali.
19. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury.
20. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mufizur Rahman.
21. Maulavi Naziruddin Ahmed.
22. Mr. F. W. Blennerhassett.
23. Mr. R. A. Palmer.
24. Srijut Bhairab Chandra Das.
25. Srijut Bideshi Pan Tanti.
26. Mr. Binode Kumar J. Sarwan.
27. Mr. C. Goldsmith.
28. Mr. Jobang D. Marak.
29. Srijut Karka Dalay Miri.

The question was negatived.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Then comes the amendment of Mr. Buragohain. I find there are two parts in the amendment, the first part is practically item No.7 of Mr. Mookerjee's amendment. Is that not so?

Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAİN: Yes, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Though item No.7 has not been put separately, the House has voted on it along with other items. Therefore it is not necessary to put the first part of Mr. Buragohain's amendment to the vote. I am putting the second part.

The question is:

“This Assembly is of opinion that the Government do take the following amongst other measures without delay:

Fixation of price of all essential foodstuffs including milk, meat, eggs and fish.”

The Assembly then divided.

Ayes—21

1. Raja Ajit Narayan Dev of Sidli.
2. Babu Akshay Kumar Das.
3. Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee.
4. Babu Balaram Sircar.
5. Srijut Beliram Das.
6. Srijut Bepin Chandra Medhi.
7. Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri.
8. Srijut Ghanashyam Das.
9. Srijut Jadav Prasad Chaliha.
10. Babu Kamini Kumar Sen.
11. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy.
12. Srijut Lakshesvar Borooah.
13. Babu Lalit Mohon Kar.
14. Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri.
15. Babu Nirendra Nath Dev.
16. Srijut Purandar Sarma.
17. Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya.
18. Rai Sahib Doulat Chandra Gohain.
19. Srijut Ram Nath Das.
20. Srijut Surendra Nath Buragohain.
21. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan.

NOES—28

1. The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhammad Saadulla.
2. The Hon'ble Mr. Naba Kumar Dutta.
3. The Hon'ble Maulavi Munawwar Ali.
4. Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf.
5. Maulavi Dewan Muhammad Ahabab Chaudhury.
6. Maulavi Dewan Ali Raja.
7. Khan Sahib Maulavi Muhammad Amiruddin.

8. The Hon'ble Srijut Hirendra Chandra Chakravarty.
9. The Hon'ble Khan Sahib Maulavi Mudabbir Hussain Chaudhuri.
10. The Hon'ble Dr. Mahendra Nath Saikia.
11. The Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri.
12. The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi Sayidur Rahman.
13. The Hon'ble Miss Mavis Dunn.
14. The Hon'ble Srijut Rupnath Brahma.
15. Khan Bahadur Hazi Abdul Majid Chaudhury.
16. Maulavi Abdur Rahman.
17. Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali.
18. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali.
19. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury.
20. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mufizur Rahman.
21. Maulavi Naziruddin Ahmed.
22. Shams-ul-Ulama Maulana Abu Nasr Md. Waheed.
23. Srijut Bhairab Chandra Das.
24. Srijut Bideshi Pan Tanti.
25. Mr. Binode Kumar J. Sarwan.
26. Mr. C. Goldsmith.
27. Mr. Jobang D. Marak.
28. Srijut Karka Dalay Miri.

The question was negatived.
 The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Now the other amendment of Babu Nirendra Nath Deb comes.

The question is:
 "That after the word 'Province' at the end of the original Motion the following be added:—

and that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do refrain from making any purchases of rice or paddy on their own account."
 The question was negatived.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I am putting the amendment of Srijut Surendra Nath Buragohain to the Motion of hon. Maulavi Abdur Rahman.

The question is:
 "That this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do set up a Standing Committee of seven Members of the Assam Legislature, five to be elected from this House, one to be nominated by the Government from among the Members of the Legislative Council, and the Minister-in-charge of Supply to act as its Chairman, to advise the Government from time to time on problems and policy connected with civil supply of the Province."

The question was negatived.
 The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Now, I am putting the amendment of Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy to the Motion of hon. Maulavi Abdur Rahman.

