



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

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 A. M., on Thursday the 22nd March 1945.

PRESENT

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

**STARRED QUESTIONS**

(To which oral answers were given)

(Starred Question No. 197 was not put and answered as the Questioner Maulavi Muhammad Maqbul Hussain Chaudhury was absent)

**Re Land Settlement Policy of Government**

Srijut BELIRAM DAS asked :

\*198. (a) Is it a fact that Pukhuripar, in the Kamrup District, is a professional grazing reserve ?

(b) Is it a fact that local landless Kacharis, Muslims and Hindus who once occupied the said reserve in 1938, were evicted ?

(c) Is it a fact that subsequent to this eviction, the reserve was again encroached upon by large number of immigrants, who were also ordered to evict ?

(d) Is it a fact that the said reserve is intended to be thrown open for settlement now ?

(e) Do Government propose to cancel such orders for settlement ?

(f) Will Government be pleased to enquire and state whether any petition has recently been received by the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup, alleging malpractices in this respect by the Sub-Deputy Collector concerned ?

(g) If so, do Government propose to take necessary action in the matter ?

(h) If it is a fact that the reserve in question has been thrown open, will Government be pleased to state under what consideration this has been done ?

(i) Whether Government have restored back the possession and given patta to those local Kacharis, Muslims and Hindus, who previously occupied the reserve ?

(j) If not, why not ?

(k) Are Government aware that in most such cases, the action of the local officer is being resented as having gone against the interests of the local people ?

\*199. (a) Is it a fact that Srijut Gopinath Bardoloi, Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri and Srijut Rabi Chandra Kachari, members of the Land Settlement Conference held on the 16th December 1944, submitted a joint note explaining the conditions under which they agreed to the findings of that Conference ?

(b) Whether Government took this into consideration while framing the Government Resolution on the subject ?

(c) In view of the explanations submitted in the aforesaid note, will Government be pleased to state whether they have made any change in their policy regarding (i) settlement of waste lands and (ii) in the eviction of trespassers in the grazing reserves ?

(d) If so, will Government be pleased to indicate the particulars by which this change has been proposed to be worked out ?

(e) Do Government propose to issue instructions that only the reserves mentioned in the Line Enquiry Committee are to be dereserved ?

(f) Do Government propose to issue instructions to restrict the protection given by paragraph 18(a) of the aforesaid Government Resolution to those trespassers mentioned in the Line Enquiry Committee and also delete the last sentence of paragraph 18(c) which aims at special consideration of trespassers in occupation of cultivable lands in Professional Grazing Reserves and also in respect of paragraph 18(b) extend the privilege of getting land only to those who obtained settlement before 1938 ?

\*200. (a) Is it a fact that Laokhoa Game Reserve is being thrown open for settlement to immigrants in contravention of the agreement arrived at the last Land Settlement Conference ?

(b) If so, do Government propose to take immediate steps to stop it and maintain the Reserve as it is ?

\*201. (a) Is it a fact that two members of the Standing Committee have informed the Hon'ble Revenue Minister that, contrary to agreement arrived at, settlement of Muslim immigrants in Tribal areas is going on ?

(b) If so, do Government propose to stop it ?

\*202. (a) Is it a fact that without the determination of the Tribal belt, the Tribal representative in the said Conference as also representatives of other communities, are not agreeable to accept the decision of Government contained in paragraphs 13 and 15 of the aforesaid Government Resolution ?

(b) Is it a fact that in the Government Resolution on Land Settlement published in the *Assam Gazette* of 17th January, 1945 no provision has been made to provide land for Tribals in places other than the Tribal belt ?

(c) Are Government aware that a large proportion of the Tribal population in other areas also have been mixed up with people of all communities such as Caste Hindus, Scheduled Castes, etc. ?

(d) What provision has been made for giving land to the landless people among them ?

(e) Do Government propose to protect the interest of these landless people ?

(f) If so, do Government propose to allot special blocks for them in areas other than Tribal belt, where they live ?

(g) Do Government propose to fix no time limit for their occupation as a special measure of protection ?

\*203. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they have taken any steps so far to take a census of the landless people in the Assam Valley ?

(b) Do Government propose to appoint a Special Officer for the purpose ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state why Colonization Officers in Assam have up till now been recruited from one particular community only ?

(d) Do Government propose to change their policy in this matter ?

\*204. (a) Are Government aware that most of the blocks proposed to be created under the new scheme of Land Settlement are already honeycombed with Muslim immigrant trespassers ?

(b) How do Government propose to create blocks for different communities with such trespassers ?

(c) Do Government propose to evict all trespassers from blocks other than those reserved for the Muslim immigrants ?

\*205. (a) Is it a fact that the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister met the Deputy Commissioners of Lower Districts of the Assam Valley on the 29th January, 1945 ?

(b) Is it a fact that in that meeting he asked the Deputy Commissioners of the Lower Districts of the Assam Valley not to evict the trespassers either from the reserves or other prohibited areas and to allow them to continue in their occupation as before ?

\*206. (a) Is it a fact that the Hon'ble Revenue Minister attended the meeting of the Assam Muslim League Council held on the 28th January, 1945 ?

(b) Is it a fact that at that meeting he assured the members of the said League Council that there will be no interference in connection with the occupation of land by the immigrants, whether trespassers or not ?

(c) Is it a fact that he told there that if Government allow him to continue in his office for two years more, he would be able to translate the intention of the Muslim League of converting Assam into a majority Province for the Muslims ?

(d) If so, does the Hon'ble Minister for Revenue propose to make a statement detailing his attitude in this connection before the Assembly ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

198. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Yes, but eviction was stayed pending revision of the Land Settlement

Policy.

(d)—No.

(e)—Does not arise.

(f)—No such petition was received.

(g)—Does not arise.

(h)—Does not arise.

(i) & (j)—Do not arise.

(k)—Government are aware that eviction carried out according to policy is always resented by those who are ejected from their unauthorised occupation of land.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that although he says encroachers in this reserve ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Sir, if there are large number of encroachers, steps are being taken accordingly.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Sir, is it not a fact that it is the policy of Government not to throw open for settlement, any reserve where there are Tribal people inhabiting?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: The hon. Member is giving information, Sir.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: replied :

199. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—No.

(d)—Does not arise.

(e)—No.

(f)—No.

200. (a)—No.

(b)—No.

201. (a)—Yes.

(b)—No.

202. (a)—No.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Yes, some proportion.

(d)—They are expected like everybody else, to find land and apply for it.

(e)—The question is not understood.

(f)—No.

(g)—No.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: As regards the Tribal belt, Sir, has the site of the same been selected, ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Not yet, Sir. Data are being collected.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: Sir, is it not a fact that the Hon'ble Revenue Minister has been saying that Udalguri and Dewanguri areas of Darrang District have been selected as that site ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: There have been various suggestions, Sir, but they are under consideration.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: replied :

203. (a)—No.

(b)—No.

(c)—The hon. Member's attention is invited to the replies given to Unstarred

Question No.43 asked by Srijut Rabi Chandra Kachari in the last November Session of the Assembly.

(d)—Government do not propose to appoint any more Colonization Officers.

204. (a)—No such blocks have yet been selected.

(b)—Does not arise.

(c)—The question is under consideration.

205. (a)—No.

(b)—Does not arise.

206. (a)—Yes.

(b)—No.

(c)—No.

(d)—No.

### Joysagar tank and Gaurisagar tank in Sibsagar

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAIN asked :

\*207. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Joysagar Tank in Sibsagar is going to be created a fishery mahal ?

(b) Whether they are aware of strong public feeling against this tank being opened as a fishery mahal ?

\*208. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether they are aware that the Gaurisagar Tank in Sibsagar is being used for the past several months as a fishery by the A. R. P. personnel ?

(b) Whether they are aware that this tank has ever been a source of supply of good water for the neighbouring villages ?

(c) Whether they propose to issue necessary orders to the authorities concerned to discontinue fishing in the said tank immediately ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

207 & 208.—The information has been called for.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, is this a reply ? (Laughter).

†The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: Yes, Sir, this is a reply in the absence of any information. Why this laughter, Sir ?

### Rice supplied by Messrs. Steel Brothers and Company to the Military

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked :

\*209. Will Government be pleased to state the total quantity of rice supplied by Messrs. Steel Brothers and Company which was later refused by the Military authorities on the ground that the stuff was unfit for human consumption during 1944 and how the same was ultimately disposed of ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

209.—During the year 1944, the Military authorities rejected a quantity of rice, amounting to 401 $\frac{3}{4}$  tons as being unfit for human consumption. Following on a further inspection of this rice, the quantity actually condemned and replaced by Government Agents was 201 $\frac{1}{2}$  tons rice. The total of 201 $\frac{1}{2}$  tons rice, which were condemned by the Army, Government understand, were utilized by the Military authorities as animal food.

### Rural rationing in Sunamganj Subdivision

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

\*210. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that rural rationing is going to be started in the Sunamganj Subdivision from 1st April 1945 ?
- (b) If so, whether they propose to select the whole-salers and retailers in the Sunamganj Subdivision on the recommendation of local people through popular organisations or village Panchait Baitaks ?
- (c) Whether in the areas, where there are Co-operative Stores, controlled commodities will be supplied to them only ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

210. (a)—No.

(b)—Does not arise.

(c)—No, not wholly. Government also want to keep established traders in their usual trade so long as they continue to be reliable.

### Supply of kerosene and other food-stuffs in Sunamganj Subdivision

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

\*211. (a) Is it a fact that only one bottle of kerosene was supplied in the month of February 1945 to each family in the Sunamganj Subdivision ?

(b) If so, why ?

