

Proceedings of the Sixteenth Session of the First Assam Legislative Assembly, assembled under the provision of the Government of India Act, 1935

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong at 2 p. m. on Friday, the 16th March, 1945.

PRESENT

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral answers were given)

Distribution of Woolen Cloths

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked :

*133. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The quantity of woolen cloths imported by Government direct or through dealers in the Province during 1944 ?

(b) The procedure adopted by them in distributing the same in each district of the Province ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

133. (a)—1,000 blankets for Naga Hills, 23,000 blankets in all for Darrang, Sibsagar, Lakhimpur and Khasi and Jaintia Hills were imported through Civil Supply Agency. Besides these Government have no informations as to what other varieties of woolen goods were imported by dealers in the Province during 1944.

(b)—These were distributed through wholesalers and retailers appointed by District Officers to the most needy persons.

List of Articles Supplied to Security Prisoners

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

*134. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether each of the articles included in the list of requirements for the security prisoners of Assam, laid on the table of the hon. Members of the Assembly in reply to starred question No. 158 (c) asked by Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee, M.L.A., in the November Session of the Assembly, 1944 has been supplied ?

(b) If not, why ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA replied :

134. (a) & (b)—Subject to modifications where the articles indicated could not be procured, the answer is in the affirmative.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : May I know why some of the articles could not be procured ?

† The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : They may not be available in the market.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : May I know the names of the articles which were not procured ?

† Speech not corrected.

† The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : I am not quite sure what variations there were and unless and until I make further enquiry, I cannot say that now.

† Srijut GAURIKANTA TALUKDAR : Will Government be pleased to put immediate pressure on the jail authorities to supply sufficient articles ?

† The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : That will be looked into.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : Is it not a fact that the articles not supplied are more than the articles supplied ?

† The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : I am not prepared to accept that.

Re Shortage of Cloth Supply

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI asked :

*135. (a) Are Government aware of the acute shortage of cloth supply in every part of Surma Valley at present ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state what steps, if any, are being taken by them to ensure supply of the same ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

135. (a)—Yes, there is a shortage of the finer varieties of cloth.

(b)—Government have made arrangements for the procurement, transport and distribution of the Province's monthly quota in an organised manner through suitable agencies.

† Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI : May we know the approximated time within which the quota is likely to arrive in the Province ?

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : It is being shipped daily from Calcutta by Messrs Shaw Wallace and Company on an average of 200 bales per day.

Re Distribution of Cloth and Yarn in Kamrup District

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS asked :

*136. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The present quantities of periodical allotments in their scheme for distribution of cloth and yarn to each of the subdivisions of Kamrup district ?

(b) Through whom those allotments are supplied to the local dealers in each subdivision of the Kamrup district ?

(c) Whether the said allotments are being supplied in full and regularly to the local dealers ?

(d) When the last issues of cloth and yarn were made for each subdivision of Kamrup district and for what period they were issued ?

(e) The steps taken by Government to ensure regular supply of full allotments of these commodities to and by the supplying Agents of the said district ?

(f) Whether cases of selling cloth above the authorised rates, and cases of stocking and selling cloth without a proper licence were reported to the authorities concerned in the Barpeta subdivision in 1944 ?

(g) If so, what action has been taken on those reports ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

136. (a)—The Subdivisions of Kamrup district like all other Subdivisions of the Province will receive a quota according to their population out of every unit of 100 bales received in the Province.

(b)—The system followed so far has been that, while those dealers who procured cloth privately were allowed to sell or distribute it in the usual course of business, those dealers who received any allotments as distributing agents in respect of cloth procured with the help of Government distributed or sold it under the directions of the local officers. In future, the Co-operative wholesale Societies of dealers will function as the distributing agents.

(c)—The question does not arise as no fixed and assured allotments have yet been made. Government distribute whatever quantities their authorised agents are able to procure from time to time on a population basis in all parts of the Province.

(d)—The last allotment was made in December 1944, in respect of the purchases made in November 1944. A further allotment will shortly be made.

(e)—There are no supplying agents in any district. Government have appointed a small number of procuring agents, who send the share of each Subdivision to one or more distributing agents nominated by the local officers or selected by the Provincial Textile Commissioner.

(f)—Yes.

(g)—Government sanctioned the prosecution of the dealers concerned under the Cotton Cloth and Yarn Control Order.

†Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Is it a fact that the November quota in the Barpeta Subdivision has been given to one Marwari gentleman at Nalbari for distribution?

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I want notice of that. It is a new question.

Re Stock position of food stuffs in the Province

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked:

*137. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The total quantity of each of the rationed commodities in stock on the 31st January 1945, in each Subdivision of the Province.
- (b) The total quantity of each of the same required weekly in each Subdivision of the Province?
- (c) The total quantity of each imported rationed commodity actually received during the months of November and December 1944 and January 1945 (to be shown Subdivision by Subdivision and month by month)?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

137. (a)—A statement of stock position as it stood on 1st February 1945, is placed on the Library table.

(b)—It cannot be ascertained as no separate account is maintained for the purpose.

(c)—A statement is laid on the table.

Statement referred to in reply to Starred Question No. 137 (c), asked by Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee at the Budget Session of the Assembly, 1945

Imported Commodities received during the month of November 1944

	Name of the Subdivision	Name of Commodities									
		Sugar	Salt	Flour, Atta and Soojee	Dals	Mustard Oil	Jagree (Gur)	Wheat			
1	Syhet ..	Md. sr. ch. 5,128 19 0	Md. sr. ch. 6,632 10 0	Md. sr. ch. 3,067 22 8	Md. sr. ch. 1,797 5 0	Md. sr. ch. 343 30 0	Md. sr. ch. ..	Md. sr. ch. ..	Md. sr. ch. ..	Md. sr. ch. ..	Md. sr. ch. ..
2	Karimganj ..	2,598 6 12	1,000 0 0	601 14 0	1,378 5 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
3	Habiganj ..	3,246 38 0	..	..	2,613 39 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
4	Maulvibazar ..	1,083 14 0	7,275 18 0	658 0 0	2,597 13 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
5	Sunanganj ..	1,540 0 0	6,500 0 0	..	1,809 30 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
6	Silchar ..	1,279 19 0	5,100 0 0	500 0 0	2,798 20 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
7	Hailakandi ..	501 24 0	2,000 0 0	..	2,189 30 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
8	Shillong ..	808 20 0	4,742 16 0	2,895 30 0	1,211 10 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
9	Sibsagar ..	4,791 35 0	..	886 20 0	3,770 38 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
10	Jorhat ..	2,376 14 0	5,084 30 0	1,426 9 0	3,571 36 0	..	..	..	..	..	1,859 0 0
11	Golaghat ..	2,776 17 0	11,255 27 0	1,943 7 0	3,134 29 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
12	Margherita ..	1,220 10 0	..	615 2 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
13	Dibrugarh ..	668 10 0	..	6,917 5 0	7,015 5 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
14	North Lakhimpur ..	..	6,729 0 0	184 38 0	988 20 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
15	Gauhati ..	1,201 28 0	3,551 30 0	3,902 39 0	3,401 11 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
16	Barpeta ..	939 37 0	2,371 38 0	1,744 3 0	1,572 36 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
17	Tezpur ..	670 13 0	3,884 2 0	2,477 4 0	1,772 36 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
18	Mangaldai ..	1,469 35 0	3,214 8 0	450 26 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
19	Nowgong ..	1,585 30 0	10,910 15 0	4,653 20 0	5,059 33 0	..	..	..	..	..	..

Imported Commodities Received During the Month of December, 1944

1	Sylhet ..	2,185 18 0	6,751 17 0	2,339 19 0	2,625 16 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
2	Karimganj ..	1,498 15 0	14,034 28 0	1,121 0 0	1,913 12 0	334 25 0	..	..	..	..	..
3	Habiganj ..	825 0 0	13,026 0 0	491 18 0	880 28 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
4	Maulvibazar ..	1,355 29 0	6,000 0 0	626 0 0	3,677 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
5	Sunanganj ..	1,889 0 0	7,592 32 0	1,129 0 0	531 25 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
6	Silchar ..	1,022 37 0	3,487 24 0	2,705 0 0	2,861 29 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
7	Hailakandi ..	1,224 36 0	996 32 0	238 15 0	949 13 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
8	Shillong ..	410 8 0	1,762 35 0	5,279 15 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
9	Sibsagar ..	..	..	76 30 0	4,369 12 0	..	..	..	..	..	..

P.T.O.

Re Srijut Harinarayan Barua, a prisoner in Sunamganj Jail

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

*138. (a) Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a chart showing the fortnightly weight of Srijut Harinarayan Barua, a prisoner now lodged in Sunamganj Jail from 1st January 1944 up till now ?

(b) Do Government propose to release him owing to his ill health ?

(c) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

138. (a)—The prisoner has been in the Gauhati Jail since 22nd December 1944. His weight was 171 lbs. on each occasion of the fortnightly weighment taken during the months of January and February last.

(b) & (c)—The Questions do not arise as the prisoner is in good health.

† Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Are we to understand that he is not to be released because of his good health ?

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Not on medical grounds, surely.

Bus Service between Habiganj and Shaistaganj

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

*139.(a) Are Government aware that since the Shaistaganj-Habiganj branch of the Bengal and Assam Railway was abolished, bus service has been opened for passengers traffic from Habiganj to Shaistaganj and back ?

(b) If so, how many buses are allowed to run daily and how many times the buses run in a day ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the total quantity of petrol sanctioned quarterly for the purpose ?

(d) Are Government aware that serious hardship is caused to the passengers on account of scarcity of accommodation in those buses each time ?

(e) Is it a fact that adequate number of buses is not placed on the line every time ?

(f) Are Government aware of the fact that there is persistent agitation among the local public over this state of affairs ?

(g) If so, do Government propose to remove the difficulties by allowing more buses to be run each time every day on the said route ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

139. (a)—Yes. This service has been running for a number of years.

(b)—14 buses are allowed to run for 17 trips each way daily.

(c)—1864 gallons of petrol quarterly.

(d) and (e)—An adequate number of buses have permits on the line and as many as possible can run daily according to the amount of petrol allowed. When more petrol is made available more trips will be run by existing buses, which are adequate to deal with all traffic demands.

(f)—No such agitation has been brought to the notice of the Authority concerned.

(g)—Does not arise.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it not a fact that, for want of sufficient quantity of petrol, trips, which are now allotted on the road, are not sufficient ?

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: As I have already answered, 17 trips each way daily have been allowed. It has not been brought to the notice of Government that with the petrol allowed these trips cannot be run.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it not a fact that on many occasions they submitted applications to the Superintendent of Police, Sylhet.

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am not aware of that. He has not sent them up.

† Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Will Government be pleased to make an enquiry whether there were public representations to the Superintendent of Police, Sylhet, to look into the actual difficulty of the people and to allot more petrol for increase of the number of trips?

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Very well, I will make an enquiry.

Deaths caused to Civil population by Military Vehicles

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked:

* 140. Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing (i) the number of deaths caused to civil population of the Province being knocked down by Military cars during the period beginning from 1939 up till now; (ii) the names of the deceased persons with names of places where such accidents took place; (iii) the dates of such occurrence in each case; (iv) the amount of compensation given to the families of the deceased persons stating names to whom such compensation has been given; and (v) the names of families of the deceased persons who have not got any compensation, though applied for?

*141. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that Srijut Govinda Ram Bhuyan, a retired Government servant was knocked down at Gauhati by a Military car on the 7th August 1944 and died subsequently on the 1st October 1944.
- (b) Whether it is a fact that the culprit driver while running away was detected by two Military officers who were in the vicinity and was compelled by them to take the wounded to the Military Hospital?
- (c) Whether any statement was recorded by the Military officials from the deceased before his death?
- (d) Whether it is a fact that some forms for making claims were given to the sons and daughters of the deceased by the Military officers?
- (e) Whether the forms were later filled up and sent to the proper quarters?
- (f) Whether it is a fact that the compensation promised to be given to the orphans have not yet been given?
- (g) Whether Government propose to start thorough enquiries regarding the aforesaid case and arrange for substantial compensation to be given to the sons and daughters of the deceased.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

140.—The total number of cases reported in this period was 321. The Police Department has not been concerned with the assessment and payment of compensation and the particulars under headings (iv) and (v) are not therefore available at present. Government do not consider that it would serve a useful purpose in the circumstances to give names and dates at present. The Military authorities have recently established a Claims Commission with a representative in the Province and the cases which remain unsatisfied will be taken up with him.

† Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: May we know which Department is concerned for the assessment and payment of compensation, if not the Police Department?

† The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The Military have established a Claims Commission. They will be dealing with the matter. If any case is brought before the Provincial Government it will be placed before the Commission.

141.—(a)—Yes.

(b)—Government are only aware that the driver concerned was a member of the U. S. A. Forces and the case was investigated by U. S. Military Police.

(c)—It is understood that this is so.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—Yes.

(f)—Yes.

(g)—Government will take the matter up with the Claims Commission.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Sir, is it not a fact that the sons and daughters of the deceased had submitted a petition to the Hon'ble Premier on the 8th December last?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, Sir. As I said, Government will take up the matter with the Claims Commission.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: When they will get the compensation, Sir?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we are already in correspondence.

† Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: May I know, Sir, who is the representative of the Province in the Claims Commission?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, I think, my Hon'ble Friend has misunderstood the position. The Claims Commission has sent their representative to Assam. We have no representative of ours with this Commission.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answer were laid on the table.)

Re Karimganj Chanda Sanmilanee

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA asked :

104. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they received copies of resolutions passed in a meeting of the Karimganj Chanda Sanmilanee held on the 19th July 1944?

(b) Is it a fact that this is an unrepresented Caste among the Caste Hindus in Government Service?

(c) Is it a fact that Babu Satyendra Kumar Chanda, B.A., (Hon.) was nominated in the year 1944, by the Assam Public Service Commission for Subordinate Services?

(d) Is it a fact that up till now his claim for appointment has been passed over in favour of candidates below him in the list approved by the Assam Public Service Commission?

(e) Do Government propose to consider his case?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

104. (a)—The answer is in the negative.

(b)—Government have no information. The reservations for communities do not extend to the separation of specific quotas for sub-divisions such as particular castes among the Caste Hindus.

(c)—Yes : he was placed fourteenth in the list of Surma Valley Hindus.

(d)—Government have no reason to suppose so : enquiry is being made of the various appointing authorities but it will take time to obtain all their answers.

(e)—As already stated, the recommendation was for the Subordinate Services, for which Government do not themselves make the appointments.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Is it not a fact, Sir, that the candidates much down in the list of the passed candidates have already got the appointment while some of those in the top of the list have not ?

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

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Will the Hon'ble Prime Minister be pleased to enquire into the matter, Sir ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : I require notice of it, Sir.

Stock position of Standard cloth and Foodstuffs

Babu KARUNA SINDH ROY asked :

105. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The amount of profit made by Government by selling—(i) Standard cloth, (ii) salt, (iii) Kerosene oil, (iv) sugar, (v) Dals of various kinds, (vi) Atta and flour, to the public during the period from 1st January 1944 to 31st January 1945 ?

(b) The amount in stock of each of the aforesaid articles in each district on the 31st January 1945 ?

(c) The quantity of each of the aforesaid articles fixed for each of the people of rural areas to be included in the ration card ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

105. (a)—Balance sheet is drawn up for the whole scheme of procurement and distribution under "86 A—Capital outlay—Grain Storage Scheme and Standard cloth and loss and profit is not worked out monthly, commodity by commodity. Figures of profit and loss during January 1944 to January 1945, cannot therefore be supplied.

(b)—A statement showing the stock excluding Kerosene oil, the stock of which remains with the agents of the B. O. C. and S. V. O. C. as it stood on 1st February 1945, is placed on the Library table.

(c)—Rationing has not been introduced in rural areas and no limit has been fixed for any of the foodstuffs except salt which is half a seer per head per month.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : With regard to (c), Sir, will the Hon'ble Prime Minister contradict me when I say that not a single person is getting $\frac{1}{2}$ seer of salt per head in the district of sylhet ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Yes, Sir, I am prepared to contest this statement. Our reports from the district authorities are that in almost all the Subdivisions $\frac{1}{2}$ seer of salt is allowed per head.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA : Sir, so far as Nowgong is concerned, they are getting only 3 chhataks and in some cases 4 chhataks only instead of 8 chattacks as allowed by the Hon'ble Premier.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : That is giving information to me, Sir. However, I will see to it.

Re Comrade Moni Roy, a Communist Worker of Silchar

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

106. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Why Comrade Moni Roy, a Communist worker of Silchar, has been externed from Cachar district in February 1945 ?

- (b) Whether Government propose to withdraw the ban on aforesaid Communist worker ?
 (c) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

106. (a)—The hon. Member appears to be misinformed. If he alludes to Srijut Manindra Nath Roy, Government understand that he was externed by order of the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, some time in 1942 and that his home is in Habiganj. The ground for his externment was that he was one of a number of persons who came to Cachar on the ground of undertaking Military contracts, but whose *bona-fides* was not accepted by the District authorities.

(b) & (c)—Not, unless adequate grounds are given for so doing.

Re Scarcity of cloth

Babu BIPIN BEHARI DAS asked :

107. (a) Are Government aware of the acute scarcity of cloth in the Province at present ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state what steps are going to be taken by them to ensure its supply ?

(c) Do Government propose to give necessary facilities to the merchants for importing cloth in the Province ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

107. (a)—Yes, scarcity of the finer varieties of mill-made cloth has been reported from certain parts of the Province.

(b) and (c)—Government have made necessary arrangement for procuring the quota of cloth due to Assam by appointing suitable procuring agencies and for distributing the same through the Subdivisional wholesale Co-operative Societies of dealers formed for the purpose in every Sub-division. In the circumstances separate facilities to traders will not be necessary.

Housing difficulties for Government Officers on transfer

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

108. (a) Are Government aware that consequent on the present day difficulties for getting accommodation, officers while going to a new station on transfer generally occupy seats in the Dak-Bungalow, if there be any ?

(b) Are Government aware that casual visitors do not find space in Dak-Bungalows at present due to that ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether any of the seat or seats of the Sylhet Dak-Bungalow were occupied continuously by any visitor for more than a week from September to December 1944 ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

108. (a)—It is likely that this has frequently happened in the late great pressure on accommodation, but the position is improving.

(b)—Government have had no complaints.

(c)—The Deputy Commissioner has been asked to report.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Sir, is it a fact that some of the officers belonging to the Assam Transport Department are occupying the Sylhet Dak-Bungalow and one of them is occupying one compartment with his family ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we have not got that information and no complaint has been made. But as I have already said, the Deputy Commissioner has been asked to report.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Will Government be pleased to ask the Deputy Commissioner not to allow one particular visitor to get a big room of the Dak-Bungalow occupied for a long time with his wife, children, and Aya?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am getting a report from the Deputy Commissioner and on receipt of that action will be taken.

Re Chanda Sanmilan (Barbar Community) of Karimganj

Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN asked:

109. Will the Hon'ble Premier be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether a representation from the Chanda Sanmilan (Barbar Community) of Karimganj was received by him in July 1944?
- (b) If so, what action has been taken or proposed to be taken on that representation?
- (c) Whether it is a fact that this community is unrepresented in Government service?
- (d) If so, whether Government propose to give special consideration to candidates of this community at the time of making future appointments?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

109.—The hon. Member is referred to the replies given to similar questions [Unstarred Questions Nos.104 (a)-(c)] asked by Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya at this Session.

Adjournment Motion re Settlement of Balijuri and Soraguri grazing Reserves in the Nowgong District.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I have got notice of an Adjournment Motion from Srijut Mahi Chandra Bora.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: Sir, I beg leave of the House to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, throwing open of Balijuri and Soraguri grazing Reserves in Chalchali Mouza, Nowgong district, to settlement against overwhelming opposition from the public.

Sir, these two Reserves....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: When did the hon. Member get the information?

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: Only yesterday, Sir, I received a telegram.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: At what time?

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: At about 12, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: But the hon. Member moved a Cut Motion in the afternoon on a matter of this nature.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: So far as the Demands for Grants for Revenue was concerned, Sir, there was no time for me to speak. A telegram and a copy of the representation that was submitted....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: But the policy of Land Settlement was under discussion yesterday and it was understood that all grievances in regard to various cases of eviction that have arisen in pursuance of the policy would be placed before the House. There should be a finality of discussion about a certain matter. The hon. Member got an opportunity to bring all these things before the House yesterday in connection with that discussion. And it was with a view to give scope for a full-dress debate on all the aspects of the recent policy of Land Settlement adopted by Government that the hon. Member was allowed to move his Cut Motion yesterday. I do not, therefore, hold that the Motion is in order. It does not get my consent.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam. I beg, Sir, to move that a

sum not exceeding Rs.44,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head "4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.44,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax'."

There are four Cut Motions. Each of the hon. Members may move his Motion and very briefly he may give his reasons. My plan today is that I will allow these Cut Motions to be moved and there will be one reply by the Hon'ble Minister and I will request the hon. Members to be very brief.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.18,415 under grant No. 1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax, Minor head—Collection of Taxes on Agricultural Income, Sub-head—A.—Provincial Agricultural Income-tax Staff—1—Pay of Officers (total), at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(My object is to raise a discussion about indiscriminate assessment of Agricultural Income-tax upon agriculturists for income from paddy and rice.)
Sir, by an Amendment to the Assam Finance Bill I wanted to save the small cultivators from the clutches of the Agricultural Income-tax but unfortunately the House rejected that Amendment. On that occasion I explained how the small cultivators were being pressed by the officers put in charge of collections. The procedure that has been adopted by these officers is that they generally collect some information regarding these cultivators. These informations are very often incorrect. Then they issue notices on them and ask them to produce their accounts. These cultivators being illiterate, it is very difficult for them to produce the accounts. Invariably when they fail to produce their accounts they are assessed. My submission to Government is that these poor cultivators should be protected. With these words, Sir, I commend my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury's Motion* is practically the same.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: I will not move it, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir. I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.44,000 under Grant No.1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax, at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(My object is to criticise Government for not having an Agricultural Income-tax office in the District headquarters.)

Sir, last year also I brought it to the notice of the Government that the assesses, specially in the district headquarters are very much inconvenienced for want of any regular offices of the Agricultural Income-tax Department. Sir, last year as I said the Income-tax Officer examined the papers inside the room of the Dak Bungalow which he was occupying. He had to sit on his bed and there was only one chair which he could offer to those who went to show him their papers but this time it so happened that there was no space in any of the rooms but in one room there were 3 Officers—the Assistant Commissioner of Agricultural Income Tax of Assam, Income Tax Officer and another gentleman. The Officer was compelled to examine our papers on the verandah and you can easily understand,

*That the provision of Rs.18,415 under Grant No.1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation tax, Minor head—Collection of taxes on Agricultural Income, Sub-head—A.—Provincial Agricultural Income-tax Staff—1.—Pay of Officers (total), at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100.
(To raise a discussion about the indiscriminate assessment of cultivators in the district of Sylhet.)

Sir, that the whole place was turned into a Bazar and no privacy of any body's account could be maintained. Sir, my objection to this is that accounts of private individuals are highly confidential matters and these should not be discussed in a place where there is no privacy. So, I hope Government will see specially—when they are making so much money out of this department—that assesses are provided with suitable accommodation so that they may feel comfortable and that they may be treated in a better way than they are done at present.

With these few words, Sir, I move my Motion before the House.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.44,000 under Grant No. 1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax, at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(My object is to raise a discussion about harassment of middle class cultivators for agricultural taxation.)

Sir, no actual cultivator's family can earn such a big income for which it can be made liable to be charged an Agricultural Income-tax. But this year many Kishans of Sunamganj area have been given notice to show cause why they should not be charged income-tax, even the traditional bumper crop in buro area cannot justify imposition of Agricultural Income-tax on middle class cultivators. I shall cite two cases for the information of the House to show how ridiculously two middle class cultivators' families have been harassed. One Sundar Das of Inathnagar is a well-off cultivator with several brothers and a large number of nephews and nieces. He can bring to his granary utmost 500 maunds of paddy annually. Can this family be assessed with Agricultural Income-tax? But I know this family has been charged Agricultural Income-tax and by this time, I think, the tax has been realised.