The question is:
 "That after the word 'Government' in the fourth line the following shall be added:
 'And to be taken from all parties of the Province'.

The question was negatived.
 The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I am putting the main Motion of Maulavi Abdur Rahman.

The question is:
 "That this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do constitute a special Committee of seven members consisting of officials and non-officials, with non-official majority to be nominated by the Government to draw up a definite programme to deal with the economic and food problems of the Province and to regulate the supply policy."

The Assembly divided.

Ayes—17

1. Srijut Purandar Sarma.
2. Khan Bahadur Hazi Abdul Majid Chaudhury.
3. Maulavi Abdur Rahman.
4. Maulavi Syed Abdur Rouf.
5. Maulavi Dewan Muhammad Ahabab Chaudhury.
6. Khan Sahib Maulavi Muhammad Amiruddin.
7. Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury.
8. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mufizur Rahman.
9. Maulavi Naziruddin Ahmed.

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| 10. Srijut Bhairab Chandra Das. | 14. Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali. |
| 11. Srijut Bideshi Pan Tanti. | 15. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Keramat Ali. |
| 12. Mr. Binode Kumar J. Sarwan. | 16. Mr. Jobang D. Marak. |
| 13. Mr. C. Goldsmith. | 17. Srijut Karka Dalay Miri. |

Noes—22

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| 1. Raja Ajit Narayan Dev of Sidli. | 12. Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy. |
| 2. Babu Akshay Kumar Das. | 13. Mr. Kedarmal Brahmin. |
| 3. Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee. | 14. Srijut Lakshesvar Borooah. |
| 4. Babu Balaram Sircar. | 15. Babu Lalit Mohon Kar. |
| 5. Srijut Beliram Das. | 16. Babu Nirendra Nath Deb. |
| 6. Srijut Bepin Chandra Medhi. | 17. Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya. |
| 7. Babu Bipin Behari Das. | 18. Rai Sahib Doulat Chandra Gohain. |
| 8. Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri. | 19. Srijut Ram Nath Das. |
| 9. Srijut Ghanashyam Das. | 20. Srijut Surendra Nath Buragohain. |
| 10. Srijut Jadav Prasad Chaliha. | 21. Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan. |
| 11. Babu Kamini Kumar Sen. | 22. Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali. |

The question was negatived.

Discussion under the proviso to Rule 40 of the Assembly Rules Re: the Provincial Motor Transport Organisation

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sorry that in this discussion, I shall have to deal with the conduct of a lady. It is needless to say that we Indians are never behind any nation in the world in showing respect to the ladies and giving them their dues. Sir, here in Assam, we have got a lady Minister in this House and a lady President in the other House. These two instances clearly show how we respect and give the dues to our ladies. Sir, I have no personal acquaintance with the wife of our Provincial Motor Transport Controller and hence I am not in a position to say anything either in favour or against her from my personal experience. But, Sir, the reports we got and are getting from the people of Shillong are so very disgusting and numerous that we have been compelled to ask so many Questions regarding this Motor Transport Organisation. Sir, the number of original and supplementary Questions were so many in this particular matter that the situation demands a discussion and, Sir, you have so very rightly given us a chance to discuss the subject. Now coming to the management of the Organisation what do we find? At the time of moving his Motion on the 24th of November, 1942, for the approval of expenditure from the revenues of the Province by this House, the Prime Minister said "Sir, the difficulty about transport by Rail and by Steamer I have mentioned on various occasions and also while discussing the last Motion of mine. Yesterday various hon. Members had also mentioned the great difficulties of the travelling public in regard to road transport—I mean transport by means of motor vehicles, that the country has experienced since the beginning of this year, with the result that the public has felt great inconvenience in transporting their goods and themselves from one place to another. Also great difficulties are being experienced in the matter of movement of vital necessaries of life.