\*212. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that in order to supply to 6 lacs adults of the Sunamganj Subdivision the following quantities of articles were in stock on 1st February 1945,—(i) Salt—14,796 maunds. (ii) Sugar—6,952 maunds. (iii) Gur—2,077 maunds. (iv) Atta—129 maunds. (v) Flour—1,440 maunds. (vi) Wheat—39 maunds. (vii) Masur—1,157 maunds. (viii) Arhor—752 maunds. (ix) Mug—303 maunds. (x) Khesari—4,209 maunds. (xi) Karkas—3 maunds and (xii) Mustard oil—600 maunds.

(b) If so, why such insignificant quantities were sent for Sunamganj ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

211. (a) & (b)—Deputy Commissioner, Sylhet has been asked to report.

212. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The stocks as on 1st February 1945 were much more than what was required for a month. Fresh supplies will also be arriving.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : Is it a fact, Sir, that the stock of salt in the Sunamganj Subdivision was so small that the Subdivisional Officer, distributed only 3 chhataks per head ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, the stock of salt cannot be said to be too small, as according to my hon. Friend, on the 1st February 1945, the stock was 14,796 maunds.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: But, Sir, is it a fact that only 3 chhataks of salt was given per head?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, I am not aware of that.

### Accommodation in Dibrugarh Jail

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH asked:

\*213. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge be pleased to state—

- (a) The total accommodation available at present for convicts and under-trials in the Dibrugarh Jail?
- (b) The actual daily average of convicts and under-trials accommodated there in the year 1944?
- (c) The total number of under-trials awaiting trial in the said jail for (i) over 6 months, (ii) over 4 months, (iii) over 3 months in the year 1944?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA replied:

213. (a)—421.

(b)—386.19.

(c)—Taking 31st December as the date—

Over 6 months  
Nil

Over 4 months  
4

Over 3 months  
5

### Introduction of Buro cultivation in Manipur

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked:

\*214. Is it a fact that with a view to introduce Buro cultivation in Manipur State Government purchased some Buro seeds last year?

\*215. If the answer to Question No.214 be in the affirmative will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Through whom and where from those Buro seeds were purchased?
- (b) The quantity of seeds so purchased?
- (c) The rate per maund at which the seeds were supplied to Government?
- (d) The rate per maund prevalent in the locality from which the seeds were purchased?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA replied:

214.—Yes.

215. (a)—Through the Deputy Director of Agriculture, Surma Valley, from interior villages of Sunamganj subdivision.

(b)—957 maunds.

(c)—Rupees 8 per maund including cost of delivery at Sylhet Ghat.

(d)—Government have no information of the prevailing rates in those particular areas at that time. The controlled wholesale price of Buro paddy was Rs.6 per maund with bags to which a premium up to Rs. 25 per cent. is allowed for seeds.

### Loss sustained by Government in procuring food-stuffs, etc.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked:

\*216. (a) Is it a fact that due to boat sinking, theft and other causes, Government have sustained a heavy loss in procuring food-stuffs such as salt, atta, flour, sugar, mustard oil, dal, etc., since Government took charge of the matter?

(b) If so, what was the loss of Government in this respect since January 1944 up till now?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether they made any enquiry to ascertain the causes of such loss?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

216. (a)—No such heavy losses have been sustained. So far the losses incurred are negligible which cannot be avoided in trade.

(b)—There are reports of theft of 7 bags of salt from the godown at Barpeta on 20th May 1944, 8 bags of salt at Palasbari on 10th August 1944 and 7 bags of sugar at Gauhati on 18th August 1944. But in all these cases, the Syndicate have been made liable for the loss.

There has been a loss of 100 bags (195 maunds 15 seers) of salt by sinking of a boat in the river Manu, in South Sylhet on the 20th May, 1944. The case is still under investigation.

There is another case of loss of 125 bags, 24 seers of salt by sinking of a boat in the river Khowai in Habiganj Subdivision.

(c)—Yes. The causes of loss are always ascertained.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Will Government be pleased to ascertain whether the sinking of salt has not been caused by the cleverness of the boatmen in some cases?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, Sir. It has not been found that the loss has been caused by sabotaging on the part of the boat-men.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I know, Sir, how the liability was made up. Whether they replaced the commodity or the cost price of the commodity was realised from them?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The cost price was realised.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Will Government be pleased to state whether they enquired into the matter to find out that after paying the cost price for the commodity they made a profit by selling the commodities in the blackmarket?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: From the enquiry, it was found that there was no case of blackmarketing.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I know, Sir, how those bags of salt and sugar were removed from the godowns?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: By cutting the walls of the godowns.

#### Rate Control Board in the Surma Valley

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked :

\*217. Is it a fact that there is a Rate Control Board in the Surma Valley?

\*218. If the answer to Question No.217 be in the affirmative, will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The names of members both (official and non-official) of the said Board?

(b) The number of sittings the said Board held during the year 1944-45?

(c) The names of commodities where rates were fixed and controlled by the said Board during the said period?

(d) The rate fixed for each of the commodities by the said Board during the said period?

(e) The rates of daily wages of labourers fixed by the said Board in each of the Subdivisions of Surma Valley?

(f) Whether the rates fixed by the said Board have been enforced?

(g) If so, by whom?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

217—There is a Rates and Wages Board in Sylhet and another in Cachar.

218. (a)—The Boards consist of persons representing various interests and not individuals appointed by name. These interests may be stated as Tea Estates, the Public Works and Forest Departments of Government, the Railway and Steamer Companies, the Assam Bengal Cement Company or other large employers and Military construction agencies, with the Deputy Commissioner, as Chairman.

(b)—Thirteen in the case of Sylhet and 11 in that of Cachar.

(c)—The commodities covered were forest produce, food-stuffs, bricks, cattle, poultry, eggs, lime, limestone and baskets.



(d)—A statement giving the prices fixed is placed on the table (printed below)

*Prices for Forest produce fixed at Sylhet and Cachar*

	Unit	Rates at Sylhet			Rates at Cachar		
		Rs.	a.	p.	Rs.	a.	p.
1. Muli bamboos 20' × 6" ...	per 1,000 Nos.	85	0	0	75	0	0
2. Barua bamboos 25' and over in length 8" and over in mid girth.	per 100 Nos.	100	0	0	45	0	0
3. Jai bamboos ditto ...	ditto	60	0	0	45	0	0
4. Pecha bamboos 20' × 7" of more in girth.	per 100 Nos.	30	0	0	30	0	0
5. Muli bamboo chattai 7' × 4' each.	100 s.ft.	1	12	0	2	0	0
6. Muli bamboo shingles 8' × 2½"	ditto	1	12	0	1	8	0
7. Jali cane split 8' and up.	per bundle of 200 pieces.	4	0	0	3	4	0
8. Ditto 12' and up ...	ditto	5	8	0	5	0	0
9. Ditto 15' and up ...	ditto	7	0	0	6	12	0
10. Ikra, bundles—12" circumference and 10' long.	100 bundles	25	0	0	...		
11. Charcoal ...	per md.	4	0	0	...		
12. Firewood ...	100 lbs. dry.	1	4	0	0	14	0
13. Ulu thatch 6" dia. ...	per 1,000 bundles.	80	0	0	65	0	0
14. Ditto 4" dia. ...	ditto	40	0	0	...		
15. Cane baskets 21" dia. ...	per 100	90	0	0	80	0	0
16. Ditto 16" dia. ...	ditto	75	0	0	...		
17. Bamboo Tarzas 10' × 5'	100 s. ft.	2	8	0	2	12	0
18. Bricks, 1st class ...	per 1,000 Nos.	35	0	0	42	0	0
19. Ditto ...	ditto	22	0	0	...		
20. Ditto, 2nd class ...	ditto	31	0	0	30	0	0
21. Ditto ...	ditto	20	0	0	...		
22. Slaked lime ...	per 100 mds.	180	0	0	...		
23. Unslaked lime ...	ditto	480	0	0	...		

*Prices of food-stuffs fixed at Sylhet and Silchar*

				Rs.	a.	p.
24. Poultry ...				0	14	0
25. Eggs ...	per lb.	L.	W.	88	0	0
26. Milk buffaloes ...	1,000 Nos.			25	0	0
27. Milk cows ...	80 lbs.			25	0	0
28. Onions ...	ditto			22	0	0
29. Jhinga ...	ditto			9	0	0
30. Karola ...	ditto			14	0	0
31. Brinjal ...	ditto			11	0	0
32. Sweet potatoes ...	ditto			6	0	0
33. Cucumber ...	ditto			9	0	0
34. Pumpkin ...	ditto			6	0	0
35. Marrows ...	ditto			6	0	0
36. Papaya ...	ditto			9	0	0
37. Lady's finger ...	ditto			16	0	0

					Rs.	a.	p.
38.	Sweet Gourd ...	...	...	80 lbs.	8	0	0
39.	Live cattle ...	...	...	per lb.	0	4	6
40.	Beef ...	...	...	ditto	0	10	0
41.	Mutton ...	...	...	ditto	0	12	0
42.	Fish, first class ...	...	...	per md.	45	0	0

(e)—The daily rates provisionally fixed for unskilled labour are Re. 1, annas 14, and annas 12 respectively for adult male, female and boy worker. These rates are in process of re-examination to distinguish between basic wage, dearness allowance and bonus, etc.

(f)—Not directly. They are principally for guidance of employing authorities *inter se*.

(g)—Does not arise.

(Starred Question No. 219 was not put and answered as the Questioner Babu Bipin Behari Das was absent)

### Shops for selling cloths to the Public

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked :

\*220. Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Government have ear marked some cloth shops who will sell cloths only to the Government officials in Sylhet town and in other towns of the Surma Valley ?

\*221. If the answer to Question No.220 be in the affirmative will Government be pleased to state :—

(a) The number of shops thus ear marked in each of the towns of the Surma Valley ?

