

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 A.M. on Tuesday the 6th March, 1945.

PRESENT

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral answers were given)

Re Services of Dr. Satish Chandra Purkayastha

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked :

*49. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the services of Dr. Satish Chandra Purkayastha who was serving under the Government of Assam, were lately requisitioned by the Military Authorities ?

(b) Is it a fact that Dr. Satish Chandra Purkayastha was sent to the Mental Hospital as a patient for sometime and subsequently discharged from the Hospital ?

(c) Are Government aware that the said Dr. Satish Chandra Purkayastha is now living at Nabiganj with a monthly allowance of Rs.75 only ?

(d) Is it a fact that he does not get any reply to his letters either from the Government of Assam or the Military Authorities as to the position of his service ?

(e) Will Government be pleased to state whether the services of the said Dr. Satish Chandra Purkayastha are still at the disposal of the Military Authorities or at the disposal of the Government of Assam ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

49. (a)—The reply is in the affirmative. He joined Military duty on the 1st April 1942.

(b)—Government have no official information, apart from the statement to that effect made by the doctor.

(c)—Government have no information.

(d)—A reply to his last letter received on the 6th May, 1944, in the office of the Director of Public Health, Assam, was sent to him on the 12th May, 1944 asking him to send any official document that he may have in his possession, but no reply from him has yet been received.

(e)—No intimation has yet been received from the Military Authorities whether this Sub-Assistant Surgeon has been discharged from the Army for reversion to Civil appointment. They have been asked to expedite.

Public Works Department roads in Sunamganj Subdivision

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY asked :

*50. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The total mileage of Public Works Department roads at present in the Sunamganj Subdivision ?

(b) The total mileage of Public Works Department roads at present under construction in the Province together with the names of particular places going to be linked thereby ?

(c) The total mileage of Public Works Department roads for construction under the scheme of Post-War Reconstruction in the Province together with the names of particular places proposed to be linked thereby ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

50. (a)—29 miles.
 (b)—Nil.
 (c)—Information cannot be given, as the whole planning scheme has had to be revised on account of curtailment of grant.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

Re Building grant and recurring expenditure to Dispensaries in Goalpara Subdivision

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA asked :

19. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Medical be pleased to state whether she proposes to advance Building grant and sanction recurring expenditure for the dispensaries at Tulshibari, Balarbhita, Jaypur, Jaleswar and Fetangapara in the Goalpara Subdivision ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

19.—The hon. Member's attention is drawn to rules 114 and 115 of the Assam Local Self-Government Manual. Unless the Local Board concerned opens the dispensaries in these places, no question for Government grant can arise.

Re Supply of Sugar

Maulana ABDUL HAMID KHAN asked :

20. (a) Is it a fact that Government have lately issued an order to the effect that with effect from the 1st January 1945 no sugar will be supplied to the rural area and that in Urban areas people would get one seer of sugar per head per month ?

(b) If so, why ?

(c) Are Government aware that sugar is essentially required for children and patients ?

(d) If so, do Government propose to reconsider their decision on the point ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

20. (a)—No. In view of the Government of India's proposal to reduce sugar quotas of every Province, as the output of sugar in the whole of India was apprehended to be short by 25 per cent., Assam Government in November 1944 had to redistribute the available sugar and proposed to issue 10,595 maunds for urban and 16,360 maunds for rural areas monthly, from the new year.

(b)—Gur is in great demand in villages and sugar quota allotted by the Government of India for Assam is not sufficient for adequate supply of sugar to all the areas of the Province

(c)—Yes.

(d)—This will depend on the allocation of further quota of sugar to Assam by the Central Government.

Malaria epidemic at Baniya horg

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY asked :

21. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The number of deaths due to Malaria in Baniyachong from the 1st December 1943 up till now ?

(b) The number of persons attacked with Malaria in Baniyachong from the 1st December 1943 up till now ?

- (c) The number of beds made available in the newly started Hospital at Baniyachong for Malaria stricken patients in each month from the 1st July 1944 till now ?
- (d) The names of medical experts who worked in the Baniyachong area from May 1943 for diagnosing the fever ?
- (e) The findings of each of the aforesaid experts?
- (f) Whether all experts are unanimous in their opinions about the name of the disease prevalent there ?
- (g) How many cases were clinically examined by the experts ?
- (h) Whether Dr. S. R. Pandit, the Director of Pasteur Institute, Shillong, visited Baniyachong for investigating the disease ?
- (i) If so, how long did he stay there ?
- (j) Whether it is a fact that he submitted a report refuting Dr. Hussain Chaudhury's diagnosis which was arrived at by verification by lumber puncture ?
- (k) Whether the verification by lumber puncture is the final test about the diagnosis of epidemics ?
- (l) Whether it is a fact that microscopic verification always brings forth the same result as anticipated by the examiner ?
- (m) Whether Dr. Hussain Chaudhury was on leave when he first went to Baniyachong for relief work ?
- (n) Whether it is a fact that Dr. Hussain Chaudhury was recalled to join his appointment at Derai after he had reported that the disease was Celebro-Spinal fever ?
- (o) Whether it is a fact that he resigned his service when Government did not accept his theory ?
- (p) Whether there was any discussion about the diagnosis of the disease between Dr. Hussain Chaudhury, the Director of Public Health, Assam, and the Director of Pasteur Institute, Shillong, on the 5th April 1944 ?
- (q) If so, whether the points of discussion were recorded ?
- (r) If not, why not ?
- (s) Why the report of Dr. S. R. Pandit has not yet been published ?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN replied :

21. (a) Number of deaths due to Malaria in Baniyachong from 1st December 1943 to 31st December 1944 was 4,231.
- (b) A total of 3,34,412 Malaria cases were treated in Baniyachong from 1st December 1943 to 20th January 1945. This includes a large number of relapses, *i. e.*, same person being attacked with Malaria many times.
- (c) The Baniyachong Emergency Hospital was started on 4th December 1944 with 31 beds. A week later this number had expanded to 50. The delay in starting this Hospital was caused by difficulties in obtaining materials for construction or getting a rented house.
- (d) The following Medical Experts visited the Baniyachong area in connection with the diagnosis and control of the epidemic from May 1943 :—
Previous and present Director of Public Health, Assam, and Inspector General of Civil Hospitals, Assam, Assistant to the Director of Public Health, Southern Public Health Division, Sylhet, Director, Pasteur Institute and Medical Research Institute, Shillong, Malariologist and Research Workers of Assam Medical Research Society.
- (e)—All are unanimous that the epidemic was due to Malaria and it was diagnosed from actual findings of Malaria parasites from the blood of persons suffering from fever.
- (f)—Yes, all are unanimous that the epidemic was caused by Malaria, many of the cases being of the malignant Cerebral Type.
- (g)—Several thousands.
- (h)—Yes.
- (i)—He was in that area for 3 days.
- (j)—Yes.