I have told the House that this situation arose for two reasons: one is the urgent necessity felt by the Central Government for rationing the supply of petrol issued to the public including the transport Companies and lately, by the requisition by the Military of the available motor transports, for Military needs, in particular sections of Assam. Buses and goods lorries that were plying in various nooks and corners of the Province were hurriedly taken away and given to the Military authorities for use by them for the effective defence of the Province and of India as a whole from enemy aggression. Be it said to the credit of the people of Assam that they cheerfully bore all these difficulties that were brought home to them by this sudden stoppage of motor transports in the Province.....

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ORGANISATION

My proposition was that in view of the fact that in the near future there is an apprehension that the Railway and the Steamer Transport Services will not have either the wagon capacity nor shipping space for utilization by the civil public, and in view of the fact that the Province is suffering for deficiency of road transport, we propose to embark on a system of commercial undertaking—a new venture for a Provincial Government—and start a pool of motor vehicles partly by buying new vehicles and partly by repairing old vehicles released by the Military, and also taking advantage of the offer made by the Tea Industry. We hope, Sir, that if this pool can be organised and administered properly, motor transport will be available in every creek and corner of the Province to the great benefit of the passenger traffic and for the transit of goods which is essentially necessary at this time when there is a dearth of food-stuffs and staple food-stuffs such as rice and paddy have to be moved from one part of the country to the other.”

Also, Sir, in the explanatory note you will find that this Organisation was started primarily to give benefit to the general public and for meeting the civil needs.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member knows that the discussion will last for half an hour and the Hon'ble Prime Minister must get sufficient time for reply.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, while we were discussing this subject siren sounded the alarm and I also warned the Hon'ble Prime Minister but, as usual, to no effect rather he began his reply with the following words:—

“Mr. Speaker, Sir, I may satisfy certain entities but not Mr. Mookerjee”.

Sir, really I was not satisfied then and even now I am not satisfied. Sir, I am not satisfied with the general management of this Organisation, I am not satisfied with the high pay of the Controller and other officers. Sir, if the Hon'ble Prime Minister who runs the administration of the whole Province gets a monthly salary of Rs.2,000, I do not understand where is the justification that the salary of the Motor Transport Controller should be Rs.2,700 per mensem. Sir, it cannot be said that the Provincial Government has got no control over the salary of this particular officer. It is not a post the salary of which has been fixed by the Secretary of State for India or by the Central Government like a few all India Services. Sir, I enquired from the Hon'ble Prime Minister whether the service given by the wife of the Controller is gratis and voluntary one just to help her husband and whether he would allow the wives of other officers as well to help their respective husbands in their work. But, Sir, no reply was given to that. Then thirdly, Sir, the way in which the appointments are made in general and the way of appointment of outsiders in particular, I am not at all satisfied. I am not satisfied with the absence of well-defined rules and regulation regarding qualifications, scales of pay and increments of the staff. Sir, Government's contention is that by virtue of Mrs. Adamson's control over Mr. Adamson's domestic affairs she is also in charge of the domestic affairs of Government Organisation under Mr. Adamson. We can understand the domestic affairs of a household but we have failed to understand the domestic affairs of a Government Organisation. Does she feed the employees and look after their interest or they are being treated like so many domestic servants? Then, Sir, the purpose of starting this Organisation as originally explained was that it would be mostly utilised for civil population's requirement but what do we find now? It is really shameful. From the replies that we have received from Government and the statements made by the Government in this connection already referred to by me to-day and in reply to a Question of mine yesterday, it will be perfectly clear that the Organisation is not only run in a most unbusiness-like manner but also it is not serving the purpose for which it was originally intended. Government mentioned about the Central Government when the question of Mr. Adamson's pay came up for discussions. Sir, may we know how the Central Government comes in and since when? We ought to have been informed about it. The Budget or the Budget Memorandum do not say anything like that. I therefore request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to pay special attention

to the Organisation and to take all possible steps so that the Organisation may be run decently and properly and the first step towards the improvement should be to make the Organisation free from undue interference from the outsiders. Under no circumstances an outsider should be allowed to have any access to Government files and to boss over the employees of the Government. The sooner it is done the better for all concerned.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Mr. Speaker Sir, I will not take long to say what I have to say—not more than five minutes, and probably not as long. I want to make three points. Firstly, had the inherent courtesy towards ladies, which Mr. Mookerjee said yesterday, always characterised the behaviour of Indian gentlemen towards ladies extended to the office staff of the Provincial Motor Transport Controller, we need not now be discussing a lady. I think it is a pity that the name of this lady should have been brought into this House at all.