(b) The names of the owners of those shops ?

\*222. Will Government be pleased to state the number of shops in each of the towns of the Surma Valley who have been permitted to sell cloths to the public other than Government officers with the names of the owners of those shops ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

220.—No.

221. (a) & (b)—Do not arise.

222.—Government have made no distinction between Government officers and public as regards sale of cloth by the dealers and no permission has been issued to any dealer to this effect.

### UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

#### Posts held by Scheduled Castes in Public Services

Srijut RAM NATH DAS asked :

140. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The number of posts held by the Scheduled Castes in the cadre of the following Services :—

(i) The Assam Civil Service Senior.

(ii) The Assam Superior Police Service ; and

(iii) The Assam Excise Service ?

(b) The number of posts due to the Scheduled Castes in each of the above services ?

(c) Whether they have at any time given any direction to the Assam Public Service Commission definitely to recommend names of applicants of the Scheduled Castes to fill up the requisite percentage in the above Services ?

(d) If not, why not ?

(e) Why not a single appointment has been made from the Scheduled Castes in the cadre of the Assam Senior Civil Service recently advertised ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

140. (a) (i)—One.

(ii)—None.

(iii)—One.

(b)—In the Assam Civil Service the Scheduled Castes are entitled to 7 posts according to the permanent strength and 8 posts according to the present strength. In the Assam Police Service and Assam Excise Service they are strictly entitled only to one post and  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a post.

(c)—At the time of each recruitment the Assam Public Service Commission are always asked to nominate candidates from unrepresented or under represented communities, if possible. Government do not bind the Commission *only* to nominate from a particular community which may possibly not produce qualified candidates.

(d)—Does not arise.

(e)—None secured recommendation from the Commission.

#### **Re supply of sugar in rural and urban areas**

Khan Bahadur Hazi ABDUL MAJID CHOUDHURY asked :

141. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether any order has lately been passed by them not to supply sugar in rural areas ?

(b) Why no sugar is supplied to old and sick people and to children in rural areas ?

(c) Whether Government propose to stop the supply of sugar in urban areas also.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

141. (a)—No. Sugar is however supplied to rural areas in limited quantities as the Provincial quota does not permit of distribution in towns and villages alike.

(b)—Sugar available is supplied without any discrimination whatsoever.

(c)—No.

#### **November 1944 quota of fine cloths in Barpeta Subdivision**

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

142. (a) Is it a fact that the November 1944 quota of fine mill cloths for the Barpeta Subdivision was given to one Marwari gentleman at Nalbari ?

(b) If so, why ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state who has selected the aforesaid person for distributing the said quota of mill cloths for the Barpeta Subdivision ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

142. (a), (b) & (c)—The information will be found in Government letter No.LTC.186/44, dated 29th December 1944, a copy of which has been placed on the Library Table.

#### **Chairman of the Provincial Co-operative Textile Society**

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

143. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Who is the Chairman of the Provincial Co-operative Textile Supply Society ?

(b) Who organised the said Society ?

(c) Who are the original or independent members of this Society ?

- (d) What are the requisite qualifications to become an independent member of the said Society ?
- (e) Whether each such member is entitled to a monthly quota of mill cloth as a wholesaler ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

143. (a)—The Chairman for the time being is Mr. F. H. Hazarika who was duly elected by the original members. It is proposed to replace him shortly by an official Chairman and an announcement to this effect has already been made in the *Assam Gazette*.

(b)—Some of the original members, whose names are given in the reply to part (c) of this Question.

(c)—The question is not understood in so far as it relates to—“independent members”. The names of the original members, that is, those who signed the application for registration, are given below :—

- (1) Mr. Faiz Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika.
- (2) „ Bhabesh Chandra Barua.
- (3) „ Umrao Singh Baid.
- (4) „ Imam Md. Shah Hussain Hazarika.
- (5) „ Tilak Chand.
- (6) „ Birendra Nath Barua.
- (7) „ Bakhta Jamal Ahmed.
- (8) „ Ram Nath Das.
- (9) „ Surendra Nath Buragohain.
- (10) „ Girija Prasad Barua.
- (11) „ Ram Nath Sarma.
- (12) „ Md. Abdus Salam.
- (13) „ Kamakhya Lal Bajoria.

(d)—The question is not understood ; but a copy of the bye-laws of the Society is placed on the Library Table. The hon. Member may be able to collect the necessary information from the bye-laws.

(e)—No member, except the Subdivisional Societies, is entitled to any monthly quota ; but for reasons explained in the Government's letter referred to in the reply to Question No.142 above, certain wholesale dealers who were members of the Society were given allotments from the November purchases of the Society as a purely temporary measure.

#### Approved dealers specified under the Brass Utensils (Control) Order, 1944

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

144. (a) Will Government be pleased to refer to their Notification No.S.D.219/44/89, dated the 25th January 1945, published in the *Assam Gazette* of the 31st January 1945 and state whether the list of approved dealers specified therein under the Brass Utensils (Control) Order, 1944, includes the names of all the traders in brass utensils who applied to the Director of Supplies, Assam, for treating them as such.

(b) If not, do Government propose to recommend their names to the Central Government for including them in the list of approved dealers ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

144. (a)—No, the names included therein were either known to Government of India by direct application or through their suppliers.

(b)—Yes, besides the Co-operative Stores the following who applied have been recommended :—

1. Messrs. Mirzamal Bhuramal, Gauhati.
2. „ Prahlad Rai Puranmall, Gauhati.
3. „ Santimoy Sudhamoy Bose, North Cachar Hills.
4. „ Basanta Kumar Hemanta Kumar De, North Cachar Hills.
5. Babu Jagannath De, North Cachar Hills.

6. Babu Sudhir Chandra Datta, North Cachar Hills.
7. Messrs. Mulukraj Madan Gopal, North Cachar Hills.
8. „ Tamizuddin Barua & Sons, North Lakhimpur.
9. „ Amarchand Ram Prasad & Sons, North Lakhimpur.
10. „ Surajmal Sreenarayan, Sadiya.
11. „ Mahadeo Chogolal, Saikhowaghat.
12. „ Ramdeo Ram Kisen, Sadiya.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Are Government aware that names of many genuine traders, who applied for including them in the list of approved dealers, have not been sent up by this Government to the Central Government?

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

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Will Government be pleased to take up the cases of those persons who applied after the recommendation, as mentioned in this list, was sent up?

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

### Supply of bonemeal in Jowai Subdivision

Rev. L. GATPHOH asked:

145. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The names of the present contractors for supplying bonemeal for the Jowai Subdivision?
- (b) The quantity of bonemeal supplied to the Jaintia cultivators (i) through Government agencies and (ii) through local traders in the years 1942-43, 1943-44 and 1944-45?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA replied:

145. (a)—No bonemeal was purchased during the current year through any contractor.

(b) (i)—247 maunds in 1942-43

2,000 „ „ 1943-44

4,939 „ „ 1944-45.

(ii)—Government are not in a position to say what quantity, if any, of bonemeal was supplied by local traders.

### Inhabitants of the northern side of the Chaparmukh Railway Station

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMIRUDDIN asked:

146. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The number of families inhabiting the northern side of the Chaparmukh Railway approach road running from East to West in the District of Nowgong?
- (b) For how long the said road has been in existence and for how long those families have been living there?
- (c) What is the avocation of the majority of them?
- (d) How many of them have got their females with them and whether they have got proper family quarters?
- (e) What arrangements of sanitation, particularly, of latrine system have been so far made by the District Authorities for them and wherefrom do they get their drinking water?
- (f) Whether Government propose to instruct immediately the authorities concerned to arrange for their easy water supply and for latrine system in the interest of their health?
- (g) Whether Government are aware that there exists a big East-to-West ditch about one furlong in length just in front of this locality remaining dirty with filth throughout the year?
- (h) How many hotels, restaurants, tea stalls and sweet-meat shops are there in this locality?

- (i) Whether each of them has got a license ?
- (j) Whether before the issue of a license in each case any enquiry was ever made as to whether each of them has got any latrine attached to it and any proper water arrangement for it ?
- (k) Whether any Sanitary Officer ever inspected the sanitation of the locality ?
- (l) If not, why not ?
- (m) Whether Government propose to direct immediately the Civil Surgeon and the Health Officer of Nowgong to inspect the condition of this locality at an early date ?
- (n) Whether Government propose to instruct immediately the Railway Authorities to fill up the ditch mentioned in Question No. 146(g), above ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

146. (a)—120 persons, with or without families.

(b)—About 20 years.

(c)—Shop-keeping.

(d)—45. About half of them have family quarters.

(e)—No arrangements have been made by the District authorities for sanitation or latrines. The area is a rural one. The people make their own arrangements. Some have latrines, some use pits. There is a tank. Drinking water is taken from the Railway station.

(f)—No. This is a matter for the persons concerned.

(g)—There is such a tank. Filth and water hyacinth have been removed, and anti-malarial oiling is being done by the Railway authorities.

(h)—Five hotels, six tea-stalls with sweets-shop attached and one sweets-shop.

(i)—It is reported that only two hotels have licenses under the Public Sarais Act (XXII of 1867). Further enquiries are being made.

(j)—No. Enquiries were made about the need for hotel and general character of the applicants.

(k)—The Civil Surgeon and Public Health Officer concerned visit the place during times of epidemic disease. No special inspection of sanitation at Chapar mukh is reported.

(l)—No special need arose.

(m)—Yes.

(n)—Government will consider this on receiving the Medical Officer's report.

#### Effect caused by earthquake of 23rd October, 1943

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA asked :

147. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The total number of casualties in the Province caused by the earthquake of the 23rd October, 1943 ?

(b) The total number of casualties in the Lakhimpur district and the number of such casualties in the North Lakhimpur Subdivision ?