(k)—The question is not understood.

(l)—The question is not understood.

(m), (n) & (o)—M. Hussain Chaudhury was a Local Board Doctor and Government have no information.

(p)—Yes.

(q)—Yes.

(r)—Does not arise.

(s)—Dr. Pandit's report was a professional report and it is not customary to publish such documents in the lay press—but a press note explaining the findings was issued later.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: With regard to (c), may we know what kinds of materials were necessary for the hospital which the Government could not secure even in the course of a full one year?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: Building materials.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: What kind of building materials—bamboo thatch, wooden posts or what?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: Building materials in general.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, is it a fact that they did not want at first to have a hospital at Baniyachong but afterwards when the disease reappeared with vehemence, they hired a house and started a hospital late last year?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: That is not so, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Then what is the real fact, Sir?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The reason has already been stated.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Is it not a fact that while delivering his Budget speech last year, the Hon'ble Finance Minister promised in so many words that a hospital would be very soon started at Baniyachong with 50 beds and that the number would be increased afterwards?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: That was so, Sir, but it was not for want of effort that the hospital could not be started earlier.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Since when Government were trying to hire a house at Baniyachong?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: Ever since the proposal was approved.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: By whom it was done, Sir? Who made the enquiry?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: What kind of enquiry?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: For hiring a house, and also for procuring building materials?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The Civil Surgeon, Sylhet.

* Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Is it a fact that even now the hospital has not been fully completed?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: I am told it is running well.

* Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Can the Hon'ble Minister tell me what is the number of patients admitted up till now there?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The exact number, I cannot say.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I know the name of the officer who was in charge of securing materials for the hospital building?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The Civil Surgeon, Sylhet.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May we know the name of the Civil Surgeon?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The name is better known to the Questioner. There were frequent changes also during the last few months.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: How many changes?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: I can't answer that off hand.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: This work was not entrusted to the Civil Surgeon. The Hon'ble Minister can't refute that.

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: I do, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: With reference to (g) how many cases were clinically examined by experts? The answer is several thousands. May we know the name of the experts?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The names of experts are mentioned in reply to question (d).

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: These experts are quite different from those experts. How many cases were clinically examined by experts? Am I to understand that the experts mentioned in the reply were experts by whom cases were clinically examined?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Question is regarding the names of the medical experts who worked in Baniyachong for diagnosing the disease.

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The departmental officers had made the clinical examinations.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May we know the names of these experts who were properly qualified? Whether the examination was made at Baniyachong, or at Sylhet or at Shillong?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: The Assistant Director of Public Health, Sylhet and the Director of Pasteur Institute went to Baniyachong and made the examination there on the spot.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: There is a reference to several thousands. Are we to understand that they examined them all?

The Hon'ble Miss MAVIS DUNN: In sufficient numbers to be able to come to an irrefutable conclusion.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The reply is several thousands. It is a bluff. It is hopeless; no use continuing any more, Sir.

Controlled price of Gur

Srijut RAJENDRA NATH BARUA asked:

22. (a) Is it a fact that the controlled price of Gur has been fixed at Rs. 13-12-0 per maund in the Province at present?

(b) Are Government aware that the cost of production of Assam Gur at present comes to about Rs. 16 per maund?

(c) Do Government propose to raise the controlled price of Assam Gur to Rs. 20 or Rs. 30 per maund?

(d) Are Government aware that owing to the price of Gur being controlled at a price lower than the cost of its production in Assam there has now been dearth of this commodity in the Province?

(e) Are Government aware that the cost of production of Bihar Gur is much cheaper than that of Assam Gur?

(f) Do Government propose to fix separate rates for Assam and Bihar Gur?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

22. (a)—Yes, except in hill districts where the district officers may add up to Rs. 2 a maund to the controlled price to cover extra cost of transport.

(b)—Government have no information.

- (c)—Does not arise.
 (d)—Government have no information.
 (e)—May be, but Government have no definite information
 (f)—No, as no more Gur is coming from Bihar.

Scarcity of Mustard Oil

Srijut SIDDHI NATH SARMA asked :

23. (a) Are Government aware that there has been acute scarcity of mustard oil throughout the Province ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state the reason thereof ?

(c) Is it a fact that the entire procurement of mustard oil seeds has been given to a monopolistic concern who has not been able to procure the oil seeds in proper time and in adequate quantity from the producers ?

(d) Is it a fact that all import of mustard oil from outside the Province has now been stopped for want of transport ?

(e) Will Government be pleased to state what immediate steps they propose to adopt for removal of this scarcity ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied :

23. (a)—Yes, scarcity was reported from certain areas in Upper Assam and Surma Valley.

(b)—This was due to shortage of local mustard seed which was reported to be below normal crop and acute transport difficulties in getting mustard oil and seeds from outside Assam.

(c)—No monopoly has been given to any one.

(d)—No. It is coming from United Provinces on Government account.

(e)—Government are taking action to procure the full production of seeds for converting it into oil through the local Oil Mills and also for movement of a quota of mustard oil allotted from United Provinces.

* Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUHDURY : Is it a fact that there is sufficient quantity of mustard oil in Shillong, but oil is not being issued to the public ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : That is not my information.

* Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY : With regard to (d), do Government propose to issue licenses for importing mustard oil from United Provinces to private businessmen ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : That is not possible. This matter was discussed in the last Food Conference. Government of India has not yet issued orders for business in mustard oil from trader to trader. The business is transacted between Government and Government.

Dr. C. G. TERRELL : Sir, are Government aware that large quantities of mustard oil are heavily adulterated and made unfit for human consumption ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, we have reports of that from certain areas, especially in Dibrugarh and Jorhat.

* Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : What about Sylhet area, Sir ? Was any sample sent for examination, Sir ?

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

Maulavi MABARAK ALI : Sir, how many maunds of mustard oil have been imported to Assam ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, the Government of India allowed us one lakh maunds as our quota from the United Provinces Government. The order was placed as late as eight months ago but up till now about 20,000 maunds have arrived.