Similarly the family of one Nadia Das has been harassed. I am glad, Sir, that Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury has submitted a Cut Motion on this subject. But I want to question him whether he knows, either directly or indirectly he is responsible in the matter of threatening the Kishans that they would be charged Agricultural Income-tax. When opinions began to differ as to the quantity of surplus paddy in the Sunamganj Subdivision, we instructed our workers to make a survey just before the last November Session of the Assembly and I instructed Adhar Chandra Pal and Behari Das of Beheli to take up the work for Sachana area and they sent letters and telegrams to me in the midst of the last November Session about the appropriate supplies of paddy in villages around Sachana area. After my return from Shillong Adhar Pal told me that he could not survey all the villages and send accounts from all the villages around Sachana area because one of the Officers of the Syndicate threatened him saying that if he would submit the reports to Government he and others would be charged Agricultural Income-tax.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order, has the hon. Member finished?

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Yes, Sir, with these words I commend the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motions moved:

"That the provision of Rs.18,415 under Grant No. 1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax, Minor head—Collection of Taxes on Agricultural Income, Sub-head—A.—Provincial Agricultural Income-tax Staff—1.—Pay of Officers (total), at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

"That the total provision of Rs.44,000 under Grant No.1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax, at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100"

"That the total provision of Rs.44,000 under Grant No. 1, Major head—4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax, at page 25 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.44,000 do stand reduced by Rs.100"

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: I wish to submit, Sir, that there has not been any case of either indiscriminate assessment or harassment on the part of the Departmental Officers, but what happened is this: in the years 1942-43 and

1943-44, owing to a rise in the price of paddy there might have been cases where some persons might have come under the assessible income during those years. To ascertain the number of such persons the Department addressed letters to the different Deputy Commissioners and requested them to furnish the names of persons who might have come under the operation of the Act because of the rise in the price of paddy and other things. The Deputy Commissioners supplied a list and on the basis of that notices had been issued to different persons to submit their accounts.

†Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: May I interrupt for a minute, Sir? I would like to know the source of information of the Deputy Commissioners.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: They might have been able to find it out from the local officers. Because notices have been served, it does not necessarily follow that they would be necessarily assessed.

†Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: But this is generally the case, Sir.

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: This is not the case Sir. Notices were served asking them to appear before the Income-Tax Officer and to submit their accounts. So far about 188 cases have been examined out of which only 91 persons have been assessed. So, Sir, there is no question of indiscriminate assessment, because, a definite procedure has been laid down by the Law and that procedure has been followed. So, there is no question of harassment. The Law has definitely laid down a procedure to be followed and the Departmental Officers are only following that procedure.

Then, Sir, Mr. Karuna Sindhu Roy has referred to the cases of some agriculturists who have been hard-hit by this Act. As a matter of fact, Sir, Government's net taxable limit is 3,000. After making allowance for admissible deductions unless a person has a gross income of nearabout Rs. 5,000 he generally does not come under the operation of the Act and persons having gross income of Rs. 5,000 are likely under assessed. Sir, what I have said, and I hope the House will agree with me, will show that there has neither been any case of indiscriminate assessment or any harassment.

Then, my hon. Friend Mr. Mookerjee has referred to cases of inconvenience caused to the assesses when they are to appear before the Income-Tax Officers in the District headquarters. Last year, Sir, he also drew Government's attention to this point and I gave assurance that we should look into the matter. As a matter of fact, Sir, Government addressed letters to the District Officers pointing out the inconveniences that are being caused for want of proper accommodation and I do not think the replies that we have got from some of the District Officers are encouraging. There are difficulties, Sir. As we all know there is a shortage of accommodation everywhere and therefore the Deputy Commissioners cannot assure us to provide accommodation in all cases. However, we have drawn the attention of the District Authorities to this matter and we hope they will do their best to provide accommodation wherever circumstances permit.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does any of the hon. Members want to press his Motion?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

(After a pause)

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

(After a pause)

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, I beg the leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

(After a pause)

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The question is :

“That a sum not exceeding Rs 44,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head ‘4.—Taxes on Income other than Corporation Tax’.”

The Motion was adopted.

GRANT No. 26

(Tools and Plant and Establishment Charges of the Public Works Department)
The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,76,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the Public Works Department (Establishment and Tools and Plant).

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,76,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the Public Works Department (Establishment and Tools and Plant).”

*Srijut KAMESWAR DAS : Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 11,01,098 under Grant No. 26, Major head—18-B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works, etc., Minor head—B.—Charges on construction (total), at page 137 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 13,76,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

My object is to criticise Government action for neglecting important irrigation and drainage projects in the Subdivision of Barpeta.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Sir, I am afraid this Motion is not in order. The Demand is about Establishment and Tools and Plant whereas the hon. Mover wants to criticise for certain projects which should come under Demand No. 9 and which will come up on the 22nd.

*Mr. WHITTAKER : Sir, supposing there will be no time on the 22nd, can he move to-day ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion must come under the appropriate head. Therefore the hon. Mover may table a fresh Motion under the appropriate Demand for Grants.

*Srijut KAMESWAR DAS : Very good, Sir.

Srijut MAHADEV SARMA : Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 13,76,200 under Grant No. 26, Major head—18-B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works, etc., at page 138 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 13,76,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(My object is to criticise the increased expenditure on tools and plant without taking into account the possibility of getting second hand tools and plant from the Military Departments.)

মাননীয় সভাপতি ডাক্তারীয়া যি উদ্দেশ্যত মই এই বিষয়ত আলোচনা কৰিব খুজিছো সেইটো অতি চমু কথাত এই মোছনত লেগা হৈছে। মই এতিয়া কেৱল এই বিষয়ে মন্ত্ৰীমহোদয়ৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰো। মই ভাবো যে গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট সকলো কথা বিচাৰ কৰিহে ইয়াত ধৰা প্ৰায় সাড়ে ৮ লাখ টকা যিটো বাজেটত ধৰা হৈছে—এইটো উচিত হোৱা নাই। মোৰ মনেৰে এই টকাটো বাহি কৰিবলৈ চেফটা কৰিব লাগে। তাৰ বাবে কিন্তু মন্ত্ৰীমহাশয়ে একো কৰা নাই। মই আশা কৰো গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে এইটো বিচাৰ কৰিব আৰু Military authorities ব পৰা এই বিলাক সঁজুলি পাবলৈ চেফটা কৰিব। বৰ্তমানে ব্যৱহাৰত থকা যান্ত্ৰিক সঁজুলিবোৰ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে চেফটা কৰিলে মিলিটাৰি বিভাগৰ পৰা যুদ্ধৰ শেষত পাব পাৰিব। যুদ্ধৰ পিচত বৰ্তমানে চলাই থকা সঁজুলিবোৰ পাব, তাক তেতিয়া আমাৰ Provincial revenueৰ অনেক টকা বাহি হব; আৰু সেই টকা আমি দেশৰ গঠন মূলক কামত খৰছ কৰিব পাৰিম। মই আশা কৰো গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে এই বিষয়ে যত্ন লব।

(Srijut Mahadev Sarma while speaking in Assamese in support of his Motion contended that Government instead of spending money for the purchase of new tools and plant should await return of the same by the Military Department after the war and thereby make a saving.)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved :

"That the total provision of Rs.13,76,200 under Grant No.26, Major head—18-B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works, etc., at page 138 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.13,76,200 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Sir, we are trying our best to get back from the Military Department our tools and machineries which were taken by the Military Department some time back and have not yet been returned. But even when they will be returned to us they will be quite worn out in condition. However, the suggestion made by the hon. Mover will be duly considered.

Srijut MAHADEV SARMA : Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

(After a pause).

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.13,76,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the Public Works Department (Establishment and Tools and Plant)."

The question was adopted.

GRANT NO. 7

(12.—CHARGES ON ACCOUNT OF MOTOR VEHICLES TAXATION ACT)

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.2,97,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.2,97,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act".

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY : Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.41,656 under Grant No.7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, Minor head—A.—Charges of Collection, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Establishment (total), at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(My purpose is to raise a discussion about the United Motor Transport and the Motor Service between Shillong and Sylhet.)

Perhaps this is the fourth time that I am speaking on the same matter and each time I brought this kind of Motion before the House to raise a discussion about motor service between Shillong and Sylhet, each time I was given an assurance that steps would be taken as soon as possible. But I am sorry to say, Sir, that no steps have yet been taken in this respect. The United Motor Transport Company did not open a booking office in the town of Sylhet, and has failed to provide accommodation for the passengers. The travelling public on this road, *i.e.* Sylhet-Shillong road, know it very well that the Company places all their rotten buses on the road and almost every day some bus goes out of order and as a result the passengers have to suffer a great deal. I had to pass one night in Pynursla. The other day when one of our hon. Members of this House, Khan Bahadur Abdul Majid, was travelling from Sylhet to Shillong the bus which was carrying his luggage also broke down at Dawki and had to go back to Sylhet. So, when the Khan Bahadur arrived Shillong he could not get his luggage and as a result had to undergo great difficulties in the

terrible weather of Shillong. These are the everyday occurrences. Sir, I have several times urged upon Government to take steps in order to mend the United Motor Transport Company. But so far Government could not do anything in this respect. If Government want to give any relief to the travelling public and the Motor Company does not care to pay any heed to what is ordered by Government, I think the Company should not be allowed to run their buses on this road any more and the contract for the same purpose should be given to the indigenous people of this Province. Sir, some people say—I do not know myself—that this United Motor Transport Company is a branch of the Commercial Carrying Company, Limited. If it is so, then the Commercial Carrying Company is running the business on this road in *Benami*. If you go to Shillong office of the Company you will find large number of passengers sitting there days together for a ticket but the Company does not make any arrangement for tickets. A good number of people came to me and represented their cases. Some said that they had their relatives seriously ill at home. The matter was represented to the authorities of the Company but still they did not provide them with any tickets. An officer of high rank one day told me that he was refused a seat. He came from Gauhati and was to go to Sylhet. I heard complaints from some of the passengers that regular black-marketing is in vogue in the sale of tickets. I don't know whether these are facts. But I bring these facts to the notice of the Hon'ble Prime Minister who, I hope, will look into the matter and see that these things are mended. If he fails to mend the ways of the Company, my submission is that, the license of the Company should at once be cancelled and settlement should be given to a Company which is composed of indigenous people of the Province.

With these words I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, without moving the Motion† that stands in my name, I support every word that has fallen from the mouth of my hon. Friend Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury.

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 4,800 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, Minor head—B.—Inspection of Motor Vehicles, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Inspector of Motor Vehicles, at page 43 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(My object is to criticise the system of inspection by which worst type of cars are even passed.)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, anybody travelling in motor bus service experiences a great deal of inconvenience and trouble. When one is compelled to travel and as soon as he gets into a bus he must always remain alert for fear of breaking his head or any part of his limbs. Sometimes while a bus is running one finds a part of the hood collapsing and sometimes while running fast one finds a wheel getting away. This is the condition of motor buses nowadays. When the buses are running one finds them going out of order 4 or 5 times in course of a travel for 20 to 30 miles and children are left stranded for more than 12 hours.

Sir, I understand that there is an officer to examine the conditions of the buses. I don't know how the officer examines the condition of buses and how fitness certificates are given. I don't know for what consideration this particular officer gives fitness certificates to the buses. If things continue like this and if he does not know anything of the mechanism of a motor car then I think there is no need of that particular officer. I, therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Minister concerned that there should be proper examination of all these buses by the Motor Vehicles Inspector or the post concerned should be abolished.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Maulavi Badaruddin Ahmed, does he like to move his Motion?

† That the provision of Rs.41,655 under Grant No.7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, Minor head—A.—Charges for Collection, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Establishment (total), at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To raise a discussion about over-crowding and inconvenience suffered by the general public in the Sylhet-Shillong Motor Service.)

Maulavi BADARUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 2,97,200 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(My object is to discuss the general policy of Government.)

Sir, the bus services in the Province appear to have been running without any control by the authorities. There are a number of officers to control the buses but they instead of mitigating the sufferings of the passengers have increased the same to a great extent. Over-crowding in a bus is never checked. The passengers are to undergo untold sufferings and inconveniences due to over-crowding. Rates of fares depend on the sweet-will of the owner. The rule of hanging up the fare list in the buses has been observed more by violation than by compliance.