(c) The extent of damages caused to public and private buildings—

(i) in the Province,

(ii) in the Lakhimpur district, and

(iii) in the North Lakhimpur Subdivision ?

148. (a) Is it a fact that the main Court building and the Treasury building of North Lakhimpur were damaged beyond repair and that as such they have been left unrepaired while the Dak Bungalow has been repaired since ?

(b) Is it a fact that the Treasury and main Court buildings at North Lakhimpur have been condemned as unsafe?

(c) If so, where and how the Subdivisional Officer's Court and offices are now held and where the Treasury is housed?

(d) Is it a fact that the news of the casualties and havocs caused by the earthquake was neither allowed to be published in the press for some time after the occurrence had taken place nor was it given publicity by the Publicity Service?

(e) If so, will Government be pleased to state who is responsible for it and why the news was so suppressed?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied:

147. (a)—Reports received by Government show:—

Injured—108

Deaths— 18

(b)—No casualties have been reported from Lakhimpur district.

(c) (i)—A list of public and private buildings which suffered serious damage is shown below.

List of public buildings seriously damaged by the earthquake

*Jorhat Division*

- (1) Magazine at Borbhetta.
- (2) Treasury Building at Golaghat.
- (3) Inspector of Schools' office, Jorhat.
- (4) Jail building at Borbhetta (Office portion.)
- (5) Bonded Warehouse at Jorhat.
- (6) Chowkidar's shed attached to Public Works Department Subdivisional's office at Jorhat.

*Lakhimpur Division.*

- (1) Ahom Raja's Palace at Gorgaon.
- (2) Ronghor Ruins of Joysagar.
- (3) Bishnudole at Joysagar.
- (4) Sivadole at Joysagar.
- (5) Bishnudole at Gaurisagar.
- (6) Devidole at Gaurisagar.
- (7) Sibsagar Jail.
- (8) Circuit House at Sibsagar.
- (9) Dak Bungalow at Sibsagar.
- (10) S. D. M. O.'s Residence at Sibsagar.
- (11) Office of the Guard Room at Sibsagar.
- (12) Reserve Constable Barrack at Tinsukia.

*Central Assam Division*

- (1) Bordole temple at Biswanath.
- (2) Tezpur Hospital.
- (3) Barrack wards 12 to 15.
- (4) Under-trial Ward.

- (5) Deputy Commissioner's Residence.
- (6) Tezpur Jail.
- (7) Vasudeva temple at Kalabari.
- (8) Mental Hospital.
- (9) Court house at North Lakhimpur.
- (10) Treasury house at North Lakhimpur.

List of private buildings damaged in Jorhat town

*Name of house-holders*

- (1) Abdul Majid.
- (2) Firdest Ali.
- (3) Ibrahim Ali.
- (4) Sathmul Nuthmal Shop.
- (5) Ramdeo Purnalal.
- (6) Hukum Chand.
- (7) Chun Ram.
- (8) Bangshilal Ramcharan.
- (9) Nem Chand Buzar.
- (10) Askuran Panchiram.
- (11) Kistur Chand.
- (12) Mvi. Abdulla, B.A.
- (13) Abdul Karim.
- (14) S. Ahmed Hazarika.
- (15) Comilla Union Bank (3 buildings.)
- (16) Abdul Kadir Mia.
- (17) Muhibatddin Ahmed (3 buildings.)
- (18) Mohiyet Hussain.
- (19) Dr. H. K. Handique.
- (20) M. C. Gohain.
- (21) Mutizur Rahman.
- (22) Balkishan Singh.
- (23) Sersha Singh.
- (24) Surjon Singh.
- (25) Ismail Borbora.

List of private buildings damaged in Jorhat town—*concl'd.*

*Names of householders—concl'd.*

- |                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| (26) Sirish Dutta.                | (69) Ratnadar Baruah.  |
| (27) Mungilal Hukumdar.           | (70) Krishna Kr. Baruah.   |
| (28) Bukta Nath.                  | (71) Radha Nath Phukan.  |
| (29) Fazlul Hussain.              | (72) Horakanti Devi.   |
| (30) Amar Hussain.                | (73) Radha Kanta Handique.                                       |
| (31) D. N. Karamkar.              | (74) Hareh Ch. Baruah.   |
| (32) I. K. Ali.                   | (75) K. K. Kalita.   |
| (33) Mvi. Abdul Karim.            | (76) Keshab Ch. Pam.   |
| (34) Mvi. Mafazul Hussain.        | (77) Hoyram Saher.   |
| (35) Md. Saheb Muhibul Hoque.     | (78) S. K. Dero.   |
| (36) Hazi Abdul Rahman.           | (79) Jeskaram Sohanlal.  |
| (37) Khursi Jema Pekas.           | (80) Miseri Ram Lili.  |
| (38) Kina Ch. Borua.              | (81) Dr. A. K. Shaw.   |
| (39) Joy Ch. Borua.               | (82) Rekiba Khatoon.   |
| (40) Azakara Peokar.              | (83) T. Abdul.   |
| (41) Tezir Rahman.                | (84) W. K. Sore.   |
| (42) Iqbal Jehan.                 | (85) Sarjuden.   |
| (43) Sardar Charan Singh.         | (86) Mad Gakaezo.  |
| (44) Eley Cinema Building.        | (87) S. P. Barua.  |
| (45) Keshab Ch. Barua.            | (88) Hukum Chand Sew Prasad.                                     |
| (46) B. K. Roy.                   | (89) Gauhati Bank, Ltd.  |
| (47) Lakhmi Union Theatre Hall.   | (90) Atulananda De.  |
| (48) Cally Buildings (Dass & Co.) | (91) Joyram.   |
| (49) Parmananda Tewari.           | (92) Gokudhar Thakuria.  |
| (50) Tilok Ch. Bora.              | (93) Phani Dutta.  |
| (51) Mitrador Barma.              | (94) Ramdew Radsad.  |
| (52) Joy Nath Bora.               | (95) Banshiram.  |
| (53) Muhidhar Bora.               | (96) Rajkumar Dhubi.   |
| (54) Padmanath Bora.              | (97) Huzra Khatoon.  |
| (55) K. Chaliha.                  | (98) Abdul Rahman Choudhury.                                     |
| (56) Sathmal Mithilal.            | (99) Purne Kanta Sarma.  |
| (57) Biren Hazarika.              | (100) K. Thakur.   |
| (58) B. B. Sircar.                | (101) R. Thakur.   |
| (59) Electric Supply Co. Ltd.     | (102) Keshab Ch. Thakur.   |
| (60) Deveswar Sarma.              | (103) Chandra Kanta Sarma.                                       |
| (61) Lakhi Prasad Khound.         | (104) Ramendranath Sarma.  |
| (62) Paresh Ch. Barua.            | (105) Nabin Ch. Dutta.   |
| (63) Tankeswar Bordoloi.          | (106) Promode Borua.   |
| (64) Duti Ram Changkakoty.        | (107) J. Duarah.   |
| (65) Lakhinath Bordoloi.          | (108) Hem Ch. Barua.   |
| (66) Hemananda Bezbarua.          | (109) Phanidhar Nath Hazarika.                                   |
| (67) Heromba Prasad Baruah.       | (110) Walls and floors of all Mosques at<br>Jorhat town cracked. |
| (68) Iswar Prasad Baruah.         |  |

Private buildings damaged at Sibsagar

*Names of house-holders*

1. Mr. B. Doulla.

2. The Amguri Railway buildings.



## Private buildings damaged at Golaghat

*Names of house-holders*

- |                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Mukti Singh.       | 9. M. N. Barua.                                 |
| 2. Rampratap Singh.   | 10. R. N. Barua.                                |
| 3. Golok Barbora.     | 11. Muslem Cottage.                             |
| 4. Manial Haque.      | 12. Dass & Co. Buildings.                       |
| 5. Maniruddin.        | 13. Late B. Dutta.                              |
| 6. Borju Agrawalla.   | 14. Dinanath Dutta.                             |
| 7. Belubox Agrawalla. | 15. Almost all mosques buildings badly damaged. |
| 8. H. P. Barooah.     |   |

## Private buildings damaged at North Lakhimpur

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Shop of Messrs. Kanaiyalall Dhansukdas. | 2. Some other shops and houses damaged. |
|--|---|

(ii) & (iii)—The information is given in (c) (i) above.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: Are not Government aware that the house of one Mr. Bidyanath Hazarika was damaged to such an extent that it had to be abandoned?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: No, Sir.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied:

148. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—The Subdivisional Officer's Court and some of his offices are now held in the main part of the settlement office, only two rooms being occupied by the settlement staff. The Subdivisional Officer's other offices including Extra Assistant Commissioner's Court are going on in second Officer's Court building and additional Court building as usual, which are not damaged by the earthquake. The Treasury is now shifted to Bonded warehouse remodelled and the Treasury transaction is going on in one temporary shed newly made. The Excise work is going on in a temporary building newly constructed.

(d) & (e)—No. Several papers did in fact publish accounts of the earthquake and statements regarding casualties very shortly afterwards. No particular action was taken by the Publicity Department for the reason, *viz.*, that before full particulars were available to Government, Press Agencies were already disseminating the news.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: With reference to replies to Questions Nos. 148 (d) & (e) may I know, Sir, when and in which papers the accounts were published?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: The names of the papers are known to the hon. Member.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Did not Government consider it their responsibility to publish a full account of the disaster?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Government did not think it necessary to publish the accounts.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: May I know when these accounts were published?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: The answer is already there, Sir. Several papers did in fact publish accounts of the earthquake and statements regarding casualties very shortly afterwards.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: I want to know the dates—approximate dates, Sir?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: I want notice of this Question, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The Hon'ble Minister has admitted that the accounts were published in several papers, but they can neither give the names of the papers nor the dates of publication. We want a straight answer, Sir?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: The informations are not available, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: In that case, if we say that nothing was published in the paper, can Government contradict it, Sir?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Government are giving this information on the basis of the reports received from the local officers.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Is it not the function of the Publicity Department to collect information in order to let the public know the details of the damages done?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: If the House desires, Government will make further enquiries.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: My point is, what is the utility of the Publicity Department if they do not collect information and give proper publicity and let the people know the effects of the disastrous earthquake?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: This is argumentative.