The whole thing could have been settled domestically if those who complained to certain Members of this House had done so to the Provincial Motor Transport Controller, and the name of the lady need not have been brought here.

Apart altogether from the way in which this lady carries out her duties—her voluntary duties—it is quite clear that she undertook those duties with the very best intentions namely, with the intention of doing her bit to help the war, and also to help her husband.

It was made a subject of complaint yesterday by an hon. Member that this lady sits over clerks and makes them do in one hour what it should take seven hours to do. I submit, Sir, that contrary to being censured, if anybody can make anybody else these days get a move on and do a job of work in one hour that normally takes seven hours to do, that person, irrespective of sex, deserves the whole-hearted thanks of the entire country. I would like to add, Sir, that my experience of the office of the Provincial Motor Transport Controller, shows that it is possible to transact business there from as early as 9.15 A. M., till as late as 5 P.M., and that I submit, Sir, is an example which other Government Offices could follow with benefit.

*Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is rather unfortunate that we have to discuss about a lady here. Government by taking this peculiar action by approving the appointment of the wife of an officer is responsible for this. I know very well there are many good wives in the town of Shillong itself who will be very glad to share the burden of their husbands. I know, Sir, some Secretariat Officer has to be literally dragged from the office by his wife from the midst of files. But this is no reason why an officer should be allowed to allow his wife to step into his official duties. It is for this reason, Sir, that this Motion has come to this House almost painfully. It was largely due to the behaviour of that particular lady officer that the reversion of a very competent and important official in that Department has taken place. I refer to the case of Mr. Barbara. I understand and I think it is quite correct that it is on account of undue interference of this lady officer that he had to revert. One day Mr. Wall came and told me that he submitted a representation to the Government that it was due to the interference of a lady whose designation has not been normally stated by Government that he had to resign. I think, Sir, that it is my duty to bring these to the notice of Government.

*Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to place before the House two facts. Sir, the clerks in that Office are never allowed casual leave. Even persons coming from Government Offices are not allowed casual leave. If they remain absent for a day, they are not allowed pay for that day. They do not get even privilege leave, Sir.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Mr. Mookerjee has complained that I give him no credit for his elaborate and constructive criticisms. As a matter of fact, he quoted what I stated on an earlier occasion that I can satisfy all critics, but not Mr. Mookerjee. I take my stand on the same position even to-day. From this discussion raised under rule 40, I could not

follow whether my Friend's objection is against the Organisation as a whole or whether for the failure of the Organisation to help public transport, or in the matter of the wife of the Controller of the Provincial Motor Transport interfering in the daily business of the Office. (Mr. B. Mookerjee—Primarily last one) I am glad to hear that my hon. Friend has no complaint against the Organisation itself. He wants that the Organisation should function and he wants that this motor transport business should help in the transport of public goods. At the present moment, the fleet that has been made available on the Lease and Land basis of the Central Government, has been utilised in the first place to make the Trunk road passable for those that have to travel on that road. Our road which was originally meant to carry a truck of 3½ tons has been in recent years, through the vagaries of war to carry heavy trucks—as much as 12 ton loads—with the result that the road has become very corrugated and full of pot-holes and as the result the motorists have come to much grief. When this matter was brought to the notice of the Defence Department, they have been good enough to remake the road, not only to remake on the previous specifications, but they are going to make the road as good as the roads running from Sylhet to Shillong and Shillong to Gauhati, at their cost but they wanted the help of the Assam Government in producing shingles and road-metal that would be necessary. Assam Government in the Public Works Department had certain quarries from which shingles are provided for repair of roads, but the Public Works Department had no vehicles to transport them, as the quarries are situated in such areas where there are no Railway lines. Most of the hon. Members who travel over that road know that Railways run about parallelly at a distance of about two or three miles. Consequently, Sir, it was the first duty of the Assam Motor Transport Organisation to lend its fleet on hire for transport of the metal from the Public Works Department's quarries on to the roadside. If by this means, the road is developed and converted into a pucca one, the public of Assam will be much benefited. Therefore, this fleet is utilised for the purpose of serving the public interest and not sitting idly.