*Speech not corrected.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Sir, is that quantity sufficient for the Province?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we cannot get more than what the Government of India has given us as our quota and what transport is available.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: If the Government is not in a position to supply the needs of the people, what is the necessity of controlling all these things?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, I will request my hon. Friend to ask the representative of Assam in the Central Assembly to put that Question.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Sir, had not this Government any responsibility regarding this?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we have been discharging our responsibility to the best of our ability.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Sir, may I know whether the Central Government has been requested by this Government to supply the needs of this Province regarding mustard oil?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: At least two dozen times, Sir, not only by correspondence but also verbally by me.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Sir, is it a fact that mustard oil imported from the United Provinces is highly adulterated?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, Sir.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Will Government take it from me that the mustard oil imported by this Government from the United Provinces Government is highly adulterated and that no one is willing to take this from the wholesaler or retailer?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: If my Friend is satisfied after a thorough chemical analysis then I will take his statement but I am not prepared to take heresay statement.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Is it not a fact, Sir, that all goods imported by Government are not sent for chemical examination or even sent to Public Health Laboratory for examination because if they are found adulterated or damaged, in that case Government may incur loss?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I will repudiate that suggestion, Sir.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Will Government send some oil for chemical examination which has recently been imported from the United Provinces Government to verify whether they are highly adulterated or not?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: This is entirely a new Question, Sir. My hon. Friend at least asserted that all these are adulterated and put a Question: Will the Hon'ble Premier or the Minister in charge take it from me that this is highly adulterated? I said: if my Friend had made any chemical analysis then alone I can accept that statement.

Dr. C. G. TERRELL: May I ask the Hon'ble Premier to accept my assurance that several samples were sent by myself from Cachar and Sylhet to the public analyst for examination and practically all of them were found heavily adulterated and unfit for human consumption. The samples were taken from civilian supplier for projects. I would like to ask the Hon'ble Premier, if he accepts my statements, that many of them were found to be very highly adulterated and unfit for human consumption that he will do everything possible to have more check on mustard oil and have a thorough investigation into the whole matter for the welfare of the people as a whole?

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Dr. Terrell has quite clearly mentioned that samples were sent which were equally and highly adulterated.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: May I ask hon. Dr. Terrell, Sir, to tell me from which shop he got the sample for civilian supply? I can then enquire whether that emanated from Government import?

Dr. C. G. TERRELL: I will do my best to supply that information, Sir. I might be allowed possibly to refer to the Magistrate at Karimganj who is taking much

interest in the matter. I understand, he has secured conviction against shop-keepers for selling adulterated mustard oil. I hope I shall be able to get full information from him.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I will be obliged to Dr. Terrell, Sir, if he could send me the name of a retail shop licensed by Government.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Is it a fact, Sir, that if we may judge from Press reports adulteration and shortage in mustard oil is well nigh an all-India problem?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we cannot go by the Press report but both adulteration and shortage of supply is well-known.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: In that case, will Government please, in concert with the neighbouring Government, take some steps to rectify this very real public grievance, Sir?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we do not get our supply from Bengal. As a matter of fact, Sir, Bengal has banned export to Assam.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Is it a fact, Sir, that private individuals are still importing oil into this Province?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Not to the knowledge of Government, Sir. We have not issued any permit.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Is it a fact, Sir, that recently a permit for the export of a large quantity of mustard oil to Manipur State was sanctioned?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: By the Assam Government? In that case the reply is 'No'.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Thank you, Sir.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Sir, is it a fact that one permit by this Government to a merchant of Karimganj has been issued for getting a supply of mustard oil from the United Provinces Government?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, Sir, this is entirely a new Question and it is not a fact.

Maulavi MABARAK ALI: Is it a fact that tenders were invited by Government for the purpose, by gazette notification?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No, Sir.

Khan Sahib Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Sir, do Government propose to encourage cultivators for the cultivation of mustard seeds?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we grow normally sufficient quantities of mustard seeds which can be crushed and converted into oil. The normal yield of the Province is 15 lakhs of maunds per year, but unfortunately on account of bad monsoon or rather bad weather conditions, crop last year was less than half. According to our agricultural reports 8 lakhs maunds were expected but not more than 5 lakhs maunds were collected. We applied to the Central Government to allow us to import mustard seeds from the United Provinces. The Central Government was sympathetic but the railway people—Priority Committee—refused to encourage any movement of such seeds from the United Provinces to Assam on account of dearth of transport.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Sir, with regard to (e), the Question is: "Will Government be pleased to state what immediate steps they propose to adopt for removal of this scarcity?" Is it not a fact, Sir, that, this problem of scarcity of mustard oil in the Province is being repeated in this House in almost every Session from almost every quarter and may I know from the Hon'ble Minister in charge what action Government proposes to take or has taken to remove this problem of scarcity of mustard oil?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Government have taken every possible steps open to them. Last year, in order to get maximum procurement of seeds which might be available in the Province, they engaged one Syndicate to procure all the mustard seeds. In order that mustard oil may be issued

to the public at a reasonable rate, *i.e.*, at the rate of Rs.1-8-0 per seer, Government fixed the controlled price of mustard seeds at Rs.11-8-0 per maund. That move was frustrated by profiteers who smuggled a part of the seeds in country boats under cover of darkness of night into the neighbouring Province of Bengal where price was about Rs.18 per maund. Our attempt to get maximum procurement was also frustrated by the local oil mills who bought secretly at a price higher than that allowed to the Syndicate. So, Syndicate could not procure more than a lakh or a lakh and a half maunds of seeds. In September last, we got all the oil mills of the Province, excepting a small oil mill at Karimganj in the Surma Valley, combined together so that we could regulate the issue of oil from these mills. But in view of the scarcity of seeds this Association also failed to fulfil their mission, because mills could not get sufficient quantity of seeds to keep their mills operating throughout the month. They had to close intermittently sometimes a week and sometimes a fortnight.

We have controlled the distribution of oil in the Assam Valley and the oil that is pressed out from the oil mills at Gauhati. At Gauhati, the stock has been taken charge over by the Deputy Commissioner and he issues it to the Gauhati public as well as supplies to the other Deputy Commissioners who ask for supply.