### Direct purchase of rice and paddy in Surma Valley

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked:

149. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The number of telegrams, resolutions and petitions received by Government from the public since the prorogation of the last November Session of the Assembly for giving effect to the decision of the Assembly regarding direct purchase by Government of paddy and chasing agencies through the Enquiry Committee set up by the Assembly?
- (b) If so, what steps have been taken by Government in the matter?
- (c) Whether Government have taken charge of paddy and rice purchased last year by the Eastern Bengal and Assam Commercial Syndicate in the Sachna purchasing centre?
- (d) Whether Government are aware that a huge amount of paddy has been destroyed in the Sachna centre due to exposure in rains?
- (e) The quantity of paddy and rice purchased last year by the said Syndicate in the Sachna centre?
- (f) The names of sellers who sold paddy and rice to the said Syndicate in this centre?
- (g) The rates of prices recorded in the vouchers received from each of the said sellers?
- (h) Whether it is a fact that the rate of price of Buro paddy rose up to Rs. 10 per maund last year in the Sunamganj Subdivision?
- (i) Whether Government are aware that the cultivators of Sunamganj in the months of December, 1944 and January, 1945 could not sell Buro paddy at rates not more than Rs. 4-8-0 per maund?
- (j) Why Government did not commence direct purchase of Buro paddy and rice at that time?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

149. (a) & (b)—A good number of telegrams and petitions were received from the public and Government are taking all possible steps to expedite matters.
- (c)—Taking over charge is in progress.
- (d)—Yes.

- (e)—Buro rice — 29,469 Maunds. Buro paddy — 54,461 Maunds.  
 (f)—Jugendra Das, Nirmalendra Choudhury, Abdul Gani, Rajani Kanta Das, Rasheed Ali, Thakurdhan Majhi, Khitish Das, Pushraj Lalwani and Kartik Das.  
 (g)—For Buro rice—rate was from Rs. 11-4-0 to Rs. 12-4-0 per maund and for Buro paddy from Rs. 5-12-0 to Rs. 6-8-0 per maund.  
 (h)—Government have no information.  
 (i)—Government have no information.  
 (j)—Direct purchase could not be taken up then as appointment of staff and other preliminary arrangements took much time.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: With reference to (f) is it not a fact, Sir, that these persons purchased paddy at Rs. 4-8-0 per maund?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am not aware, Sir, at what rate those people purchased paddy.

### Appointments of Textile Superintendents

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED asked :

150. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) What was the cause of delay in making the last appointments of Textile Superintendents ?  
 (b) Whether it is a fact that these appointments were first about to be made by the Department of Industry on its own choice, but subsequently passed to the Assam Public Service Commission ?  
 (c) If so, why ?  
 (d) How many Muslim candidates were called for interviews from the Assam Valley in this connection ?  
 (e) Whether Government propose to lay on the table a statement showing (i) their names, (ii) general qualifications, (iii) technical knowledge, (iv) special abilities, if any, and (v) home districts ?  
 (f) How many candidates (Muslim and Hindu) were called for interviews by the Public Service Commission in connection with the above appointments from Goalpara district and got nominations and out of these how many have been appointed ?  
 (g) How many Muslims have been appointed as Textile Superintendents from each of the Valleys of the Province and what are their special qualifications or merits ?  
 (h) Whether Government propose to give due consideration to the cases of the district of Goalpara candidates who have been recommended by the Assam Public Service Commission in making similar appointments in the near future ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

150. (a)—No appointments of Textile Superintendents have as yet been made. The Question therefore does not arise.

(b) & (c)—It was originally proposed to make the appointments with the concurrence of His Excellency the Governor under regulation 25 (vii) of the Assam Public Service Commission Regulations, because, at the time that they were initially contemplated, they were urgently needed in order to make the cloth and yarn control more effective. But with the inauguration of the new system of procurement and distribution which, by organising the dealers into bodies corporate, makes the administration of the control easier, it was found that the appointments could wait to be made through the Public Service Commission.

(d), (e) & (f)—The Public Service Commission, which possesses the information, is not prepared to disclose it.

(g)—In view of the reply to part (a) of this Question, the Question does not arise.

(h)—Government cannot make appointments to the Provincial Service on a District basis. They have to follow the order of preference of Public Service Commission recommendations.

### Procurement and distribution of various consumer goods

Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAİN asked :

151. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The quantities of each of the various consumer goods procured on Government account of September 30th, 1944 ?
  - The principle, if any, on which the quotas of such goods are allocated to the different Subdivisions of the Province ?
  - The machinery through which these goods are distributed among the consuming public ?
  - The principle on which distribution of these goods is made in the Subdivisions ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

151. (a)—A statement is placed on the Library table.  
 (b)—The quotas are allocated to different Subdivisions on population basis modified by variations in normal demand.  
 (c)—Through wholesalers and retailers appointed by District and Sub-divisional officers.  
 (d)—Distribution is according to supply available and nature of demand in the various classes of goods.

### Re Applicants for food-grain licenses for 1945 in Goalpara Subdivision

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA asked :

152. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The number of applicants for food-grain licenses for 1945 in the Goalpara Subdivision ?
  - Whether it is a fact that the Investigating Officer, Goalpara Subdivision, demands from the said applicants, Rs.5,000 for " A " Class, Rs.2,000 for " B " Class and Rs.1,000 for " C " Class licenses on the assurance of recommending their cases ?
  - If so, do Government propose to transfer such officer and then enquire into the matter and take necessary steps ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

152. (a)—169.  
 (b)—Government have no such information and no complaint was received.  
 (c)—Does not arise.

### Disposal of Kapash (Cotton) with seeds

Khan Bahadur Hazi ABDUL MAJID CHOUDHURY asked :

153. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they have made any arrangement with the producers of Kapash for the disposal of the same with seeds ?  
 (b) If not why ?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA replied :

153. (a)—No.  
 (b)—No difficulty in the matter of marketing of cotton with or without seeds has come to the notice of Government so far.

### Irrigation project of Ghehua-Chalchali in Nowgong District

Srijit MAHI CHANDRA BORA asked :

154. Will Government be pleased to state—
- By whom and at whose instance the irrigation project of Ghehua-Chalchali in the district of Nowgong was first mooted out ?
  - Whether any application for construction of a drain in that area has been submitted to the Deputy Commissioner concerned ?
  - If so, by whom and by how many persons it has been submitted ?
  - Whether the requirements of the provisions of the Assam Embankment and Drainage Act, 1941 (Assam Act VII of 1941) have been complied with in the matter of the aforesaid project ?
  - Whether the Provincial Government have caused the scheme to be drawn up under Section 7 of the aforesaid Act ?
  - Whether any Embankment Officer has visited the locality and ascertained the utility of such a drain ?
  - Whether it is a fact that the Sub-Deputy Collector of the Circle has held that the aforesaid project if given effect to, would not only damage the lands through which it is proposed to pass but would also make other lands unfit for jute and *sali* crops by draining out water from them ?
  - What is the opinion of the Sub-Deputy Collector of the Circle concerned and the Deputy Commissioner on the matter ?
  - Whether Government are aware that the majority of the people of the locality is against the proposed project ?
  - Whether Government propose to drop the project or depute an expert to find out the utility or otherwise of a canal thereat ?

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA replied :

154. (a)—By the Department of Agriculture on the application of Maulavi Muzaffur Ahmed and 110 other signatories of the following villages:—Barpaka, Dakshin Khatwal, Gagamari, Gehua-Chalchali, Uttar Khatwal, Kandhulimari, Kanepur, Hatipukuri and Digheli.

(b)—No.

(c)—Does not arise.

(d), (e) & (f)—The hon. Member may refer to the reply given to (j) below.

(g)—No. These allegations were made by persons who objected to giving up amicably a small part of their higher land for the canal, and the Sub-Deputy Collector after trying to persuade them to give up their land, reported that they had made these allegations.

(h)—The Sub-Deputy Collector doubted if the canal would drain away more water, but did not doubt that it was desirable to drain away water. The Deputy Commissioner considered that it was impossible to be certain of the exact results for the area to be drained, without expert knowledge and elaborate taking of levels, but that since a large area of cultivation was concerned, the experiment should be made. The higher land, through which the canal would pass, belonging to objecting parties, would not be damaged, and provision could be made against its being drained too much.

(i)—No. The Deputy Commissioner reports that the objectors were only those through whose higher land the canal would pass.

(j)—The whole matter is under consideration. The Executive Engineer, Embankment and Drainage Division, Assam Valley, is shortly going to inspect the site. He would naturally consider the provisions of Section 7, Assam Embankment and Drainage Act in this connection.

### Bans on meetings in different places of the Province

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked :

155. (a) Will Government be pleased to state, the names of places, Subdivision by Subdivision, other than Excluded Areas, where at present there are no bans on holding meetings, associations etc. ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state the population of these places, as against the population of the places where there are such bans ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state why these restrictions have been imposed ?

(d) Are Government aware of the wide-spread discontent among the people regarding scarcity of supply of essential food-stuffs, want of medical treatment, and other hardships due to the war throughout the Province ?

(e) Is it a fact that recently some of the people, who gathered to discuss these matters at Kampur and Koliabar centres of Nowgong district, were arrested and put in custody ?