Route permits have been renewed without considering the condition of buses. The buses have been allowed to run in the routes and most of these buses in the midst of the journey break down and thereby the passengers are detained for hours together causing maximum hardships and troubles.

On the road from Mangaldai to North-Gauhati as many as thirteen permits have been issued. But in fact only three or four buses have been plying on it. Except one, all are old and for want of seats the travelling public are to avail the services in spite of the buses being already full. The owners also do not refuse, as the more passengers they carry the more money they earn. Although there is an inspecting officer, I don't know what for he does not inspect the buses? I, therefore, draw the attention of the Government to the fact that when they issue permits to the owner of a bus the owner must be warned that he will have to keep his bus in a proper condition and also look to the convenience of the travelling public so that they may not suffer due to the negligence of the owner.

With these words, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motions moved:

1. "That the provision of Rs. 41,656 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, Minor head—A.—Charges of Collection, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Establishment (total), at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100."

2. "That the provision of Rs. 4,800 under grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, Minor head—B.—Inspection of Motor Vehicles, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Establishment, Detailed head—Inspector of Motor Vehicles, at page 43 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100."

3. "That the total provision of Rs. 2,97,200 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100."

Khan Sahib Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am glad that my hon. Friend Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury and my hon. Friend Maulavi Badaruddin Ahmed have tried to draw the attention of Government regarding the inconveniences of the passengers on the Shillong-Sylhet Road and other roads. Some of my Friends on the Opposite are apt to say that the business of this Province should be given to the indigenous people of the soil. But, Sir, from the speech of my hon. Friend Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury I find that the proprietors of the Company belong to Bengal. But I am surprised to find that not a voice of protest was raised against them. When by chance any Muslim happens to do any business in this Province, chorus of protests are raised from all quarters of the House. Why this discrimination, Sir? I draw the attention of Government and urge upon them that in future the Company should be formed with the natives of the soil and legitimate share to the Muslims given in the organisation.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Does not Bengal form a part of the Pakisthan ?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Motions that have already been moved by my hon. Friends and I am at one with the hon. Members so far as they have ventilated the grievances of the general public. There is no denying the fact that the general public who travel by buses are suffering a great deal. In this connection, I think it is my duty to mention that for these inconveniences, it is not only the Company or the contractors who are responsible; the responsibility lies to a great extent with Government as well. Sir, the number of passengers have increased a great deal. I think nobody will challenge this statement, but the number of vehicles have not been proportionately increased. I think that the number of vehicles on each road should be increased specially when the number of trains, where there are train communications as well, have been decreased. It is also a well-known fact that spare parts are not available in sufficient quantity so as to meet the demands of those who are in need of these parts. Generally speaking the vehicles that are running on the roads that have already been mentioned and other roads which have not been mentioned are old ones and in some cases, I think, it is the duty of Government to replace old vehicles by new ones. Unless the number of vehicles is increased, spare parts are made available and old vehicles are replaced by new ones, what good is it on our part to ventilate these grievances? Sir, I hope Government will take note of these and will try to remove the grievances of the people who have to travel by motor vehicles. With these few words, I support the Motions.

† Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I should like to add a few words regarding the condition of the buses which are plying between Sylhet and Shillong. Amongst many instances I will cite only one. In February last, when I was coming to attend this Session along with eight other Members of the Legislative Assembly by the second timing in two buses, the bus in which I was travelling broke down on the road between Dawki and Pynursla and all the passengers were stranded for a long time. Accidently one of the buses was running late and we stopped that bus in the mid-way and that bus had to accommodate us all much beyond its actual capacity. Again, while I was coming up to Pynursla by that very bus, the police officer there accosted the driver for carrying additional passengers. The driver said to the Police officer that as all these gentlemen were stranded on the road he had no other alternative than to take them in his bus and it would have been inhuman on his part to leave them in the midst of the road which is one of the most dangerous places. Again, in February last, when I was returning from Gauhati, the driver of the bus in which I was coming suddenly stopped the bus and discovered that some parts were going wrong. He told us that had he not stopped and detected the wrong, the bus would have straightway gone into the gorge. Sir, this state of things happens almost every day.

Next, I come to another point, which is very serious so far as the travelling public is concerned. Whenever you go to the motor station, you will find a large number of people waiting there. You will find them waiting there for days together or going down to Sylhet. Even, I have seen with my own eyes, women with their children have to wait for days for tickets. Now as the hill-section of the railway has been closed to civil population, people are to go to Sylhet *via* Shillong. But for want of accommodation they are to wait here for days together to their great inconvenience. Had it been at Sylhet they would have got food and drink but here in Shillong people are in extreme difficulty. I heard my hon. Friend complaining about blackmarket. During the last week, two of my friends came here on certain business. One of them is a Head Maulavi of a certain Madrasas and the other is a Professor. I sent them to the motor station for two days and yet they could not get their tickets. After waiting for three days the Maulavi got one ticket for Rs. 10. The Maulavi told me that at first the man whom he approached for a seat refused to be disturbed as he was asleep, but when he paid him Rs. 10, he secured one seat. My professor friend could only leave

after five days. I was also told by the Maulavi that an additional income of at least Rs. 100 per day was made by some employees of the company. He said that everybody was getting a seat by paying Rs. 12 to 18 and unless one paid the ordinary fare plus something no tickets were available. So I suggest that at least the number of buses should be increased so that people are not put to such inconveniences.

Mr. C. W. MORLEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must join in this chorus of protest. I will not traverse the ground covered by the hon. Members. I should like to offer a suggestion to Government that it might be possible for some immediate relief to be given in this matter by the conversion of some of the Assam Transport lorries. With these few words I support the Motions.

Srijut MAHADEV SARMA: মাননীয় সভাপতি ডাঙৰীয়া, এইটো সকলোৰে জনা কথা যে যুদ্ধৰ হেচাত পৰি অৱশ্য আমাৰ পুৰ্ভিচ্ছিয়েল আৰু বিজিওনেল অৰ্থবিটীয়ে এসময়ত আমাৰ প্ৰদেশত ব্যবহৃত 'বাছ' সংখ্যা কমানবলৈ বাধ্য হৈছিল; কাৰণ যি পৰিমাণ পেট্ৰল এই বাছ বিলাক চলাবলৈ লাগে সেই পৰিমাণ পেট্ৰল তেওঁলোকে দিব নোৱাৰিছিল, বৰ্ত্তমানে যুদ্ধ আমাৰ প্ৰদেশৰ পৰা দূৰলৈ যোৱাত যুদ্ধৰ হেচা আমি বহুত কম অনুভৱ কৰিছো। সেই কাৰণে মই আশা কৰো যে গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট ইমান দিন যি policyত আৰু যি যাতায়াতৰ অসুবিধাবোৰ দূৰ কৰিবলৈ চাববো দিন আহিছে। এইবিষয়ে মই স্থানীয় উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে কব খোজো যে যি সকলে তেজপুৰৰ বিষয়ে জানে আৰু সেই ঠাইলৈ গৈছে সিবিলাকে জানে যে তেজপুৰলৈ যাবলৈ বৰ্ত্তমানে কি ভয়ঙ্কৰ অসুবিধা হৈছে। আগেয়ে জাহাজেদি যাতায়াতৰ সুবিধা আছিল কিন্তু আজিকালি জাহাজ একেবাৰে বন্ধ হৈছে। মোৰ constituencyত, দীঘলে ৭১ মাইল, যাতায়াত কৰিবলৈ মুঠেই এখন লৰী দিয়া হৈছে। সেই লৰীখনত ইমান মানুহ হয় যে মানুহ ভিতৰতেই নবহে বাধ্য হৈ মটৰৰ ছডৰ ওপৰতও বহি যায়। এই কাৰণে অলপ দিনৰ ভিতৰতে কেবাটাও মটৰ দুৰ্ঘটনা হৈছে আৰু মানুহো মৰিছে। এই পাছত তেজপুৰৰ পশ্চিম ফালেও বাছৰ সংখ্যা অতি কম। মই ভাবো যে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে বৰ্ত্তমান policy change কৰিব লাগে আৰু যাতায়াতৰ সুবিধা কৰি দিব লাগে। এইটো জানিছো যে Regional Transport Authorityয়ে সম্প্ৰতি বাছৰ সংখ্যা বঢ়াইছে আৰু পেট্ৰল নিদিব বৰ অসুবিধা; কিয়নো যেনেকুৱা charcoal দৰকাৰ তেনেকুৱা charcoal পোৱা নেযায়। সেই কাৰণে মই কওঁ যে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে এই সকলোবিলাক কথা বিবেচনা কৰি আমাৰ যাতায়াতৰ অলপ সুবিধা কৰি দিব আৰু বৰ্ত্তমান অসুবিধা দূৰ কৰিব।

(Srijut Mahadev Sarma, M.L.A., speaking in Assamese on the Motion said that since the war had receded far from the Province, petrol should be more liberally issued. Alluding to the inconveniences of motor journeys he urged for the increase in the number of buses especially in the district of Darrang.)

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with Mr. Mookerjee that the number of buses is too small to give efficient service, and the Government have realised this, because I find that the Regional Transport Authorities of different districts are trying to increase the number. But they are in difficulty because they have been forced to lay down a condition that these buses should run only on gas plant. I have heard from certain reliable authorities that gas plant is not successful in Assam, because the proper quality of charcoal is very difficult to get. May I therefore request the Hon'ble Prime Minister to take some steps to move the Government of India to release some petrol for these buses? It is common knowledge that the railway journeys are now-a-days very difficult and therefore there is a great rush of passengers who want to travel by buses, but as the number of buses is extremely limited, they cannot serve all the passengers.

Another thing, which I would like to point out, is that all buses which are at present running on certain roads very often break down because of bad condition of roads, for instance, I would bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister, in charge of the Public Works Department, the portion of the road between Numaligarh and Khowang. No steps have so far been taken to improve this portion of the road.

If the Hon'ble Minister wants that there should be efficient bus service and there should be no difficulty for other vehicles that use this road, I hope, he will take immediate steps to improve this portion of the road.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have just to add one word to the long list of grievances voiced from different sections of the House. I need not describe the difficulties of my subdivision in this matter at length, as I think most of the Members know it fully well that in regard to communications my subdivision is the most backward. My subdivision is not touched by any railway or steamer service, and so we have to depend entirely on the bus service. The bus service from Rangapara to North Lakhimpur is the only outlet from North Lakhimpur to the outside world nowadays. Now, Sir, on this road only one bus is plying each day; the monopoly over this route was given to one mail contractor, and this bus very often leaves behind a large number of passengers at Rangapara due to lack of accommodation. It is quite evident that only one bus cannot take all the passengers from Rangapara to North Lakhimpur. I would therefore bring this matter to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister and urge him to come to our rescue by providing, if he can, at least another bus to run on that route.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the complaints which we have heard from the different sections of the House on this Motion are most annoying and puerile. My hon. Friend, Mr. Mookerjee has explained the difficulties of the bus-owners; one of the principal difficulties under which they work is lack of spare parts. In this country we want to move in aeroplanes, motor cars and all sorts of fast vehicles, but we do not know how to manufacture a single pin! This is our condition, and this is the position to which we have, even now, been placed after an association of 150 years with the British people who manufacture everything themselves! We are complaining of this or that part, of petrol, and so on, but you should not expect anything better than a palanquin! You must go back to the days of palanquin or *thappa*, so long as you are not allowed, by an alien rule, to manufacture all these things. What else can we expect, Sir? It is useless to talk on this subject. I am all the more surprised that my hon. Friends on my right *viz.*, the Congress Group have taken part so delightfully and so seriously in a debate of this kind in bringing petty matter without going into the root of the question.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have no hesitation in accepting that the conditions of our buses and the constant breakdowns that have been laid before the House by various hon. Members are true to a large extent. But the matter should be dispassionately considered, and I am surprised that at least two hon. Members who have taken part in this debate, knowing full well Government's efforts in obtaining more new buses and spare parts, have chosen to support this Motion which is a censure Motion. The background is this: in 1942 about 400 vehicles plying on different roads were requisitioned for military purposes. The Province went bus-dry. At this stage no new buses were available in the market throughout India. It was through the good offices of the United States of America that the Government of India got certain vehicles under the Lease—Lend programme. We were the first Province to press our sad plight to the Government of India and with their concurrence we started the Assam Motor Transport Organisation with the idea of relieving, to a great extent, the difficulty about the conveyance of goods. But the geographical position of Assam and the continuity of the enemy pressure in our boundaries, did not allow a large number of these vehicles to be placed for civil employ but had to be placed for Military constructional work. This position Government wanted to improve. They wanted to give these vehicles for replacing those that were commandeered in 1942 but this could not be carried to the same extent as Government wished. We have been given over a quarter of our requirement and have asked the Government of India to release more Lease—Lend vehicles for civilian purposes in Assam. Between October and January we asked the Government of India to release 600 more vehicles for Assam so that all the old buses running on different roads may be replaced and new vehicles placed on the roads on a larger scale than is possible at present in the Province.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA : What about the North Lakhimpur subdivision ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : This interjection does not help North Lakhimpur.