The quantity that was made available for Shillong was 800 tins per month. I also know that the Deputy Commissioner of Gauhati issued oil to Nowgong and as well as to Tezpur districts. There are also six mills in the Sibsagar district that would be able to supply to the upper districts. But I am told that for want of sufficient seeds those mills could not issue much oil to the people there. It was in this condition that we requested the Central Government to allow us more quota either of seeds or of oil. But as I have already mentioned, owing to the transport difficulties, we have not yet been able to get as much as 25 per cent. of our quota. Every possible steps that are open to the Government have been taken, but we could not fight against the Centre or we could not fight against the Priority Authorities.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I do not think any further supplementaries are necessary.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: But my point has not been answered, Sir. May I know from the Hon'ble Premier who supplied the stock of oil which was found unfit for consumption on chemical examination both at Dibrugarh and at Jorhat, as stated by the Hon'ble Premier?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The oil was issued from the local mills in Assam, but whether it was adulterated at the source or by the intermediary of middlemen, Government have no information.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I know, Sir, how did the Government deal with this adulterated oil—whether they rejected it or they allowed it to be sold in the open market for human consumption?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: That was sold openly in the market as commercial oil.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. Now, we are going to dispose of some of the Adjournment Motions. Maulavi Matior Rahman Mia is to ask for leave to move his Motion regarding acute shortage of salt in the Goalpara district.

Adjournment Motion regarding acute shortage of salt in the Goalpara district
Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of the House to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the acute shortage of salt in the Goalpara district and discrimination against the immigrant population in distributing the stock at the disposal of the Government.

গোয়ালপাড়া জিলার immigrant অঞ্চলে কিছুদিন যাবত মাথা পিছু ৩ ছটাক বা ১ পোয়ার বেশী লবন পাইতেছেন। ৩ ছটাক বা ১ পোয়া লবন মাত্র ১০ বা ১৫ দিনের মধ্যেই খরচ হইয়া যায় বক্রী ১৫ দিন লবন অভাবে তাহাদের খাওয়ার সুবিধা হয়না এবং লবন অভাবে না খাইতে পাইয়া তাহাদের ভিতর সংক্রামক ব্যাধি দেখা দিয়াছে এবং তাহাতে লোকও মরিতেছে। সেইজন্য আমি এই মূলতর্কী প্রস্তাব এই এসেমব্লীতে আনয়ন করিয়াছি।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Has the hon. Member finished?

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: Yes, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Will the Hon'ble Premier say anything?

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, Sir. The wording of the Adjournment Motion, which is well nigh a censure Motion, refers mainly to the alleged discrimination in the distribution of salt amongst different population. I did not hear anything about that alleged discrimination from the hon. Mover.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, he has only spoken about acute shortage of salt.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am prepared to deal with the shortage. As regards the other part, I need not say anything.

It is well known to every one that there was an acute shortage of salt about the middle of last year, and for the reasons of that, I have detailed probably ten times on the floor of the House. It was due to the fact that Assam has been tagged on to the Port of Calcutta by the Government of India and our salt is brought to that Port from Cutch in the Western India by steamers plying on the coastal route. Originally we were given one-tenth of the import to Calcutta but after much correspondence we have been given about one-seventh of it. But due to a serious explosion on the Bombay dockyard in April of 1944, the steamers could not ply with the salt sent from Cutch and the result was that there was an acute shortage of salt here in Assam. After the Bombay dockyard had been properly repaired there was an even flow of salt to Calcutta and we have been getting our share.

My hon. Friend complains that there was an acute shortage of salt in Goalpara, but in fact, shortage of salt was everywhere at that time. Since then we have been able to bring into the Province $1\frac{1}{4}$ lakh maunds of salt per month on an average from Calcutta, although our requirement is only 1 lakh as we are trying to build up a reserve. The position has now considerably improved and we have built up a reserve of about $2\frac{1}{2}$ lakh maunds. The district quota of the Goalpara district is 10,000 maunds per month, and we have been able to distribute to that district in the last three months of December, January and February—15,660, 9,034 and 12,400 maunds respectively. As I have already passed an order to allow $\frac{1}{2}$ seer of salt per head per month to each individual, I propose to raise the Goalpara quota to 13,100 maunds on the basis of population. The stock in the district on the 1st March was 4,939 maunds and 12,400 maunds has been despatched in the latter half of February from Calcutta, which will be arriving soon. Sir, we have not heard any complaint from the local officers of any further shortage of salt in the Goalpara district.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Having heard the Hon'ble Premier, I don't think the Motion is in order.

The second Adjournment Motion* standing in the name of the same hon. Member regarding scarcity of cloth is also out of order having regard to the statement made by the Hon'ble Premier, the other day in connection with an Adjournment Motion on the same subject.

The third Motion† of the same hon. Member is regarding failure of Government to grant licenses under the Assam Food Grains Control Order and also permits for controlled commodities to immigrants, and is not an urgent matter and of recent occurrence. And moreover, these points may be raised in connection with the Budget discussion in the House. So, I think, this Motion is also not in order.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Srijut Lakshesvar Borooah is now to ask for leave to move his Motion.

*Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA to move:—This Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the cloth famine prevailing in the Goalpara district and the inequitable mal-distribution of standard cloth in the rural areas particularly in immigrant localities.

†Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA to move:—This Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, namely, the failure of Government to grant licenses under the Assam Food-Grains Control Order and also permits for controlled commodities to immigrants who have thus been deprived of their livelihood.

Adjournment Motion re: the operation of the Assam Acquisition, Keeping and Disposal of Gold Order, 1945, at Dibrugarh

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of the House to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to discuss an urgent and definite matter of public importance of recent occurrence to wit, consternation felt by the public of Dibrugarh owing to recent operation of the Assam Acquisition, Keeping and Disposal of Gold Order, 1945 at Dibrugarh with the misconceived, incorrect and unwarranted interpretation put upon the word "person" occurring in the Order to mean "a family" and "gold" to mean "converted gold" by the Superintendent of Police, Lakhimpur.

Sir, since the outbreak of the ruinous war and along with its progress there have been a plethora of Orders and Ordinances in this country in the name of efficient prosecution of the war. Sir, the application or rather the misapplication of Ordinances and the trouble under-went by the public have been the topic of discussion whenever and wherever two people meet. Recently my district has been chosen to be a victim to such an Order, viz., the Assam Acquisition, Keeping and Disposal of Gold Order, 1945. Sir, I have designedly used the word "victim".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: What is the grievance of the hon. Member?