(f) Is it a fact that papers are not allowed to publish the news of prevalence of scarcity of food-stuffs in the Province without the authority of the Press Adviser ?

(g) Do Government propose to withdraw their existing orders preventing holding of all meetings and associations in the Province except with specific permission ?

156. Do Government propose to withdraw the present restrictions in regard to publicity in the Press so as to allow free publicity of all news other than those connected with Military secrets ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

155 (a) & (b)—The information is given in the table annexed :

*Subdivisions and their population where the ban on meetings, etc., has been imposed*

Subdivision	Population
Silchar ... ..	437,284
Hailakandi ... ..	166,566
North Cachar Hills ... ..	37,361
Nowgong district ... ..	710,800
Jorhat ... ..	377,358
Sibsagar ... ..	382,831
Golaghat ... ..	314,552
Gauhati ... ..	810,032
Barpeta ... ..	454,168
Dibrugarh ... ..	689,345
North Lakhimpur ... ..	205,497
Lakhimpur F. Tract ... ..	11,343
North Sylhet ... ..	664,172
South Sylhet ... ..	515,154
Habiganj ... ..	731,151
Sunamganj ... ..	637,897
Karimganj ... ..	568,228

*Subdivisions and their population where no ban on meetings, etc. has been imposed*

Subdivision	Population
Dhubri ... ..	715,924
Goalpara ... ..	298,361
Tezpur ... ..	412,545
Mangaldai ... ..	324,246

(c)—In time of war and in an area so intimately involved with the conduct of the war as Assam, it is necessary to take power to control some activities, which may have effects beyond the intentions and purposes of the sponsors.

(d)—Government are aware that the effects of war have involved many difficulties and privations for the people of the Province, but would not regard the fortitude and self-help which they have shown as fairly characterized by such words as "wide-spread discontent".

(e)—Yes. These were not the only matter discussed, and the meetings were held without permission.

(f)—There is no prohibition governing this matter. Government have sought the co-operation of the Press in giving matters relating to essential supplies calm and reasonable treatment which will place shortages in their proper proportion.

(g)—Not at present.

156.—Government are not clear to what restrictions the hon. Member refers. Excepting for matters publication of which is prohibited by the Defence of India Rules, publication is generally left to the good sense of the Editor, and Press advice is available to assist him in avoiding such action as might render him liable for infringing the Defence of India Rules by publication of prejudicial matter.

### Procurement and distribution of cloth in the Province

Maulana ABDUL HAMID KHAN asked :

157. (a) Will Government be pleased to state what arrangements they have made till now to remove the present difficulties of the people of the Province particularly in rural areas in getting mill cloths ?

(b) Is it a fact that Government officers are reserving a large portion, as much as 25 per cent. or 30 per cent. of the stock for distribution among themselves ?

(c) If so, is this reservation in conformity with their percentage in population of the country ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

157. (a)—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 wholesale Co-operative Societies of dealers formed for the purpose in every Subdivision of the Province. It is hoped that this arrangement will solve the problem of the supply of mill cloth in rural areas.

(b)—No.

(c)—Does not arise.

### Complaint *re* Questions left unanswered during the Session

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: Sir, I like to draw your attention to the fact that a large number of Questions remain unanswered during this Session as was also the case during the last Session. I myself gave notice of about 22 Questions but up till now only three Questions have been answered. May I attribute this, Sir, to the sense of inconvenience felt by the Hon'ble Ministers who if they have to reply, may have to tell lies ? In this surmise, Sir, I am supported by a sentence of Barnard Shaw who in his play 'Supermen' has advised the Members of the British Parliament in these words: "Ask no Questions and you will be told no lies".

Is it also the same reason here, Sir, for keeping our Questions unanswered ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I strongly resent the insinuation made by my hon. Friend Srijut Sarveswar Barua. A large number of Questions have been tabled by this particular hon. Member but

almost all the Questions barring a few require research. For example, my hon. Friend put about ten Questions on certain events which had happened in 1942, to know whether a certain man in a particular village on a particular date led a procession and whether the man was arrested, taken to a Thana. All these Questions happened in 1942. So I have been going through the previous papers in order to give him replies. On the last two days, I have drafted the replies to my hon. Friend's Questions and probably he will get the replies on the last day of this Session. If the hon. Questioner, instead of confining himself to current events, wants Government to trace what happened three years ago, he must give the Government sufficient time to get the materials in detail.

**Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA:** As regards this, Sir, I have to give a personal explanation. These Questions which the Hon'ble Premier has just now spoken of and which he says, require a research, were as a matter of fact framed and sent for the March Session of 1944 when I was in jail, but they were withheld by the jail authorities on that occasion. So I tabled the same Questions, after my release, for the November Session of last year, but they were not answered then. Now in spite of that the Hon'ble Premier says that he will require sufficient time to collect the materials to answer those Questions.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir **MUHAMMAD SAADULLA:** We got notice of these Questions while the Session was on in November 1944. We sent them to the Deputy Commissioner concerned for supplying us materials. The Deputy Commissioner had to consult the Subdivisional Officer. My hon. Friend himself had on many occasions complained of the difficulties about communications between the district headquarters and the North Lakhimpur Subdivision. Therefore he can himself realise how much time they might take to furnish us the materials from the officers concerned, to enable us to draft replies. However, I have drafted the replies during the last two days, and I think the answers will come on the last day of this Session.

### Demands for Grants

#### GRANT No. 9

#### (18B. AND 68B.—NAVIGATION, EMBANKMENT AND DRAINAGE WORKS)

The Hon'ble the **SPEAKER:** Voting on Demands for Grants is now to be taken up.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi **SAYIDUR RAHMAN:** On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,09,900 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 "18B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works".

The Hon'ble the **SPEAKER:** The Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,09,900 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 "18B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works".

**Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 8,09,900 under Grant No. 9, Major head—18B. and 68B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage works, at page 45 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 8,09,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

My object in moving this cut Motion is to draw attention to the failure of Government to keep the Juri river open to navigation. To a question on this subject put earlier in the Session, the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge was good enough to answer that the matter of the silting of rivers would receive attention after the war and that the services of an expert would be obtained to give advice on this important problem and that owing to the shortage of staff nothing could be done at present to better matters.



Sir, I appreciate all this and its broader implications, but it does not take an expert to see a sandbank which is holding up country boat traffic and to arrange to have it removed by manual labour. This is all that is required at present to open up the Juri River. A permanent solution will naturally have to wait until the end of the war.

It is however a very definite Government responsibility to see that important inland waterways are at all times kept clear and safe for country boat traffic and it was never so necessary as at present time when, owing to the difficulty in obtaining wagons for the movement of goods by rail, industries must rely on country boats to a greater extent than ever before.

Now, I have obtained figures from a reliable source which show that the maundage of teas, essential foodstuffs, and other agricultural produce carried by country boats on the Juri River *per annum* is not less than 3 lakhs and a very large proportion of this must of necessity be moved during the cold weather months and at a time when the sandbanks are causing a blockage in the river. During the past cold weather, in spite of requests to Government to have these blockages removed, nothing has been done and laden country boats have been held up for days on end.

I wish to acknowledge the helpfulness of the Karimganj Subdivisional Officer who arranged for a passage through one of the fishery Beels to enable boats to bye-pass the blocked places in the river; but unfortunately, in the absence of any proper control, the fishery lessees were demanding and indeed exacting a toll of Rs. 5 per boat for a passage through this Beel and this the poor boatmen were forced to pay to enable them to carry on their trade.

Sir, the rains are approaching and soon it will be too late to do anything this season to clear the blockage and when November comes this state of affairs will again occur causing hardship and inconvenience to the boatmen and a hold-up in the movement of teas, essential foodstuffs and forest produce.

I would therefore like Government's assurance that the work of clearing the blockages in the Juri River will be taken in hand at the earliest opportunity.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved:

"That the total provision of Rs. 8,09,900 under Grant No. 9, Major head—18B. and 68B.—Navigation, Embankments and Drainage Works, at page 45 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 8,09,900 do stand reduced by Rs. 100."

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I quite recognise the necessity of keeping the Juri River open to navigation. The silting of this River, as was replied the other day, has been going on for a long time. With the opening up of the country and gradual denudation of the hill sides the silting is now assuming serious proportion, as it is affecting the Beels as well as the river. The problem is where to deposit the silt. It cannot be carried forward and deposited in the Kusiara river without upsetting navigation there. It cannot be deposited in the Beels without spoiling the fishery. Solution of this problem requires skill and attention, a lot of preliminary observation and survey work. Corrective measures will be extremely costly. The Government however will examine this matter as early as they can. The hon. Mover now asks for an assurance so that the blockages may be removed. We will examine this matter carefully, Sir, and see what can be done.

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD: Sir, on the assurance given by the Hon'ble Minister I beg to withdraw my Motion.

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

The Motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I am now putting the main Demand.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,09,900 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 '18B.—Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works'."

The question was adopted.

## GRANT No. 29

(56.—STATIONERY AND PRINTING)

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,47,600 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 "56.—Stationery and Printing".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,47,600, 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 '56.—Stationery and Printing'."

There is one Cut Motion\* in the name of Srijut Sarveswar Barua. Will the hon. Member move it?

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: I do not like to move it, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Then I am putting the main Demand as a question.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,47,600 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 '56.—Stationery and Printing'."

The question was adopted.

## GRANT No. 4

(9.—STAMPS)

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. 58,800, 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 "9.—Stamps".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 58,800 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 '9.—Stamps'."

There is one Cut Motion† tabled by Maulavi Abdur Rouf. Does he want to move his Motion?

Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: No, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Is there any discussion on the main Demand?  
(Voices:—No.)