We have applied for 600 vehicles but the Government of India could release only 75 during that period and all these 75 had to be placed on a very urgent, special and humanitarian service, namely, feeding, the devastated areas of the Naga Hills and Manipur. Three thousand maunds of rice has got to be transported from Bokajan to the Manipur State and Naga Hills per day and the carriage of this requires a very large number of vehicles, because only one trip can be made and there is no return trip the same day. When I was at Delhi, I received telegraphic communication from our Chief Secretary that I should use my influence over the War Transport Department, to get further release of vehicles. My hon. Friend, Mr. Whittaker also wired to me that the vehicles which were given to the Tea Industry in replacement of those commandeered in 1942 have nearly broken down and for want of coal fuel they have to transport a million ton of wood fuel and so they required more lorries. I went and discussed this matter with Hon'ble Sir Edward Benthall and Sir Kenneth Mitchell and laid before them the transport condition in Assam. In my presence they ordered the release of 200 vehicles immediately. I was also told that in the Assam Transport as well as in the Province generally, there was a shortage of spare parts. This matter I was asked by the Secretary to place before the Central Government. This matter with the result that hon. Members, who are members of the Economic Advisory Board, had learnt in greater detail, that the Government of India sent their Deputy Director of Roads, Mr. Swamy to enquire into the spare parts position of the Province. They also asked the General Manager of the Fords Company and General Motors Company who deal with Chevrolet trucks to deal with this in order to bring into the Province new vehicles and also sufficient number of spare parts. When the promised spare parts arrive, I think, there will not be much inconvenience as mentioned by my hon. Friends. Another factor that has resulted in the reduction of number of buses in the roads is the question of petrol. Many Motor Associations have requested me to move the Central Government for an increase in the rations. By the last communication on the subject, we were told that for shortage of petrol, rations may have to be reduced and petrol for private civilian use may have to be stopped. With the opening of the pipe line from Calcutta, the threat of further curtailment of petrol operation may not materialise. Sir K. Mitchell who is in charge of the road development is coming to Assam to discuss certain outstanding and important questions on the 21st of this month. He will be staying here till the 25th of March and I will take this opportunity of placing before him the difficulties about petrol issue in the Province of Assam. When we take these three things into consideration, that is, non-release of fresh Lease—Lend vehicles for civilian use, insufficiency of spare parts and the rationing of petrol, the Government do not deserve any criticism on the ground that they have failed to get transport. We have done our best in the matter.

Some hon. Members have mentioned about the bad conditions of vehicles on the roads but it is really a wonder that these old vehicles are still on the road. One hon. Member has criticised that the Motor Vehicles Inspectorate are not performing their duties ; on the other hand when there was only one Motor Vehicles Inspector he could not examine all the vehicles plying on the roads ; we increased the number to two and later on we increased such Inspectors to four. Unfortunately, one of the Inspectors died in the middle of last year and we tried to secure another man in his place but in vain. The matter was referred to the Public Service Commission. I received their recommendation the day before yesterday and I have passed order yesterday evening, employing a new man. From the report that I get, I find they are examining more vehicles and that they have condemned a considerable number. Being a layman I cannot quarrel over the reports of the technical officers.

Lastly, Sir, my hon. Friends from the Surma Valley have criticised Government that their complaint about the conditions of service, about the amenities

provided to passengers on the Shillong-Sylhet line has not been given any attention to. Suffice it to say, Sir, that every complaint that was made on the floor of the House was sent to the Company concerned with a view to redress. I sent them the entire proceedings to take steps and to remedy certain of their deficiencies. The passenger traffic between Shillong and Sylhet had increased at least ten fold, if not more and they plead guilty to the charge of not being able to give sufficient accommodation to the intending passengers because on account of military request that two vehicles daily, for carriage of military personnel, should be allowed. I remember, Sir, that the matter was mooted on the floor of this House probably by my Friend Mr. Whittaker that we should force the Military to make their own arrangement for the carriage of their personnel. We did our level best but the military said that it was not possible for them to transport their personnel in their own lorries. It is, therefore, apparent, Sir, that whereas the passenger traffic has increased by ten times the sitting capacity has been reduced by 50 per cent. No wonder that various hon. Members have found difficulty in sending their friends down to the plains. I heard a complaint of blackmarketing in tickets last year and I at once took steps. I set up a Criminal Investigation Department Inspector to enquire into this matter and after a very thorough enquiry lasting over 2 months I got a report from which I found that it was grossly exaggerated. There were certain menials of the company who undertook to procure the tickets on a small *baksis* of a rupee or two when intending passengers could not penetrate the crowd in front of the booking office. These menials have been removed from the service of the company.

My Friend Mr. Abdur Rahman has spoken about a certain gentleman giving information that he had to pay Rs.10 extra. If that gentleman will be kind enough to give me any particulars or any witness to that transaction, I will at once place the matter in the hands of the police. I hope, my Friend Mr. Abdur Rahman will co-operate with me in this matter.

Some hon. Friends have stated that the United Motor Company is a *benami* Company of the Commercial Carrying Company. To some extent, they are correct. Although originally this was started as a separate Company, the Directors somehow or other merged themselves under the management of the Commercial Carrying Company. This was protested to by Government but as this is a private Company and the shareholders wanted this on the ground of economy, nothing could be done. The term of this United Motor Company, rather the period of permit of this Company will end with this calendar year. Advertisement will be issued in the official Gazette calling for tenders to run this service. It will be up to the children of the soil to see if they can get this line in preference to outside Company. But I am very pessimistic about this coming into effect, for, in two instances in order to safeguard the interests of the children of the soil, I asked the Companies newly formed to reserve a portion of their share capital to be bought up by the children of the soil. In spite of the fact that an advertisement was issued in the *Statesman* for one year, one-tenth of the share capital reserved was not bought by the children of the soil. (A voice:—*Statesman*!) My Friend interjected by saying "Statesman". But I am doubtful if a bigger number of people would have bought the shares if these were advertised in *Janasakti* or *Jugabheri*. Sir, even in this Commercial Carrying Company whose licence was debated on the floor of this House in 1938, I made mention that 1/6th of the share capital was reserved for the children of the soil, if they wanted to buy. About 10,000 rupees worth was bought. In the Bengal & Assam Cement Company, I also wanted that at least 1/4th of the share capital should be reserved for the people of the Province, that is, share worth 5 lakhs of rupees was intended for the local people but only shares to the value of Rs. 30,000 was subscribed. After all these experiences, it is useless to hope that our people will combine together, collect the capital and take up the business. Any way, Sir, the time will soon come, advertisement will be issued in the Gazette and it will be for our hon. Members to take up this question in right earnest.

Only one word more, Sir, that as the petrol ration was on the point of being reduced we took prompt step to appoint a Special Officer, an expert on producer gas. Luckily, we had a son of the soil who was already in service in Assam, a knowledgeable man on the subject, or whose knowledge was brushed up with a refresher course at Calcutta. He has now studied the question and is trying to get charcoal. He will be willing to help every concern who are willing to turn from petrol to producer gas. So, Sir, every possible step has been taken by Government in order to ease the situation. I think, a time will come when all these complaints will be a matter of the past.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury press his Motion?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: No, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think, the hon. Member has leave of the House to withdraw his Motion. *(after a pause.)*

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri press his Motion?

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: No, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think, the hon. Member has the leave of the House to withdraw his Motion. *(after a pause.)*

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does Maulavi Badaruddin Ahmed press his Motion?

Maulavi BADARUDDIN AHMED: No, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope, the hon. Member has leave of the House to withdraw his Motion *(after a pause.)*

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

Now, according to time-table we are to begin Demand No.5 at 3-30 P. M.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: We can sit for half an hour more, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Very well; I shall allow another 15 minutes to this Demand.

Does Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya want to move his Motion?

*Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Yes, Sir. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 2,97,200 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole Grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(My object is to discuss the public inconvenience arising from the increased fares for bus service between Karimganj and Sylhet and insufficient number of daily timings.)

Sir, I want to say a few words in addition to what has been said about the condition of Motor Transport regarding fares. Sir, the fare between Karimganj and Sylhet was formerly Re.1—a distance of about 35 miles—but it has now been raised to Rs. 3. Similarly, Sir, between Sylhet to Maulavibazar—a distance of about 37 miles—the previous fare was annas 12 and now it has been raised to Rs. 3-8-0. As you know, Sir, the distance between Sylhet and Shillong is 86 miles and the fare for third class passengers is Rs. 2-8-0 only. So, Sir, the fares of those two routes mentioned above

*Speech not corrected.

have been raised out of all proportion and that is why I draw attention of the Government by this Cut Motion to this aspect of the question and hope Government will take such steps as to reduce the fares on those routes.

With these few words, Sir, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the total provision of Rs. 2,97,200 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole Grant of Rs. 2,97,200 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also support this Cut Motion.

*The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, this matter was discussed in the Regional Transport Authority's meeting at Sylhet. Formerly, Sir, one could engage a driver on Rs. 30 but now drivers are to be found out for about Rs. 75 and prices of spare parts for motor cars have also gone up very high. The Bus Association represented this matter and after giving due consideration to everything the fares have been raised. If things come to normal and if we find that the wages of labour have come down we will see whether fares cannot be reduced.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member press his Motion?

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: No, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw this Motion. (*After a pause*).

The Motion stands withdrawn with the leave of the House.

Then I am putting the whole grant No. 7 as a question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,97,200 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act."

The Motion was adopted.

GRANT No. 8

(13.—Other Taxes and Duties)

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "13.—Other taxes and duties".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "13.—Other taxes and duties".

There are no Cut Motions. Is there to be any discussion on the Motion? (*After a pause*)—I am then putting it as a question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 9,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "13.—Other taxes and duties".

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 14

(30.—Ports and Pilotage)

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "30.—Ports and Pilotage."

*Speech not corrected.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "30.—Ports and Pilotage."

There is one Cut Motion standing in the name of Babu Karuna Sindhu Roy. Does he want to move his Motion ?

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : Yes, Sir. I beg, to move that the total provision of Rs. 2,000 under Grant No. 14, Major Head—30.—Ports and Pilotage, at page 79 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,000 do stand reduced by Rs. 100

(My object is to raise a discussion about the irregular Steamer Communication in Province the by the Steamer Services maintained by Rivers Steam Navigation Company.)

Sir, it is well known to all the hon. Members of the House that the Subdivision of Sunamganj stands isolated from all parts of the world for want of regular communication. Last year, from my own experience, I may say that it took me, to go to my village from Shillong, as many days as it took me for travelling from Madras to Shillong. This is, Sir, simply deplorable. The steamer service that can connect Sylhet with Bhairab Bazar and Mohanganj, the nearest railway stations in Bengal, is very irregular. Now, it is the season for the steamer service to operate from Chhatak to Bhairab Bazar twice a week—on Saturdays and Tuesdays. But it is always found that passengers waiting from Saturdays and Tuesdays cannot catch the steamer before Sundays and Wednesdays, thus the valuable time of the people are wasted and how disgusting it is for those who pass busy and systematic life to lose time in this way.

With these words, Sir, I would urge upon Government to maintain a regular steamer service between Sylhet and Bhairab Bazar.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That the total provision of Rs. 2,000 under Grant No. 14, Major Head—30.—Ports and Pilotage, at page 79 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 2,000 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, strictly speaking, the Cut Motion is not relevant to the Demand before the House. This Demand relates to charges on pilotage given to the steamer companies for supplying pilots to the Government vessels. However, Sir, as the hon. Member has mentioned his grievances I can inform him that we have already addressed the Steamer Company to have a regular service between Sunamganj and Sylhet and I will be only glad to urge this matter again upon the Steamer Company. The hon. Members will however realise that regularity of communication is not possible due to military demands.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Does the hon. Member press the Motion ?