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH: Sir, I am just coming to that. As I was saying, under this Order a legal duty is cast upon a person to disclose what property he owns or possesses which according to a canon of etiquette or a sense of security he is not inclined to disclose. The public of Dibrugarh, however, are prepared to forego the inroad upon right of maintaining a secrecy in favour of the good that a correct reading of the Order aims to bring about but the matter took a serious turn when on the 13th February the Superintendent of Police came to the Bar Library and informed the members of the bar that such an Order has been promulgated. On the members of the bar asking him about the meaning of the words "person" and "gold" and as to how he proposed to enforce the Order, the Superintendent of Police replied that for the purpose of the Order the word "person" means members of the family and "gold" will include ornament also. I think at this stage I should read out the relevant sections of the Order.

Section 5 runs thus:—"No person shall acquire, keep or dispose of gold in excess of five tolas unless he is in possession of a license to do so, issued by the Licensing Authority."

Section 7 runs thus:—"All persons in possession of gold in excess of five tolas on the date on which this Order comes into force shall immediately declare the same to the Licensing Authority, and shall apply at the same time to him for license to keep or dispose of such gold, and shall be subject to the provisions of paragraphs 5 and 6 of this Order."

I submit, Sir, there is a world of difference between the Order as it stands and the Order read with the misconceived and unwarranted interpretation put upon the words "person" and "gold". The difference, Sir, may best be explained by an illustration. Supposing Mr. Mookerjee has given ornaments weighing 30 tolas of gold to his three daughters; under the Order, as it is, Mr. Mookerjee need not take any license to keep the 30 tolas of gold ornaments. But if the Order is enforced with interpretation of the Superintendent of Police, he cannot keep that amount of ornaments without a license and without running a risk of prosecution.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think the main purpose of the Motion is to discuss the wrong interpretation of the Ordinance of which the hon. Member complains and also to discuss the operation of that Ordinance on that interpretation. Is that the idea?

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH: Yes, Sir. It is about the improper operation of the Ordinance. According to this Order (without the interpretation) no obligation is put on anybody to take license for possessing gold ornaments. There are two sections of the people in my district: one section is taking licenses for possessing gold ornaments weighing more than 5 tolas for fear of prosecution, the other is not taking and wants to stand by the Order as it is and take the consequence.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I do not know what the hon. Member wants to achieve by discussing the Adjournment Motion.

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH : Sir, I want to discuss that the Superintendent of Police is wrongly operating the Ordinance by putting his own interpretation to the words "person" and "gold".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I have seen there has been an Amendment made in the Order, *i.e.*, the limit of 5 tolas mentioned in the Order has been raised to 20 tolas.

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH : But my point to discuss in the Adjournment Motion is that since gold is defined in the Defence of India Rules to include coin, stick, block, etc., he is not competent to interpret it to mean ornaments.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will make the position clear. There has been a tremendous drain of gold from India to China. It was being carried or rather smuggled sometimes by the Chinese and sometimes by some other Military personnel who were daily going to China. We were doing our level best to check this by ordinary means. But it was found impossible to stop the export of gold and in consultation with the Government of India this Order was passed in order to safeguard the gold ornaments of our people living in that district from being smuggled into China. This Order was passed during my absence at Delhi for a month. As soon as I returned I got a telegram stating that every man there was complaining that the limit of 5 tolas was much too low. Knowing the condition of our society and of the middle class householders in Assam, I raised the limit from 5 tolas to 20 tolas, so that our ordinary householders may not be troubled in any way. Only to check the activities of the smugglers, this Order was passed. Therefore, if any officer has misinterpreted the Order, Government is not at fault. If my Friend, instead of bringing an Adjournment Motion to censure Government for wrong interpretation of the Order by the Superintendent of Police, had written to me about this, I would have passed authoritative instruction to the Superintendent of Police so that there might be no difficulty as regards the interpretation of the Order. Though my Friend wrote to me recently, he did not mention of this alleged wrong interpretation. A small demi-official chit from him would have been quite sufficient to put the matter right as quickly as possible.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Having heard the Hon'ble Premier, I do not think this Adjournment Motion is at all justified. It is, therefore, not in order and I do not give my consent to it.

The next Motion about the failure of Government to start the Rice Enquiry Committee is not at all in order having regard to the facts that are well-known to the hon. Member. I do not, therefore, give my consent to it.

Adjournment Motion regarding encroachments to Kaimari, and certain other professional grazing reserves of the Barpeta Subdivision.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Then the next Motion standing in the name of Srijut Kameswar Das about the unauthorised encroachments and mischiefs to graziers involving breach of public peace in the Kaimari, Theka-paka, Mandia and Manisimla professional grazing reserves of the Barpeta Subdivision. This matter may be discussed in connection with an almost similar Motion that is likely to come up.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS : Sir, I want by this Motion to refer to some definite incidents of recent occurrence.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I do not think this matter is of urgent importance. Any way, I would like to know the special reasons for this Motion.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of the House to move that the Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance : to wit the situation arising out of Government's failure to give protection against unauthorised encroachments and mischiefs to graziers involving breach of public peace in, amongst others, the Kaimari, Theka-paka, Mandia and Manisimla professional grazing reserves of the Barpeta Subdivision.

*Khan Bahadur Maulavi MAHMUD ALI to move :—

"This Assembly do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence namely the failure of the Government to hold an enquiry against the Government agents for procurement of food-grains in the Surma Valley as per decision of the Assembly".

Though the matter of encroachment in the reserves is an old affair in the Barpeta Subdivision, I may assure, however, that I am not at all referring to these old encroachments. Sir, since after the last land settlement policy conference held at Shillong there have been various attempts to encroach into the professional grazing reserves of Barpeta as if in a rush and with a determined attitude to nullify the effect of the recent Government Resolution. This fact was partially admitted by the Hon'ble Premier yesterday. My complaint is that the Government have failed to take adequate preventive measures effective enough to keep away the new encroachers from the reserves even after the land settlement Resolution of the Government was published in the middle of January last. The result has been that in very recent times there have been cases of serious clashes between the graziers and the new encroachers thus endangering the public peace there and groups of graziers grazing their buffaloes in the reserves specially in the Mandia and the Theka-paka professional grazing reserves were assaulted by immigrant encroachers.