Then I am putting the main Demand.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 58,800 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 '9.—Stamps'."

The question was adopted.

\*Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA to move:

That the total provision of Rs. 5,47,600 under Grant No. 29, Major head—56.—Stationery and Printing, at page 142 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 5,47,600 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To criticise Government for failure to print and furnish replies to many questions given notice of by hon. Members during this and the last Session.)

†Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF to move:

That the total provision of Rs. 58,800 under Grant No. 4, Major head 9.—Stamps, at page 37 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 100, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 58,800 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To raise a discussion about the desirability of appointing Muslims as stamp vendors in Barpeta Subdivision.)

## GRANT No. 23

(43.—INDUSTRIES)

The Hon'ble Dr. MAHENDRA NATH SAIKIA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,71,900 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 "43.—Industries".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,71,900, 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 '43.—Industries'."

There are as many as 18 Cut Motions.

Is any hon. Member from any side of the House going to move his Motion?

(Voices: No, no.)

Then I take it that no Cut Motions are going to be moved.

Is there any discussion on the main Demand?

(Voices: No, no.)

Then I am putting the main Demand.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,71,900 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 "43.—Industries."

The question was adopted.

## GRANT No. 12.

(28.—JAILS AND CONVICT SETTLEMENTS)

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 14,78,500 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 "28.—Jails and Convict Settlements."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 14,78,500 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 '28.—Jails and Convict Settlements'."

There are as many as 6 Cut Motions.

Is any hon. Member from any side of the House going to move his Motion?

(Voices: No, no.)

Is there any discussion on the main Demand?

(Voices: No, no.)

Then I am putting the main Demand before the House.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 14,78,500 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 '28.—Jails and Convict Settlements.'"

The question was adopted.

## GRANT No. 22

(42.—CO-OPERATION)

The Hon'ble Dr. MAHENDRA NATH SAIKIA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,39,200 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 "42.—Co-operation".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,39,200 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 '42.—Co-operation'."

There are as many as 10 Cut Motions.

Is any hon. Member going to move his Motion?

(Voices: No, no.)

Any discussion on the main Demand?

(Voices: No, no.)

Then I am putting the main Demand.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 3,39,200 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 "42.—Co-operation".

The question was adopted.

#### GRANT No. 25.

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

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 46,70,700 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 '50.—Civil Works (excluding Establishment and Tools and Plant charges).'

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 46,70,700 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 '50.—Civil Works (excluding Establishment and Tools and Plant charges).'

There are as many as 12 Cut Motions.

Is any hon. Member going to move his Motion?

(Voices: No, no.)

Is there any discussion on the main Demand?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: I want to say only a few words, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: In regard to what?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: On the main Motion, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Very well.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, I want to impress upon the Hon'ble Minister the fact that the Sylhet-Sunamganj Road should be finished as early as possible. It is causing great inconvenience to the public in general. Only this much I want to say, Sir.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Sir, we are finishing the earth and gravelling work within the next year. As regards bridges, I think, there is some difficulty about getting steel and re-inforced concrete. As soon as these materials are available, the work of the road will be complete. But there is no possibility of getting the materials during the War.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Then I am putting the main Demand.

The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 46,70,700 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 '50.—Civil Works (excluding Establishment and Tools and Plant charges).'

The question was adopted. This finishes the business of the day. The whole Budget is passed. Then I am going to adjourn the House.

**Statements by the Hon'ble the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition re formation of a new Ministry**

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, it would be better to adjourn the House till 2 P.M. There are certain important negotiations going on between the Government Benches on one side and the combined Opposition Groups on the other side. If it materialises in the meantime, I shall have to make a statement before the House at 2 P.M. Therefore, I request that the House be adjourned till 2 P.M.

**Adjournment**

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

**After Lunch**

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am rather in a bit of difficulty, because the negotiations that have been going on with the Leader of the Opposition as well as the Leader of the Nationalist Party have concluded, but the Leaders are not yet present. They have got certain documents in their hands which we have to sign. The documents are ready. So in their absence I don't like to make a statement. But everything has been settled and probably there will be no difficulty if the House will wait for another 15 or 20 minutes. In the meantime I shall send information to them to come to the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Very well, I may adjourn the House say for another 20 minutes.

**Adjournment**

The Assembly was then adjourned till 2-25 P.M.

**After Adjournment**

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Province got its New Constitution in 1937, but the party alignment in the House has been such that no Ministry could carry out their programme and policy for want of a solid majority. As the Cabinet had to be a coalition one, the party majority in the House—whether of my Ministry or of the Congress-Coalition Ministry—was very meagre. The party attachments mostly were of a fluid type; a Member may be seen sitting on one side of the House at one time, and the same day he may be seen sitting on the other side of the House. This had led all the well-wishers of the Province to consider whether an agreed policy and programme could not be drawn up, and with the approval of all the parties in the House, a Cabinet might be formed which could count upon a stable majority. My hon. Friend, the Leader of the Opposition, as well as my hon. Friend, Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri, the Leader of the Nationalist Group and the Independent Party, saw me on Saturday last and discussed this matter in detail. After three days' continuous discussion we have been able—thanks to the intervention of some hon. Members both of my side as well as the side opposite—to arrive at an agreed solution of some of the burning problems of the day, like the Land Settlement policy, the supply of foodstuffs, the distribution of Local Board seats and, lastly, that of curtailment of civil liberties. I am glad to announce to the hon. Members of this House that by some modification of the Government Resolution, published on the 15th January 1945 on the Land Settlement policy, we have been able to arrive at a very satisfactory solution of this vexed problem. I personally believe, and I hope my collaborators in these negotiations also believe, that what we have arrived at is a very great improvement on the provisions in the Government Resolution. I need mention only one point: whereas in the Government Resolution, which was passed on the results of the Conference held in December last, any one who had a little over five Bighas of land was to be debarred from applying for further land, we considered this matter from the economic standpoint of view, and we agree now (I had better read the term of our decision) that "in order to raise the standard of living of our cultivating class Government shall provide, on application, land in the planned settlement area an economic holding which shall be at least 20 Bighas for an applicant or a family of five persons or less. In no case shall a family or applicant get more

than 30 Bighas". That is, any one who has got less than 20 Bighas will be able to apply to Government to make it up to 20 Bighas. This allotment of 20 Bighas to both indigenous and immigrant people alike will surely bring some improvement in the economic condition of our people. Similarly, although—as I had stated in the House—in the Government Resolution it was not clearly mentioned that the Tribal people, who live scattered amongst the ordinary people of the plains, shall have the same right as the other people to get settlement of land in the colonisation areas, this has been specifically recommended in the terms that we have agreed upon.

The next point, about the distribution of Local Board seats, it has been agreed that if it is possible to go through a redistribution, it will be left to the Cabinet to take the matter up.

As regards supplies of essential foodstuffs, everybody is agreed that it will be best for the country if corruption can be removed, and thereby the little that we can bring to the Province is distributed equally among the high and the low, the urban and the rural areas, a desideratum which is wanted by everyone.

Lastly, Sir, in order to create an atmosphere of goodwill and peace, it is proposed to release those hon. Members of the House who are behind the prison bars forthwith (*Hear, hear*). I have been following a policy of gradual release, and in view of the greatly improved war situation I can speed up the course of release. By now there are in all 90 people who are security prisoners. I stated on the floor of the House a few days ago that barring those who have been convicted of sabotage or other heinous offences, and who declared themselves to be followers of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, the others can be released speedily and in my opinion, probably two-thirds of them could be released within the next month (*Applause*). Alongside this, we propose to review the cases of restrictions on those people who have been made home internees or externed from some particular areas and saddled with certain restrictions, and those restrictions, if possible, will be forthwith withdrawn. There will be no restriction whatsoever imposed upon any hon. Member of the Legislature (*Applause*). My Friends, who had been negotiating with me, realise that no one, however, high he may be, can come without permission to those areas which have been declared "protected." Nobody has got the right to enter these protected areas unless he or she be permitted by proper authorities.

Similarly, I think, that time has now come, as the enemy has been pushed back from Mandalay, that restrictions on processions and meetings may be relaxed and gradually withdrawn. In certain areas, in certain cases I am willing to withdraw them forthwith. But in other areas and in certain cases each case shall be dealt with on its merits. I propose to withdraw the ban on holding meetings in all parts of the Province excepting in Dibrugarh subdivision, where on account of the district being on the border of Burma, various impediments there are about the removing of restrictions. My Friends had agreed that these restrictions should continue except in those areas in the town of Dibrugarh where there are no Military preparations. On the whole, Sir, we hope that the curtailment of civil liberties about which we have heard so much during this Session will be a thing of the past soon. (*Applause*.)

In agreeing to these terms, both myself as well as the two Leaders from the combined Opposition have stressed about reconstitution of the Ministry. Before I could take the matter up, one of my Colleagues has tendered his resignation this morning from the Ministry. Pursuant to my declared policy, as it is a joint responsibility, we are tendering the resignation of the entire Ministry to His Excellency the Governor today. To the new Ministry, if I am called upon by His Excellency to form it again, my hon. Friends of the Opposition, both Congress and the Nationalist group, are willing to give their entire support. As Members of the Nationalist group have declared their desire to participate in the administration of the country, we have come to this conclusion that for the present there should be ten seats in the Cabinet as at present, of which five will go to the Muslims, three to Caste Hindus, one to the Scheduled Hindu, one to the plains Tribal. Ever since, I formed the Ministry

in 1937, representatives of the Hill Tribes found a place in the Cabinet. We all feel that this group should also be represented in the new Government. Therefore a joint recommendation has been made both by myself and by my collaborators that His Excellency the Governor should be requested to allow eleven seats; and if the seat is available, that seat shall be filled up by a group representative of the Hill Tribes and Indian Christians.