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : No, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw the Motion. (*After a pause*). The Motion stands withdrawn by the leave of the House. Then I am putting the Demand as a question.

The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of head "30.—Ports and Pilotage."

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 16

(37.—Education—European and Anglo-Indian)

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "37.—Education (European and Anglo-Indian)".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "37.—Education (European and Anglo-Indian)".

There are no Cut Motions. Is there to be any discussion on the Motion ?
(After a pause). Then I am putting it as a question.

The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 62,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "37.—Education (European and Anglo-Indian)".

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 28

(55.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions, etc.)

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,50,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "55.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions, etc."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,50,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "55.—Superannuation Allowances and Pensions, etc."

There are no Cut Motions. Is there to be any discussion on the Motion ? (After a pause). Then I am putting it as a question.

The question is :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 18,50,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "55.—Superannuation, Allowances and Pensions, etc."

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 6.

(11.—Registration)

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,96,900 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "11.—Registration".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER—Motion moved :

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,96,900 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment, during the year ending on the 31st March, 1946, for the administration of the head "11.—Registration".

There are three Cut Motions :

Maulavi ABDUL AZIZ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 68,500 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registrations, Minor Head—A.—District charges, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers (total), at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, my object in moving this Cut Motion is to draw the attention of Government for the need of establishing a Sub-Registry office at Bhanugach. Sir, Cut Motions No. 1 and 3 are practically the same. A few years ago there was a Sub-Registry office at Kamalganj. It functioned for some years and was then closed down during the last depression, and ever since then I have been moving again and again to have it re-opened. My submission is that as there is a wide distance to cover between

Bhanugach and Srimangal, near about eight or nine miles, the people of Bhanugach are put to great inconvenience for not having an office at their own place. The area of Bhanugach is about three times that of Srimangal and naturally the amount of work for Registration, had there been the office at Bhanugach, would have been three times more than what it is at Srimangal. If Government do not consider the necessity of transferring the office from Srimangal to Bhanugach, then at all cost a separate office should be established here. With these words, Sir, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 68,500 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registration, Minor head—A.—District charges, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers (total), at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

The object of my moving the Motion is to raise a discussion about the necessity of converting the Derai Sub-Registry office into a regular establishment.

Last year I tabled an identical Motion and the reply that came from the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge, was that the matter would be considered when war condition improved. This year, Sir, I have been encouraged by the conversion of the Barpeta office to a regular establishment to bring up this matter again. In the Explanatory Note attached to the list of news schemes Government say:—"The Sub-Registry office at Barpeta was first made an *ex-officio* office. It was then converted into a whole-time office as an experimental measure with effect from 6th October 1941. Since then the office has been retained on a temporary basis year after year. The result of the working of the office has been very satisfactory. The statistics show that the work than pays for itself. The number of documents is increasing and there is more slightest danger of the office ever failing to be remunerative." My submission is that the condition of Derai office is quite identical to that of Barpeta. So similar treatment should have been meted out to the Derai office as well.

Then again while the Barpeta office was started in 1941, the office at Derai was established in the year 1938. So, in all fairness, it should have found precedence over Barpeta. If war conditions did not prevent the Barpeta office to be raised to a regular establishment, it should not be allowed to stand in the way of the Derai office.

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: Sir, I beg to move: That the total provision of Rs. 1,96,900 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registration, at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

By this Motion I want to criticise Government for not opening a Sub-Registrar's office at Kamalganj in South Sylhet Subdivision.

Sir, I brought this question before the House as early as 1938 while the same Hon'ble Minister was in charge of this Department, and got an assurance from him. I also got an assurance from the present Minister-in-charge of Medical Department when she was in charge of this Department of Registration. When I got that assurance from an Hon'ble Lady Minister. I thought that that assurance would be carried out; but it became a bubble and the proposal was thrown into the waste paper basket; but it that any assurance that might come from the present Hon'ble Minister would be fulfilled. With these words, Sir, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House and support the Motion of my hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Aziz, for the establishment of a Sub-Registrar's office at Bhanugach or Kamalganj.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motions moved:

"(1) That the provision of Rs. 68,500 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registration, Minor head—A.—District charges, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers (total), at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(2) That the provision of Rs. 68,500 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registration, Minor head—A.—District charges, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers (total), at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(3) That the total provision of Rs. 1,96,900 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registration, at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.”

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: As regards Motions Nos. 1 and 3, Sir, we had a Sub-Registry office at Kamalganj which was started in 1926, but as a measure of economy it had to be abolished in 1932. Since recent time there has been a proposal for reopening this Sub-Registry office at Kamalganj and the matter is already under the consideration of Government. During these abnormal times it is very difficult to get materials. Government have decided that this project will be considered again as soon as the situation improves. Relating to the Derai Sub-Registry office, a similar Motion was moved by the same hon. Member in the last Budget Session and I gave an assurance that as soon as the situation improved the matter would be considered. I can tell the hon. Mover that the demand for Barpeta Sub-Registry office is greater than that of the Derai office. I again repeat my assurance to my hon. Friend that the matter will be taken up as soon as the situation improves. All the projects involving additional expenditure have at present been deferred until the end of the war.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury press his Motion?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: No, Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Motion was withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri press his Motion?

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: No Sir, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Motion was withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: As regards Cut Motion No. 1 standing in the name of Maulavi Abdul Aziz, I do not find the hon. Member in his seat. Therefore, I must put the Motion to the vote of the House. The question is:

“That the provision of Rs. 68,500 under Grant No. 6, Major head—11.—Registration, Minor head—A.—District charges, Sub-head—1.—Pay of officers (total), at page 41 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,96,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.”

The Question was negatived.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,96,900 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '11.—Registration'.”

The question was adopted.

GRANT No. 27

54A.—FAMINE RELIEF

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 50,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head “54A.—Famine Relief”.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

“That a sum not exceeding Rs. 50,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head ‘54A.—Famine Relief’.”

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 50,000 under Grant No. 27.—Major head—54A.—Famine Relief, Minor head—A/—Famine Relief, Sub-head—(b)—Gratuitous Relief (total), at page 139 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 50,000 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, the object of my moving this Motion is to raise a discussion about the non-utilisation of the grant. In the year 1943-44 the same sum of Rs. 50,000 was provided for famine relief. Out of this amount, within the year, only Rs. 6,000 was spent in the non-excluded areas and Rs. 3,000 was spent in excluded areas. In the current year, the budgeted figure for the non-excluded areas was Rs. 50,000 and Rs. 5,000 for excluded areas, but out of this only Rs. 17,000 has been spent for non-excluded areas and Rs. 3,000 spent for excluded areas. My idea is, that the actuals of 1944-45 will be still lower in the current year. We have Rs. 53,000 in the next year's Budget for Famine Relief. We have got Rs. 50,000 for non-excluded areas and Rs. 3,000 for excluded areas and as things are going this sum also will remain unspent. So, my submission, Sir, is that this sum ought to have been properly utilised. I ask the Hon'ble Minister what is the definition of "famine"? Is it not a fact that most of our people are always living in famine conditions?

I will urge upon the Hon'ble Minister not to sit tight over the sum, but to spend it for beneficial purposes. With these words, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved:

"That the provision of Rs. 50,000 under Grant No. 27, Major head—54A.—Famine Relief, Minor head—A.—Famine Relief, Sub-head—(b)—Gratuitous Relief (total), at page 139 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 50,000 do stand reduced by Rs. 100."

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is fortunate that nothing untoward happened during the year to justify the provision. But at the same time we cannot forget that any moment a calamity may overtake us and it may be a much bigger one. It was a matter of estimate, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member press his Motion?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: No, Sir. I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member has got leave of the House to withdraw his Motion. (*After a pause*).

The Motion stands withdrawn by the leave of the House.

Then I am putting the Demand as a question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 50,000 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '54A.—Famine Relief'."

The Question was adopted.

GRANT No. 15.

(36.—SCIENTIFIC DEPARTMENTS)

*The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '36.—Scientific Departments'."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '36.—Scientific Departments'."

There is no Cut Motion.

I am putting it as a question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 6,500 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '36.—Scientific Departments'."

The question was adopted.

*The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN, being absent, the Hon'ble Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri moved the Demand.

GRANT No. 5

(10.—FORESTS)

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.25,13,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '10.—Forests'."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 25,13,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head '10.—Forests'."

There are as many as thirteen Cut Motions of which by two Motions hon. Members want to discuss the policy of the Department. Hon. Members may also speak about the subjects under other Cut Motions and give vent to their party grievances which they want to be put before Government. So I want that Cut Motions No. 9 or No. 10 may be moved either by Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury or by Mr. Baidyanath Mookerjee.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: I will not move Cut Motion No. 9*, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 25,13,400 under Grant No.5, Major head—10.—Forests, at page 38 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I have tabled this Motion to criticise the policy of Government with regard to the Forest Department. Sir, in the Budget, it will be found that the Revenue of this Department has increased 5 times the normal so far as the surplus is concerned; by surplus I mean what is left over after meeting the expenditure. Now, Sir, specially in the average receipts of last two years it will be found that it is 60 lakhs of rupees. So it is evident that deforestation is going on, on a large scale. But if we see the amount allotted for improvement and extension of forests, Sir, it will be found that the meagre sum that has been allotted is really most ridiculous; for Working Plan it will be found that the average expenditure is Rs. 7,000 per year. As I have taken the average in the receipt side I am taking the average of two years of the expenditure side also. Under the Working Plan and so far as Regeneration is concerned, it will be found that the average expenditure is only Rs.15,000. Many hon. Members last year pointed out this fact to Government that it was high time that they should try to extend the forest on a planned basis and more money should be allotted for this purpose.

So far as Sylviculture is concerned, I find that an amount greater than that of the last year has been provided. But I understand, Sir, that there is no particular officer in charge of the Department. Sir, only the work of the Sylviculturist will not serve our purpose. The experiment that will be made by that Department must be given effect to by extending our forests and unless that is done, as I always say, Sir, we are using up the capital of the Province in the name of revenue and we are not trying to replace the same. Now, Sir, another fear that arises in my mind is this and it has been mentioned on other occasions as well that due to this deforestation there is a great chance of flood. Some hon. Members brought this also to the notice of the Government but, Sir, without paying any heed to these warnings Government is going on merrily deforesting the Province.

Sir, so far as cinchona cultivation is concerned, we understand that Government has accepted a plan for 3 years and every year only hundred acres will be cultivated. Now, Sir, we have heard on the floor of the House, not only from the hon. Members but even from the Hon'ble Minister in his speech, that we have not got sufficient cinchona or quinine for our purpose and even the Central Government could not supply this Province with the required quantity of quinine and they have supplied its

*That the total provision of Rs.25,13,400 under Grant No.5, Major head—10.—Forests, at page 38 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To raise a discussion about the general policy of the Government)

substitute. Sir, there are about 4,000 acres of land which are quite suitable for cinchona cultivation in this Province. I think, Sir, it is high time that Government should pay more attention to this aspect of the matter and try to cultivate cinchona on a larger scale so that we may derive the desired effect soon. Sir, we heard from the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge last year that Government have adopted both the Russian method and the ordinary method and according to the Russian method we can manufacture cinchona every 30 months.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: 22 months.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: But I remember perfectly well that last time the Hon'ble Minister said 30 months. However, when he says that it is 22 months it suits me even better and if the plantation can be adequately increased, we shall get sufficient quantity of quinine in 1947 in that case.

I shall bring another point to the notice of this hon'ble House that in many places in the Province wild elephants are destroying the crop. On the one hand the Government are pushing forward the Grow-More-Food Campaign and on the other hand they are not paying any heed to the dangers of this deforestation affair and thereby risking the crop to be damaged in the case of floods and in other cases by elephants. There should be sufficient number of *kheda* operations to check the latter evil.