In the Mandia reserve on the 10th of February last about 25 new immigrant encroachers attacked and assaulted one employee of a grazier seriously and threatened others who for fear of personal injury fled away. Here the assailants then drove away a hundred and twenty heads of cattle with a view to impound them in a Local Board pound in an immigrant area. The graziers had to come to Barpeta and approach the police for taking cognisance of the case and giving police help to get the impounded cattle released. They waited there for the whole of the afternoon and by about the evening they were sent back with direction that they should approach the Magistrate for any police help for release of their cattle. Now these graziers had no time on the day, yet, with difficulty they approached the Subdivisional Magistrate in-charge that very evening with a petition for police help to get the cattle released from the pound as the young calves were at the *bathans* tethered all the day and had no milk throughout. The Magistrate did not pass any order on that day and had no milk through-day. The next day the Magistrate passed an order stating that he could not give any police help in view of the recent happenings at another reserve hinting thereby at the incident of Kaimari and asked the petitioners to put up the petition to the permanent Subdivisional Officer when he would return from Gauhati. Now, there was no knowing when the permanent Subdivisional Officer would return from Gauhati where he had gone for a conference. So, they were at a loss. They did not know when the permanent Subdivisional Officer would return. In the meantime the cattle were without food and without their young calves who were without milk for two days. The graziers having had no other alternative had to approach some immigrant Matbars of the locality for giving them safe escort in going to the pound to release the cattle and coming back therefrom to the reserve. These Matbars charged Re. 1 per head of the buffalo impounded and after a good deal of bargaining they settled the matter for Rs. 40 or Rs. 50. This was the state of affairs in the Mandia reserve. The conditions of the graziers in the other reserves are in no way better. The conditions cited could not get any reasonable protection from the local Government officials. Under the very peculiar circumstances of the case, they could not wait for the permanent Subdivisional Officer to come back to Barpeta and were compelled to take the help of the Matbars much against their will. This is not the whole picture of things prevailing there. In some reserves graziers are being personally attacked and injured in the very *bathans* that have been in the reserves from long time past and their properties are being damaged. On approach to the authority they find no protection from any quarter. In view of all these, I say that my Motion is perfectly in order and I hope hon. Members will give me the leave asked for and support my Motion.

The Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not think that on the facts which have now been stated before the House by my Friend, Srijut Kameswar Das, the Adjournment Motion is in order. Encroachments in these reserves have been going on for the last eight years. Encroachments Line System Enquiry Committee which was published in the report of the present Barpeta, were mentioned in the report of the Encroachments Line System Enquiry Committee which was published in 1938. What my Friend just

now stated is that the graziers of the Mandia reserve were put to difficulties on account of the alleged occurrence of the 10th of February last. From his statement no new encroachment is to be found. All he said was the pitiable plight in which the graziers have been placed by the fact that the Magistrate did not take any action. The Magistrate there is Srijut Ganesh Phookan. My Friend also stated that the young calves of the impounded cattle were suffering for want of milk. This has got, Sir, no relevance whatsoever to the alleged encroachment. So, Sir, I submit that this Motion is not in order.

Then, again, he did not mention anything about Theka-paka, and as regards Kaimari he said that there has been a recent occurrence. Therefore, from the wordings of his Motion and from his speech I am emboldened to say that the occurrence which is alleged to have taken place on the 18th of February is not a matter for which Government could be censured. Having taken for granted that there was an encroachment on these reserves, has anyone reported this matter to the local Government? I cannot be supposed to be omniscient to know everything. If there was an occurrence, the party or the representative, *i.e.*, my Friend or the Subdivisional Officer should have informed the Government what has taken place. We have had reports from nowhere and therefore up till now we did not know what the question is about. If the Government has no information from any source, either official or non-official, they cannot be censured for not taking any action in the matter. I, therefore, Sir, submit that this Motion is not in order.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Having heard the hon. Mover and also the Hon'ble Premier I think the Motion is not in order. These grievances as stated by the hon. Member asking for leave are not matters to be discussed in an Adjournment Motion. So, I don't give my consent to it.

Budget Discussion

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I commence the criticisms of this year's Budget from both ends, namely, the whole outlook behind the Budget, and the implications of all of its items.

Needless to repeat, Sir, we are under a Constitution which entitles our Ministers only to ditto the demands of a bureaucracy whose top-dogs derive authority not from this House, but from an alien exploiting class—the British Imperialists of Churchill-Amery stock. Everyone of us knows that in such a corner, any Cabinet without the united strength of the patriotic opinion of the Province behind it, without any patriotic policy before it—can only maintain office at the mercy of these bureaucrats, and as such will ever try to satisfy their orders and demands however mildly termed or worded those might be. Hence our characterisation of such a Cabinet as a “His-Master's-Voice Cabinet”—and a Budget placed by such a Cabinet can never meet the needs of our people—it can only be a typical bureaucratic one. The one that lies before us speaks only one language—the language of a slave-driver, it bears on itself the birth mark of its origin, namely the bureaucratic one. In no respect, Sir, our Hon'ble Finance Minister could manage to change this character of the Budget—and at best it is only an exact replica of the last one if not worse.

Let us begin, Sir, from the assertion of the Hon'ble Finance Minister that “despite the fact that Assam is not yet out of the wood created by the peril of war, and during a large part of 1944 was subjected to actual attack by the enemy, Government have throughout given the closest consideration to the need of limiting civil liberties to the least possible degree.” To his credit the Hon'ble Minister has given us a decreasing number of security prisoners and persons under various restrictions in the Province. And add to that his tremendous sympathy towards the Police Department because of the mounting strains on it. One only is at a loss whether one is hearing a Maxwell or a leader of the Great Muslim League Organisation. Any honest patriot would instantly begin arguing with our Finance Minister saying, “Yes, Mr. Finance Minister, Assam enjoys civil liberty indeed! Banning of Congress flag on the plea that Congress organisation is banned is civil liberty no doubt! But for God's sake, look at Bengal where the same League leaders are in office. They have not banned this flag on this plea. Look at the Punjab Muslim League—they are fighting tooth and nail for the release of Congress leaders and you a brother Leaguer boast of civil liberty when

scores of patriots lie in jail or live under intolerable restrictions. You have considered much indeed to keep up the banners of civil liberty by banning all meetings and processions in almost all the districts in the Province. Whenever we have to hold a meeting or a procession to express our opinion regarding all the problems that affect our life, you show us the bungalows of the District Magistrate. Yes indeed you have given us much civil liberty to keep mum about your food and cloth bunglings, your policy of nepotism and grafts."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: This matter has been sufficiently discussed in connection with an Adjournment Motion. Why does the hon. Member introduce this question in his speech on the Budget?

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY: Very well, Sir.

I am not one to believe that these are the real sentiments of a Muslim League leader. These are the words of the Gods of the Secretariat.