I am not unmindful of the fact that probably Mr. Mookerjee wants that the owners of the lorries that were plying over certain sections of the roads throughout Assam and which were requisitioned for Military purposes last year, should be supplied with vehicles for resuming their trade. In this connection, Sir, I can inform the House that the Assam Motor Transport Organisation under Mr. Adamson has repaired some of the dilapidated lorries that were taken from the Military and thereafter these lorries have now been utilised as carriers of public goods. This Organisation has also helped various public interests, *i.e.*, by making available certain number of new trucks and motor vehicles for use by people in their respective areas. A number of applications for such a purpose are even now pending. This morning some hon. Members of this House approached me with their prayer that, as the Railway line between Habiganj and Shaistaganj is likely to be discontinued and there is no other means of traffic in that area, some lorries should be given to them. Already, Sir, I have ordered that six of the vehicles from the Assam Motor Transport should be made available either to be run by the Assam Transport themselves or, if any private enterprise comes forward, this should undertake to utilise them. So, Sir, it proves that this Organisation is serving various public interests by making available a number of lorries.

From the last thing mentioned by Mr. Mookerjee and from various Questions, as well as from the supplementary Questions arising out of this Question, it was sought to be established that this Motor Transport Organisation is quite good and it is being run efficiently but for the interference of the wife of the Head. I am surprised that Mr. Rohini Chaudhuri, after full discussion of this question is labouring to know why this Government has appointed the lady. Even to-day Mr. Blennerhassett reminded the House that she gives her voluntary services without any payment or allowance as her contribution towards war efforts. This lady receives no remuneration or allowance for her services. She has been helping the Office from the time when the Office was in infancy and when there was only one Officer, Mr. Adamson himself; and she ran

the Office while Mr. Adamson was out on tour. She has also been helping even after the 22nd July last when Mr. Adamson was given a deputy who is an Indian Police Service Officer. I can say only this much, Sir, that on the discussion and the question that has been raised on this score, Mr. Adamson will be told with a request that his wife may not come again to supervise the work of the Office. I think, Sir, the last point which Mr. Mookerjee urged vehemently will be solved to the satisfaction of all concerned according to the wishes of the Members of this House.

As regards the question of casual leave raised by my Friend Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy, the file dealing with this subject is with me now with draft rules for my approval. I have not been able to see the rules that have been framed owing to my pre-occupation with Assembly work. In the first place, hon. Members must remember that this institution is run on a semi-commercial basis and the officers serving there cannot have the same sort of medical or other leave as the Government officers get. It has been said that even Government officers who had gone from their original offices to this new Office for temporary service, have to submit to the same rules. These Officers cannot have it both ways. They have voluntarily gone to this Office because they are given a better pay. They cannot expect that they will get better pay as also all the other privileges which they enjoyed in a permanent Government Office.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Is this lady officer paid any vehicle allowance?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Not, so far as I know, Sir.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Does this lady officer issue orders on behalf of the Transport Controller?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Not, so far as I am aware, Sir.

Prorogation of the Assembly

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The sitting is to conclude now. And it is the order of His Excellency the Governor that the Assembly is to be prorogued at the conclusion of to-day's sitting. The order of His Excellency is to the following effect:—

“In exercise of power conferred by clause (b) of Sub-Section (2) of Section 62 of the Government of India Act, 1935, I, Andrew Gourlay Clow, hereby prorogue the Assam Legislative Assembly at the conclusion of its sitting of the 30th November, 1943.

A. G. CLOW,
Governor of Assam.”

The Assembly was then prorogued.

Shillong:

The 26th January 1944.

A. G. P. (L.A.) No. 129-122+2-2-2-1944

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam

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