Lastly, I would warn Government that unless they pay their whole-hearted attention to the extension of forests it will be dangerous for this Province so far as this department is concerned and I think, if necessary, they should employ one particular qualified officer as Sylviculturist. Otherwise the money that will be spent under this head may be wasted. There may be officers who are devoting their attention casually to these matters; so, for other matters these officers will not be fully doing this work as I understand. The Conservators of Forests are occasionally suffering and neither this nor that is being done satisfactorily. So I suggest a Special Officer may be soon appointed for this purpose and more money may be allotted for regeneration works on the basis of the sylviculture experiments.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved:

"That the total provision of Rs. 25,13,400 under Grant No.5, Major head—10.—Forests, at page 38 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of 25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

Mr. R. A. PALMER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, my Cut Motion* refers particularly to the District of Lakhimpur but there is no doubt that it will apply to other districts of the Province.

It is probably well known to all hon. Members that for many years past thatch and cane *mahals* have been sold annually by public auction.

This system worked well in peace time when ordinary trade channels kept prices at a reasonable level, but, unfortunately, at the present time this competition is non-existent as the Armed Forces are taking large quantities leaving insufficient quantities for the ordinary man's requirements, thus opening up the possibility of black-marketing.

We heard in this House on Monday that the price for 1,000 bundles of thatch in Dibrugarh in the years 1933-34 was Rs. 45, but to-day a price of Rs. 140 to Rs. 180 is being openly asked.

It is obvious under these conditions that auctioning *mahals* is a farce, as gamblers are prepared to pay any amount for the *mahal* with the hope (I might say the certainty) of getting their money back with large profits on the black market, thereby eliminating the legitimate trader. As an example, I understand that a *mahal* at Dibrugarh which sold by auction in 1944 for Rs.39,000 was sold this year for Rs.1,25,000. I have been unable to verify these figures but I believe them to be correct. The Hon'ble Minister will find it impossible to convince the House that this large

*That the provision of Rs. 58,173 under Grant No. 5, Major head—10.—Forests, Minor head—A.—Conservancy and Works, Sub-head—II.—Timber and other produce removed from the forests by consumers and purchasers (total), at page 39 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To draw attention to the unsatisfactory policy of disposing of Thatch and Cane Mahals by auction which is resulting in profiteering in these commodities.)

extra amount will not be recovered from the unfortunate consumer and he will find it difficult to refute that Government is sharing the loot.

I strongly urge Government to dissociate themselves from this scandal at once and re-negotiate the settlement of the *mahals* on a sounder basis and to ensure the settlement with men, not only of proved integrity, but proved experience in this work.

I suggest that *mahals* should be settled with experienced persons, not on payment of a lump sum but on a basis of actual costs settled by Government *plus* an agreed profit per 1,000 bundles of thatch.

This would ensure a fair price to the consumer and a fair profit to the trader and moreover as the total profit made would depend on the amount sold, it would encourage maximum extraction, a very important matter when every bundle of thatch is needed.

The question of giving a bonus for extra extraction above estimated yields might also receive the attention of Government.

With these words, I support the Motion.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Sir, since the appointment of Mr. R. N. De, as the Second Conservator of Forests, who has been placed in charge of the Lower Assam Division, the Assamese forest contractors have been very much affected. The result has been that outsiders are getting preference over Assamese contractors and the Assamese contractors are being gradually eliminated from timber business. He has taken forest contracts in the name of his brother-in-law and some of his friends and relations of the other valley. It is clamoured by the people of Lower Assam that Mr. De has some shares in contract works in Kamrup and Garo Hills. In Kamrup district none of the Assamese contractors has been given monopoly of forests, but outsiders have got the monopoly. I mention the name of Mayang Hill in my constituency.

At Kukurmara, there are reserve lands near the Trunk Road which have been leased out to the Assamese contractors and shop-keepers. But now these lands are being taken away from the hands of the Assamese people in order to give the same to some outsiders under the pretext that the outsiders are big contractors.

Since last year, it has been seen that elephant *mahals* are being given only to the Rajas and Zemindars of the Goalpara District. The Rajas and Zemindars of the Goalpara District keep elephants for their luxury and for management of their estates. Whereas the Assamese elephant owners keep these elephants for earning their livelihood. So the actual *koonki* owners should get preference in the settlement of elephant *mahals* over Rajas and Zemindars.

Sir, I have gathered the view of the general public that Mr. De should be transferred from the Lower Assam Division and that another officer, preferably the Senior Conservator, be placed in charge of the Lower Assam Division. With these words, I support the Motion.

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহোদয়, আমার নামে ৭নং এ একটি ছাঁটাই প্রস্তাব* আছে সেই সম্বন্ধে আমি কিছু বলিতে চাই। আসাম ভ্যালীতে Forest Department-এর contract মুসলমানদের দেওয়া হয় না। বিশেষতঃ immigrant দের কিছুমাত্র contract দেওয়া হইতেছে না। এই বিষয়ে বহুবার গভর্নমেন্ট এবং মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মহোদয়কে আমি ও public জানাইয়াছি কিন্তু তাহার কোনই প্রতিকার হয় নাই। আমাদের immigrant দের ভিতর এমন অনেক লোক আছে যাহারা landless, যারা চর এবং বিভিন্ন যায়গা হইতে খের, বাঁশ ইত্যাদি কাটিয়া আনিয়া বিক্রী করিত কিন্তু Forest Department-এর কোন contract তাদের দেওয়া হয় নাই। গারো হিল, গোয়ালপাড়ায় ও কামরূপ জিলায় বহু লক্ষ টাকার কাঠ, বাঁশ, খের ইত্যাদির contract কাজ বন বিভাগের contract বিতরণকারী বড় বড় অফিসারগণ, শ্রীযুত J. N. Nandi, S. j. Nanda Lal Ojha, S. j. S. N. Pait, এবং B. K. Bose ইত্যাদি—তাহাদেরই আত্মীয়, বন্ধু, সহযোগী এবং স্বার্থ সংশ্লিষ্ট ব্যক্তিকেই অধিকাংশ contract দেওয়া হইয়াছে। এটা বড়ই অন্যায় ও আপত্তিজনক। আশা করি যে এখন হইতে সংখ্যানুপাতিক হারে মুসলমান এবং immigrant দিগকে তাহাদের ন্যায্য share অবশ্য দেওয়া উচিত হইবে।

(Maulavi Matior Rahman Mia while supporting the Motion said that due share of contracts of the Forest Department should be given to the immigrants.)

* That the provision of Rs. 9,85,700 under Grant No. 5, Major head—10.—Forest, Minor head—B.—Establishment (total), at page 40 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100 *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To criticise the conduct of the officers concerned in matter of giving Forest contract to the Muslims.)

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Sir, I wish to bring one matter affecting my subdivision to the notice of Government. It may be a small matter from the point of view of Government, but all the same it is important from the point of view of the public. What it is will be clear from the note appended to Cut Motion† No.6 that stands in my name to-day. Sir, the fuel problem of Barpeta has assumed a serious proportion in recent times. It is clear to any one who has been to the subdivision or has any personal knowledge of it. Unlike other places, the southern part of Barpeta, being low, grassy land, grows a very small proportion of tree or bamboo fuel. Formerly reeds, which were available, were used as fuel together with the drift wood of the Beki river. Gradually however with the reclamation of the available jungle land, reeds have become scarce, and the people not being accustomed to the use of coal, had only the drift wood of the Beki river as their source of fuel supply. But recently by the sale of the drift timber of the Beki, fuel has not only been made scarce but also prohibitively costly. It is now as costly as rice itself at Barpeta, and I think the Government have a duty to do something in this matter. They have failed to do anything so far and this is why I bring this matter to the notice of Government and I hope Government will not hesitate to remove the very great hardship to the people of Barpeta by cancelling the existing sale and permanently stopping future sale as well.

Maulavi BADARUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had a Cut Motion* standing in my name by which I wanted to discuss about the failure of Government to protect man and property from the ravage and destructions caused by wild elephants in the subdivision of Mangaldai.

Sir, from the month of *Jaistha* to the month of *Pous* last, herds of wild elephants were moving in the subdivision, especially in the northern part of it, and were causing damage to the standing crop. When they did not find enough of the crops in the fields they began to move from village to village, and from house to house causing damage to the paddy stocked in the granary. When people attempted to scare them away these elephants attacked them and killed as many as 13 persons last year. This fact was brought to the notice of Government and they by way of help opened a petty *shikar* late in the month of January last. I thank Government for opening this petty *shikar*, but, Sir, I believe, this is doing more harm to the people than helping them. By petty *shikar* only small elephants can be caught, but the bigger elephants which cause damage to the standing crop remain untouched. If the Government want to deal with these bigger elephants they should open *kheda shikar* in the subdivision. Only in this way the people of my subdivision can be saved from the depredations caused by these elephants. (*A voice:—Why not use rifles?*) There are rifles, but bullets are not available now-a-days. Government should therefore open *kheda shikar*.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is insistent complaint against the gross abuse of ministerial powers in the administration of this Department. I shall cite only one instance to show that. The fishing right in the Sarolini Beel in the Laokhowa Forest Reserve of Nowgong district was duly advertised for sale in public auction on the 10th of May 1944. The sale was conducted by the Divisional Forest Officer. There were two bidders, one Shamsher Ali and another Hussian Ali Sarkar. Shamsher Ali's bid was for Rs. 10,175 and that of Hussain Ali Sarkar's was for Rs. 10,150, and as the acceptance of the bid, the value of which exceeds Rs. 10,000, needs the sanction and approval of the Conservator of Forests, the Divisional Forest Officer sent the names duly to the Conservator of Forests, who in his turn approved the higher bid of Shamsher Ali. Shamsher Ali was duly informed of the fact and he paid up 10 per cent. of the bid as earnest money and it was accepted by the Divisional

†That the provision of Rs.15,27,681 under Grant No.5. Major head—10.—Forest, Minor head—A.—Conservancy and Works (total), at page 39 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.1,000, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To criticise Government action in allowing the fuel situation of Barpeta to become a serious menace to the population specially by their sale of the Beki drift timber.)

*That the provision of Rs.15,27,681 under Grant No.5, Major head—10.—Forests, Minor head—A.—Conservancy and Works (total), at page 39 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.25,13,400 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To discuss the failure of Government to protect man and property from the ravage and destruction of wild elephants in the Subdivision of Mangaldai.)

Forest Officer. As the working of the bid is limited to three years, *i. e.*, from the 1st of June 1944 to the 31st of May 1947, Shamsher Ali made all sorts of preparation to catch fish in the Beel, and he invested more than Rs.1,000 in that direction. But when he was about to fish, in the month of December 1944 an order from the Hon'ble Minister reached him to the effect that his lease had been cancelled, and the Beel was settled with the other man, *viz.*, Hussain Ali Sarkar and that without any notice. Sir, the only qualification of this Hussain Ali Sarkar is that he is a prominent member of the District Muslim League of the Nowgong District. It has further been said, Sir, that he has been found loitering in the compounds of the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Department. Sir, I understand that a notice is going to be served against the Government of Assam wherein the propriety of settlement will be sufficiently dealt with. There are likely to be many ugly things to see the light of the day if the suit is instituted. Moreover, Sir, I understand about three thousand Bighas of dry land, I mean, the shallow portion of that Beel has also been settled with this man to grow Boro cultivation and that has evoked a chorus of protest from the people of the locality. By this act the local people have been deprived to graze and tend their cattle on the shallow portion of the Beel, which they have been using from time immemorial I understand that the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge had been to the locality and but for the ban on public meetings and processions there would have been a hostile demonstration. Clashes and conflicts are likely to be inevitable. I rather request the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge to see that there is no clash among the persons who have been using the shallow portion of the Beel for cattle and the lessee with whom the settlement has been made. I also hope that the orders of settlement be revised.

*Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Sir you have said that we from this side of the House cannot attack our own Government with remarks at least which do not befit the hon. Members of this House. But so far as this particular Department is concerned, such serious allegations there are in my possession that I cannot but see that some of those allegations do enter in the permanent records of the Assembly. First of all it is about appointment and transfer. I have been informed, Sir, that officers of higher ranks who entered Assam's service from Calcutta, Barisal and Tippera districts after attaining the full age for their retirement have again been re-employed by this Government not very late but very recently. I do not understand why after their retirement they have been re-employed and why they are needed for certain special works and why suitable persons are not found in the Province. But I cannot imagine for a moment that the special occasions for which some of these officers should be re-employed should arise just on the following day of their retirement. A man who retired on a particular day is taken on the following day on the ground that there are special occasions for which they have been re-employed. If the Hon. Minister wants I can give him at least names of seven persons who were holding offices of Rangers and Deputy Rangers, who had completed their service and retired and then re-employed. But our own people are not getting employments while those people who served for 30 or 35 years are again re-employed here.