I shall begin the Budget criticisms this year from last pages of the Budget estimates of Assam for 1945-46. Similar provision on capital outlay in the last Budget has been deliberately misappropriated. The huge sum has been spent for procurement of paddy and rice but no procurement has been made in the Surma Valley. The bitter criticisms in the last Session of the Assembly had no effect upon our adamant Premier who has deliberately neglected the suggestion of the Assembly and the decree of the whole House has not been seriously attended to. To my letters, which he kindly mentioned in reply to my Adjournment Motion, and which always relates to these affairs and release of prisoners which sometimes advise him to draw himself out from the clutches of bureaucratic high officials and which also even warn him, I have not got a single reply. Enquiry Committee appointed by the *Assam Gazette* of the 7th February does not consist except one the same personnel, as recommended by the House.

Direct purchase of paddy and rice by Government after payment of 40 per cent. of money in advance has not been done in December, January and February. What is the result? Cultivators of Sunamganj Buro area were at a fix to find out money for purchasing their daily necessaries. The black-marketing traders took the opportunity, purchased the cultivators' Buro paddy at the lowest rate of Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 and sold at the rates of Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 to Mymensing traders at Gaglazur Ghat.

In spite of the dirty exports, lakhs of maunds still remain in cultivators' *golas*. We come to know from the Deputy Commissioner and Subdivisional Officers that new licenses are being issued for the purchase of paddy and rice. We are always against the granting of such licenses. The same bunglings as were done by the Syndicate to cheat cultivators will certainly continue. Circumstances convince us that such direct purchase should never be made. Government deserves censure if such is not done. Even bottom prices of rice and paddy are not fixed. That is, not a single recommendation made by the Assembly has been implemented. As regards consumer goods, our amendment in the Assembly has been implemented. As regards consumer boards, As regards rural rationing, assurances are given by officials from time to time, dates after dates are announced but that fortunate days of rural rationing are not forthcoming, but actually the scheme is not yet in application. The Hon'ble Sir Saadulla's declaration of half a seer of salt per head is only a myth.

On the floor of this House, the Hon'ble Premier has very often declared his determination to help the Co-operative Stores in all possible ways. We clearly remember his assurances that all Government supplies shall be distributed to Co-operative Stores and everywhere Government supplies shall be distributed to Co-operative Stores and everywhere Government supplies shall be distributed to Co-operative Stores in all possible ways. We clearly the distribution of Government supplies would give preference to Co-operative Stores to all these tall assurances. But doubt arises from our experience to all these tall assurances. Very few Co-operative Stores have as yet been given the license of salt and kerosene distribution. Supplies to Co-operatives Stores are always less than the supplies to the trader licensees. In Sylhet and Cachar we have seen that, for a certain number of consumers supplied by Co-operative Stores, the Supply Department would allot less quota than to the same or less number of consumers supplied by the trader licensees. Does that mean that the traders supply more commodities to the consumers? The contrary is the fact. These traders are

in the good book of the Supply authorities, because they can easily gratify them with gifts, and this seems to be one reason of the anti-co-operative attitude of the Supply officers. From the facts coming from all over the Province, we find that the same is the order of the day. Does it not enable us to conclude, Sir, that the Ministry has its unseen hands behind these anti-co-operative games? Let us look at the matter from the other side of the Co-operative policy. We know hundreds of cases where applications for the registration of the Co-operative stores have been duly sent and they are not being registered by the authorities for months together. And in the whole co-operative policy of this Government one will not find any room left for training of co-operative functionaries even when they boast that Assam has now about 1,600 Co-operative stores. From this, Sir, one and only one conclusion alone can be arrived at. The tall talks of Co-operative policy of this Government is only a cloak behind which the actual practices of the Cabinet, namely, gratifications of the Supply Officers and Cabinet Members are being carried on with impunity. Yes, Sir, their Co-operative policy is one of systematic killing of these popular organs of people for obvious reasons.

I would show how this Cabinet has handled the problem of education and particularly the question of Primary Education of the Province. While even in the last Session of the Assembly this House resolved to fix the minimum salary of Primary School teachers at Rs. 40, this Cabinet has almost by-passed the decision and in this Budget appropriation also you can clearly see that the decision of this House is not being implemented. I am not going to show here and now the shallow plans envisaged in the Budget estimates on "Grow-More-Food", Public Health and such other items. In course of Cut Motion on these demands I will deal with them. In a nutshell, Sir, I want to characterise this Budget as nothing but as a slave-driver's Budget.

Curiously enough, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has kept himself completely mum over the land settlement policy of the Government and it is this policy which has raised a storm of controversy inside and outside the Province. It is the policy pursued by the present Cabinet on land settlement which led to Police firing at Kaimari, an incident which must be deplored by all. It is the same policy which is responsible for creating innumerable clashes all over the lower four districts of Assam—clashes between indigenous people and immigrants. The Province is drifting towards a state of civil war.

It is most unfortunate that the All-Parties Conference held in last December could not come to an agreed decision over it. But whatever decision was adopted the Ministry do not seem to have honestly implement it. From the reports that have appeared in the Press it seems that the Cabinet is not of one opinion on the present policy pursued by the Government. I invite the Finance Minister to clarify his position with regard to the present land settlement policy. Sir, failure on the part of the popular organisation to come to an agreement has its reflections on the Cabinet itself. It is most unfortunate that Assam has a Cabinet which does not pull together on a vital issue on land settlement and these differences are not now limited within the four walls of the Constitution Hall. We hear that after the Kaimari incident an Hon'ble Member of the Cabinet went to the spot and encouraged the encroachers not to leave the spot where they had been settling. If such be the state of affairs, if the evil is there inside the Cabinet, who is there to prevent it from outside? It is the general feeling in the minds of the people of Assam that the Cabinet has agreed to a policy only to satisfy the indigenous people and the representatives, but by a back-door policy they are going to nullify it and thus satisfy the immigrants. Such a state of affairs cannot go on, and it is bound to lead to conflicts which will ruin the peace and prosperity of both the immigrants and indigenous population of Assam. The only way out of it is not the policy of dishonesty and hoodwinking of the public nor evading the problems but to face facts squarely and to come to an agreed solution among all the contending parties—Congress, Muslim League and the Tribals. There must be a Cabinet which should carry the confidence of all to implement the agreed decision; otherwise there is only the black nights before us upon which the alien bureaucracy will rule.