Sir, if the spirit in which this negotiation has been carried out to successful conclusion can be kept up and if my Friends opposite who have so long opposed for opposition's sake and who have now extended their hands of co-operation, after my offer of two years ago, come to support such a Ministry, for the benefit of all, I hope, a new era in the political history of Assam may be ushered in. I hope that every hon. Member of this House who has got the betterment of the Province, political, economic and moral, will help the re-constituted Ministry if it comes into being.

Srijut GOPINATH BORDOLOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank the Hon'ble Premier for the manner in which he has taken up the cause of civil liberty on the floor of this House to-day. We felt that one thing which is responsible for the polluted atmosphere that prevails in the country was the complete curtailment of civil liberty. On the floor of this House there was occasion for me to refer how on account of the loss of this valuable right, corruption in the administration and in every sphere of life was rendered possible. I want to tell the House that I believe in the maxim that civil liberty is correlated to all that is good in human life. When therefore the Hon'ble Premier comes with his offer for the enlargement of liberty, the deprivation of which I felt so sorely, I have got to offer him my heart-felt thanks. I do indeed wish that the hopes he has given unto us will be realised sooner—I wish it was done now and to-day. But I am prepared to wait for the scrutiny of cases which would require real scrutiny. I am particularly anxious about our dear Friends, the Members of the Assembly, in jails. One thing that has troubled me during the time that I have been out of jail is the thought of my Friends over there. For the good news which the Hon'ble Premier holds out to-day that they are going to be released forthwith, I do indeed feel happy. At this moment, I do not like to go into the origin of the causes which led to this incarceration, but I do definitely hope that with the release of the political prisoners, with the removal of restrictions on the movement of political people and with the removal of ban on meetings and processions, we shall surely come to a time when once again we shall have things usual as before. I am glad to tell the House that it is one reason why we have come to stand by the Ministry though not behind them. No less anxious was I, Sir, about the land settlement problem which was causing such a great discontent amongst a large section of our people, I mean, the people of the four districts of the Brahmaputra Valley. I hope the enunciation of this new policy will go a great way in removing that discontent. A lot will depend on how this policy is going to be operated. But I do hope that this will at least lead to a better relation between all parties concerned. For myself, I have been telling from the beginning that I will bring all the good-will within me to bring about a settlement between the two parties who are in conflict. I have given all that is possible in me for the settlement of this intricate problem. I do however want to assure this House that I will try to carry that good-will and I hope that instead of discontent, instead of hatred, instead of ill-feeling, instead of strife among the two communities, we shall have better relationship and better feeling of one community towards another.

Lastly, Sir, the problem of the day also is the problem of food supply to the poor people in this Province. I do not like at the moment to criticise the policy that is being pursued, but I had occasion to point out how on account of that particular

policy, carried out in a particular manner, the price of food stuffs and the availability of foodstuffs could not have been improved. It shall be the duty on our part to tender such advice as to see that the situation in this respect, at any rate, is improved.

I am also grateful to the Hon'ble Prime Minister for having agreed to allow his new Government to take into consideration the question of the distribution of seats in the Local Boards. I hope, Sir, that with the settlement of these things better relationship will come in the country.

Lastly, Sir, regarding the reconstitution of the Cabinet. I have always held the view, and that is my personal view, that measures are more important than men; and that men are required only to see that the measures are carried on properly. Keeping that point in view we decided, Sir, that we may as well do without participating in the Cabinet. At no time did we find any difficulty in supporting any Government, which carried out the Congress policy, particularly a Government which has given assurance of rightly tackling such vital subjects about which I have already mentioned. I have said that we will stand by this newly-constituted Cabinet. With these words, Sir, I associate myself with what the Hon'ble Prime Minister has said that we are experimenting upon bringing a new era into Assam. The Congress Party was undoubtedly a party which has stood in the opposition of Sir Muhammad Saadulla these many years, but I say if we had differed we did so on principles. Congress has always stood on certain principles. To-day, however, on account of the particular situation in the country and other problems facing us, the time has come for a change in details and outlook by which we do not insist on some of those principles on account of which we could not be associated with parties which had not the same in view. Particular problems require particular solution for a particular time and it is with that end in view, Sir, that we have decided to support the Government which we hope will be able to solve the problems. We have launched on an experiment, the success of which will be determined only by the result.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It appears that the present Government is going out of office by to-morrow and a new Government is going to be installed. May I know when the new Government is likely to take office? I am to see how, in that eventuality, the course of business for to-morrow and the day after to-morrow is to stand.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, even though I will tender resignation of the present Government this afternoon to His Excellency, His Excellency has asked me and through me my Colleagues to carry on for to-morrow. We propose, if possible, to have the reconstituted Ministry functioning from the 24th. So there will be no necessity for dislocating the present programme of the Assembly.

#### **Ruling by the Hon'ble Speaker with regard to an amendment on the Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill, 1945**

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The House will no doubt stand adjourned upto 2 P. M., to-morrow. Having regard to the state of business that is to be taken up to-morrow and the day after to-morrow, I would like to dispose of a small matter, which remains outstanding, in order to complete the proceedings of the 10th March last. It is in regard to the point of order that was raised on an amendment moved by Mr. Rabindra Nath Aditya to sub-clause (1) of clause 2 of the Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill.

The other day, that is on the 10th March last, in the course of the debate on the amendment of hon. Mr. Rabindra Nath Aditya to sub-clause (1) of clause 2 of the Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill, seeking to add a proviso to that sub-clause, a point of order arose, as to whether the proviso proposed was in order or not. Although I gave a ruling that the proposed proviso was in order, I did nevertheless permit a discussion on the point



of order raised, and, ultimately, having given my best thought to all that was urged, both in favour and against the same, I found no sufficient reasons to change my decision; but with a view to allow the full time of the House to be made available to the hon. Members for the final disposal of the Bill, I refrained from giving my reasons for my decision that day, and intimated to the House that I would disclose the same to it on a subsequent day. Now, therefore, in fulfilment of that promise, I am stating to the House the reasons for the ruling I gave, which, if they were delivered to the House on that day, would have been as follows:

The Bill seeks to postpone the Assam Local Board elections for a further period, not later than the 15th June 1945, and sub-clause (1) of clause 2 of the Bill provides for that postponement. Under the Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Act of 1944, the elections were due to be held before the 31st March 1945. The main ground for the proposed postponement of the Local Board elections, as stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill, *inter alia*, is that Government were unable to come to a decision earlier than mid-December, 1944, about the redistribution of seats of the different Local Boards in the Province, which entailed in its turn, the revision of constituencies, necessitating the electoral rolls to be prepared according to these revised constituencies, and thereafter the procedure of elections requiring that two months before the date fixed for general election, preliminary electoral rolls are to be published for filing claims and objections. In the course of the debate on the previous stage of the Bill, it was made fully clear to the House that there has been a complete redistribution of seats in the Local Boards of the Province and a consequent revision of the constituencies thereof made by Government in exercise of the power given to them by the Rules in force under the Local Self-Government Act of 1915. From what stands stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the Bill and from what has been elaborated in the course of the debate on behalf of Government as to the necessity of the Bill, it is clear that Government are going to make the said redistribution of seats and the consequent revision of constituencies final without any reference to the Legislature, although, by the Bill, Government are asking the Legislature to extend the time for holding the elections for a period beyond 31st March 1945; obviously on the ground that the elections are to be arranged and held on the basis of what Government have done of a far-reaching character in regard to a matter affecting the constitution of Local Boards in the Province. Therefore, the position undoubtedly is that the passing of the Bill as presented to the House would amount to an indirect approval of the redistribution of seats in the Local Boards and the consequent revision of their constituencies made by Government. But the proviso, as it is drafted, seeks to impose on Government an obligation of securing a direct approval of the Legislature in regard to the redistribution of seats and revision of the constituencies made by Government before holding the elections by the date to which they are being sought to be postponed, and, therefore, raises the question before the House whether the House should agree to accord an indirect approval of Government's action in the matter of redistribution of seats, or should ask Government to secure a direct approval of their action from the Legislature. Although there is nothing in the Assam Local Self-Government Act and the Rules thereunder requiring Government to secure an approval of the Legislature to what they have done, the fact that the passing of the Bill by the Legislature would virtually mean an indirect approval by the Legislature of the action taken by Government without consulting the views of the people and different interests directly concerned, makes the whole position such that it is difficult to say that the amendment is outside the scope of the Bill in view of the fact that it seeks to add merely a condition precedent to the postponement of the Local Board elections, which the Bill is providing for, to the effect that Government should secure the approval of the Legislature for their action on a matter of very vital interest to the people.

Under the present Constitution, the Provincial Government being responsible to the Legislature, the amendment cannot be held to be one seeking to make a provision in the Bill which would really be beyond the powers of the Legislature.

Again, remembering that Government proceeded to alter the existing distribution of seats in the Local Boards on a demand presented to it by a section of the House in the shape of a motion tabled, though not discussed, in a previous Session of the Assembly, a Member is quite within his rights to ask Government to place the decision about the redistribution of seats before the Legislature showing how the redistribution of seats in the Local Boards of the Province establishing a new order of things in regard to the matter of representation of all communities and interests in these Local Bodies has fulfilled the requirements of section 4(2) of the Local Self-Government Act. As Government is not going to do that, a Member can justifiably under the Constitution avail himself of the opportunity that the Bill has presented for attaching to the postponement of the elections in the Local Boards a condition precedent of the nature the proviso prescribes. Again, there is nothing also in the Assam Local Self-Government Act or in the Rules thereunder, which, it can be said, is going to be contravened by the proviso.

#### Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 2 P. M., on Friday, the 23rd March, 1945.

SHILLONG :

*The 13th June, 1945.*

A. K. BARUA,

*Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam.*