So far as transfers are concerned, you will find, Sir, that in these hard days the poor clerks after serving for 10, 15 or 20 years in better places, that is to say, where living is too cheap, have all on a sudden been transferred to the Hills. They are put to a difficult position. There they cannot maintain their family and they have been forced to live without any servant. If the Hon'ble Minister wants I can enumerate good many cases like that. I say, Sir, a man who serves at Sylhet should not be sent to Haltugaon, Dibrugarh or such other places. He has got a number of children to maintain and all on a sudden he should not be transferred.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member should finish now. The Hon'ble Minister should get some time to reply.

*Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Very well, Sir, As regards serious allegations that have been made by some of the speakers against some of the high officials on their policy of giving contracts, I should draw the special attention of Government to the ugly things that are going on. I do not think there

should be full disclosure. The Forest Utilisation Officer was going to be prosecuted, but it is Mr. De who interfered in the matter and hushed it up. He saved him from the clutches of criminal prosecution.

About giving contracts many ugly things are going on. I would urge upon Government to look into the matter. I do not rely on the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Forests.

Then Sir, I come to the general question of timber. Government have adopted certain policy that 70 to 80 per cent. of the timber should be reserved for the Military; the result is that the public are not getting any timber for their purpose. The civilian population are extremely suffering for this.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Sir, in the heat of this discussion we should not lose sight of the fact that this Forest Department has added a net revenue of Rs.30 lakhs to the Provincial Exchequer in the year 1944-45. So in that respect our officers deserve commendation of this House inasmuch as they have taken all pains to credit being done at the cost of our forest wealth or whether our capital has been frittered away. Of course, I am sure, the Hon'ble Minister and the Heads of the Department will see to it so that in order to earn revenue or meet demands of the war we do not lose our capital itself.

Then the control orders are certainly operating harshly on the timber merchant. A representative of the timber merchant of Karimganj met me before I left. I think, Sir, there is a great disparity of prices between Bengal and Assam markets of timber. So there is scope for increasing the controlled price of Assam timber having regard to the fact that the cost of extraction has gone 4 fold higher and the charges of conversion also has gone up very high now-a-days. And as the price in Bengal market is far higher than that of Assam there is scope for giving certain increment in rates to the timber extractors and the saw mills of the Province. The Government should not try to profit at the expense of the timber merchants who, as I am told, have been hard hit by this control order. That is why I would ask the Hon'ble Minister whether in view of the improvement in the war position it is not high time for them to revise their control orders so that certain amount of latitude can be given to the timber merchants, who far from having reaped a bumper profit out of the war market have been adversely affected on account of the operation of the control order.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have listened very carefully to the speeches made by different Members who have preceded me and I have come to the only one conclusion that the Government is following a policy of greed and a policy of suicide in carrying out the administration of the Forest Department. I want to lay particular stress on the matter which has been brought to notice of the House by my hon. Friend, Mr. Palmer. I do not know whether the officer holding the auction is responsible or whether it is a part of the policy of Government that irrespective of future consequences all efforts are made to secure a large amount of money, I mean a large amount of revenue. It so happens at times that the officer conducting a sale has a particular party in mind and so long that party has not reached that amount the auction is kept open; the same thing has happened with regard to the settlement of fisheries in the district of Kamrup. The price has considerably increased this time. I know of a fishery of Barpeta which was previously sold at Rs.6,000 but this year it has been sold at Rs.36,000. In the Gauhati Subdivision a fishery which was sold in the previous year at Rs.20 has been settled this year at Rs.1,000. The officers are very happy because they think that they have gained the approbation of Government by raising revenue. The Commissioner whose duty it is to check these things and to confirm the sales has simply danced and rejoiced as the revenue has gone up so high and the Hon'ble Minister when he meets them simply pats them on the back.

Sir, the other matter which has been dealt with by my hon. Friend, Mr. Mookerjee, is a very serious one. We have seen that the forest has entirely been denuded. I have attended this House for the last 20 years or so and have heard the Member-in-charge of the Forest Department and the expert Forest Officers to say that it is their duty to conserve and not to destroy forest in such pell-mell fashion as they

have been doing to-day. But what we are seeing now? The forest has been denuded for the enhancement of Government revenue. On one hand the forest has been denuded and on the other the grazing reserves have been thrown open to cultivators for increasing the revenue by the same Hon'ble Minister. What is going to happen to the Province we tremble to think. The Government should now cry a halt to their policy and consider seriously whether they should run merely after getting more and more revenue. Sir, stories about settlement of waste land with people coming from outside the Province are heard. Government want more money, more revenue and therefore they do not hesitate to settle land without keeping anything for the future expansion of the Province.

Sir, I have heard that certain controlled price has been fixed for the timber, but whenever you go to purchase timber at controlled price you never get it. That is a myth. I think, Sir, the whole intention of fixing prices is to see that the Government can purchase the timber at a low cost. It is never intended for the benefit of the public. The public at large do not get timber at controlled price and the public at large cannot have any use of timber because they will never be given permit to purchase C. I. sheets, cement, and other building materials. The permit system has been brought in only to favour a few fortunate. The result is, Sir, that the labourers have been hard hit, the contractors have been hard hit. They have to pay more and get little. I think, Sir, the system has to be revised.

The other matter on which I should like to touch is the allegations which have been made by my hon. Friend, Mr. Beliram Das. He is a responsible member of the Congress Party and he belongs to the place from which the complaints come. In fairness to the officer, *viz.*, the Junior Conservator of Forests concerned, I would ask the Hon'ble Minister to hold a sifting enquiry and if fault is found to deal with him properly. The Hon'ble Minister ought not to be satisfied with merely transferring him. The Hon'ble Minister should hold an enquiry; if it is found that the allegations are unfounded he should be exonerated publicly; otherwise he should be punished.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Sir, we have received serious reports regarding the treatment of Forest Officers to the evicted villagers from Patherkandi. Though the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge has asked them to go to Manikband Reserve for clearing jungles, construction of houses and for making preparation for cultivation, for some days they could not exact orders from the local officers. They were then compelled to enter the Reserve without any order being communicated to them and the Forest Officials once threatened them to demolish their houses by elephants. No doubt this nasty business was done to exact money from poor cultivators.

Another situation has arisen now, Sir. The Patharkandi South Project has been abandoned and orders have been issued that they might return to their former villages. They are at a fix now as to what to do. They have not yet got their full compensation for their former removal. How can they remove for the second time after spending so much money and labour for their new place? Moreover, Sir, a portion of the compensation money of some of the inhabitants of Barunga and Bajarichara is demanded by the Tripura State. I cannot make out why the Tripura State should demand 30 per cent. of compensation from those unfortunate villagers. The hon. Members of this House will be horrified to know the miserable plight of those evicted villagers from Patherkandi area. When they were first evicted they had to travel from place to place like vagabonds searching for shelter and in this way they were attacked with diseases and many of them perished. I think, Sir, Dr. Terrell will bear me out in this matter. I therefore, Sir, appeal to the House to urge upon Government for making satisfactory arrangement in order to save those poor people from destruction.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: I wish, Sir, I had sufficient time to reply to each and every point brought forward before this august Assembly. Generally speaking, Sir, criticisms have been both constructive as well as destructive. I welcome those criticisms that are constructive and I shall try my level best to see as to their implementation, so far as it may be practicable. Regarding the destructive criticisms Sir, one Member of the Congress Group—the Member from Nowgong, Mr. Mahi

Chandra Bora—has brought forward certain allegations for which he said that if he were allowed time to bring out all the facts before the hon'ble House, the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Forests would have to hang his head in shame. I wish, Sir, that without making such sweeping generalisations in which he so freely indulged and took bulk of his time, he had the courage to bring these forward before the House and I can assure him that the Ministry would fully justify the action they have taken and they would have nothing to be ashamed of. I do not know, Sir, in what capacity he has brought forward the bid of one of the bidders in the Soralini Beel. None of the allegations nor the causes of it have been brought forward by the bidder himself to our notice. I may tell the hon. Member for his edification that that bidder, though his bid was only higher than the next highest by Rs.25, had also defaulted and had over and above several weighty reasons in the vital interest of the children of the soil.

Sir, the criticisms offered by our hon. Friend, Mr. Mookerjee, deserve very careful consideration. As regards Regeneration and Working Plan, etc., I think the hon. Members' notice must have been drawn to the provision of money for making the Working Plan branch permanent. They must have also noticed that the entire Subordinate Forest Service, from the Guard at the bottom upwards to the Deputy Ranger, has been thoroughly re-organised and an additional ultimate expenditure of Rs.1,20,000 per annum is going to be spent for the purpose. Mr. Mookerjee also referred to the possibility of increasing the cinchona cultivation. Well, Sir, no one in this House is more anxious than the Government for the increase in the cinchona cultivation. Government have launched upon a very bold scheme of providing one hundred acres of cinchona plantation annually entailing huge expenditure and I can assure the House that Government will not falter in going with their forward move in this direction.

Regarding Sylviculture, he thinks that a wholetime officer should be appointed. Sir, we are very anxious to find one such person who can be a wholetime employee of Government for this purpose. But we have hitherto failed to find one. We have in our mind that one wholetime officer should be provided and as soon as a suitable man will be available, we will lose no time to appoint one.

Then regarding desforestation, of course, it must be admitted that larger quantities of timber had to be brought out on account of the war necessities. But I can assure the House that every care is being taken to see that the future of the forests is not jeopardised. The hon. Member who dilated on this point did not specifically say in what way the forests were being degenerated. He made some general remarks only; although I admit that to certain extent war necessities compelled us to do larger cuttings than we would have done normally.

Our hon. Friend, Mr. Palmer, has brought one fact to our notice that extraordinary bids are offered in auction. On principle the same matter was brought forward by Mr. Chaudhuri, particularly in respect of fisheries. This question has already been engaging my serious attention and I am glad, Sir, that the hon. Members have also drawn my attention to it. It must be admitted, that auction is the best method in normal circumstances and no better methods could be devised hitherto. It has struck me very much that the bids are extraordinarily high and I might inform the House that in certain cases I had to use my discretion in bringing down the bids under the special prerogatives vested in Government under Rule 190(A) of the Fishery Rules. As regards sale of fishery Mahals by competition or otherwise, for the best method, I would invite the assistance of the hon. Members to suggest to me at their leisure, compatible with the rules and law prevailing.

Now, Sir, one matter, namely, the serious allegations that have been brought against one of the topmost officers of the Department. The number of Indian Officers in the highest rank in the Forest Department is very few, and when we had an Indian Officer as a head of the Department, I thought that the Province was going to be happy. If the allegations brought forward by the hon. Member who generally speaks in hyperbolic languages, are found to be true after a sifting enquiry, as suggested by my Friend, Mr. Chaudhuri, effective steps will be taken against that officer by not merely transferring him but inflicting upon him a punishment that he might deserve.

[16th MAR. 1945.]

I think, Sir, I have traversed all the important points that have been mooted out. As regards certain matters brought forward by our Comrade Friend, I shall be breaking no secret if I could tell the hon. Members that the same hon. gentleman went to my Bungalow with certain of his clients and made the same complaints before me. I assured him that I would look into the matter and he came away quite satisfied. Thereupon I thought the matter ended there. But in spite of that as he thought it fit to bring forward the same matter before the House, I can only reiterate the assurance that I gave him.

Regarding the controlled rates, Sir, the same story would repeat as in the case of paddy control. There is scarcity of timber and wood material in this Province. When the control order in the supply of rice and paddy was promulgated they went to a very large extent into black market. I think, Sir, in the light of the suggestions that have been made on the floor of the House by different hon. Members I would examine this question and see what benefit could be rendered to the children of the soil.

In view of what I have stated on behalf of Government, I think, Sir, that the hon. Member might withdraw his Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Does Mr. Mookerjee press his Motion ?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : No, Sir. beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Motion was withdrawn with the leave of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The question is :

“ That a sum not exceeding Rs.25,13,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1946, for the administration of the head ‘10.—Forests’ ”.

The question was adopted.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 11 A.M., on Saturday, the 17th March 1945.

SHILLONG :
The 25th May, 1945.

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