Finally, let us touch on the so-called Post War Plans and talks of the Cabinet. One simple question will suffice to show the hollowness of the whole business. Who will

plan this Reconstruction and who will carry it into practice? An alien bureaucracy? A partisan and unprincipled Cabinet? Sir, we also think in terms of Post War Reconstruction. We also visualise a better Assam and a better India. But this onerous task can be done only by a full-fledged popular Government—real united Government of our patriotic parties.

With these words, Sir, I would recommend to the House to reject the Budget as a whole and request again to set up an united Ministry in Assam backed by the representatives of the Congress, Muslim League and the Independents (*Laughter.*)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The hon. Member has got only one minute more.

Babu KARUNA SINDHU ROY : Let us come to an agreed programme in so far as matters relating to land settlement, food and civil liberty are concerned to save our people from utter helplessness, distrust and complete degeneration, and to pave the way to freedom and democracy. Through freedom alone, we will be in a real land a real home of plenty, progress and happiness.

Mr. A. WHITTAKER : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is always embarrassing to follow Comrade Roy. I have no intention of imitating the speed of his delivery.

No Finance Minister of any country or any Province has ever the right to expect from his audience a higher praise than the common phrase, "Well, it might have been worse". This Budget could have been a great deal worse. I notice that the gentlemen of the Press in their headlines have seized on the fact that this particular Budget is carrying a deficit of just over 2 lakhs whereas the important point is that last year in the same way they seized on the headline that we were carrying a deficit of 10 lakhs which is now converted into a surplus of 29 lakhs with every prospect of same thing happening in 1945-46.

The Budget speech is a commendably frank statement. The Finance Minister states that his favourable position in 1945-46 as well as during the last three years is due to a series of windfalls from temporary war time prosperity. For example, petrol which yields 32 lakhs is just as much a munition of war as tanks and shells. Dikom foreign liquor, which yields 31 lakhs, is only a war time prop. Comparison with the results of the last two years suggests that we have passed the peak in the timber boom. None of these gloomy facts are suppressed. Rather has the Finance Minister gone out of his way to emphasize the temporary nature of swollen revenue receipts. I should like to repair one omission, however, by paying a tribute to the Army which in nine months has transferred a Japanese threat to the Province of Assam and in particular to the Brahmaputra Valley into an Allied threat to the whole of the Irrawaddy Valley. We are all apt to forget dangers past and the men who caused those dangers to pass. Nine months ago the Japanese were battling hard for Kohima and were in sight of the Bengal and Assam Railway. A very gallant delaying action fought by the Assam Regiment and the Assam Rifles helped the 2nd Division, composed largely of English County Regiments, to make and win that epic defence of Kohima. The heavy price paid in lives finds noble expression in the stone memorial at Kohima which carries this inscription :—

"When you go home
Tell them of us and say,
For your to-morrow
We gave our to-day."

I would suggest, Sir, that when the Assembly plans to raise money and spend it on Development, we should remember gratefully that our plans of to-day and to-morrow have been bought with Indian and British lives, many of them lost not more than 80 miles away from this building in which we are talking today.

After mentioning our temporary prosperity, I should like to underline also the more solidly based sources of our revenue, namely, land revenue and agricultural income-tax. One cannot repeat too often that up to the present the main stay of revenue in this Province is agriculture, and whatever plans emerge for establishing other industries in the Province, for many years to come the agriculturist, and with him I include the grower of tea, will be the main producer of wealth in the Province.

The second point to emphasize is that most schemes of social betterment will depend on increasing the productivity of agriculture and on taxing that increase. The one great lesson which the war has taught in the sphere of taxation is that the common man must contribute to social benefits if those benefits are to be provided for him quickly. Taxation of the Rockfellers and the Birlas produces spectacular individual amounts but Beveridge for all needs contributions from all, even though the contributions are graded according to capacity. In India the Central Income Tax has taken charge of the big fellow. In the Provinces we are left to deal with the little fellow and the main ways of dealing with the little fellow are by Land Revenue and Agricultural Income Tax. Obviously we cannot increase the tax on the agriculturist unless we can guarantee and increase his prosperity. Nor can we increase the Agricultural Income Tax unless there is a reasonable guarantee that the Tea Industry remains prosperous. The Tea Control Act may take care of the Tea Industry, but what takes care of the Agriculturist? In my opinion, the soundest basis of Agricultural prosperity is a stable price for the agriculturist's produce and scientific measure to increase that produce. Government may claim that they have done wonders in the sphere of education and public health. But these are nothing compared with the achievement of guaranteeing to the agriculturist, at least in the Assam Valley, a steady and profitable price for his paddy. A difference of 8 annas a maund in the price of paddy means 400 lakhs of rupees. Now let us assume that only 20 per cent. of the crop comes to the market and is sold; that means not less than 80 lakhs hard cash in the cultivator's pocket. The cultivator will profiteer like most other people if he is given the chance. But in my view the cultivator is not asking for the opportunity to profiteer: all he is asking for—a small request—is that he should be protected from a slump and that is what Government's buying operations in the Assam Valley are doing and, I hope, will continue to do for him. I personally consider that Government are holding the price at too high a level but this difference of opinion does not affect the credit which is due to this Government for holding a price at a pre-determined level; it is the ability to hold that price steadily, come what may, which marks the real success of Government's policy and the biggest thing that this Government can do for the cultivator is to protect the price of his products from slumping. This is, Sir, the same wide problem which confronts President Roosevelt's administration as well as that of the President of the Argentine Republic. This war time lesson should be carried forward to peace time. The cultivator should have the price of his produce protected and thereby his ability to pay land revenue maintained.

Having given Government credit for their rice control policy, I should like to add some remarks about controls generally. There is a disease in the Government Secretariat called "Controphobia." One Secretary to Government bites another Secretary and soon the whole Secretariat froths on paper into the most rabid controls. New associations spring up overnight to deal with one commodity, others will spring up to-morrow to deal with another commodity and others to transport articles. Some control in war time is inevitable, particularly that of transport. My quarrel with Government's control is that they assume that all private individuals are scoundrels and that private enterprise does not know its job (*hear, hear*). Last year I asked for the brakes to be taken off as soon as possible and I make the same appeal this year, and in doing so, I am not speaking only for the industries represented by the European Group, but I am speaking for every trader and for every manufacturer, and particularly for the small trader and small manufacturer. I think Government's policy towards business enterprises should be—praise us when we make profits which Government will certainly tax: console and sympathise with us when we make losses: encourage us to recover from slumps: exhort us to improve labour conditions and wages, for we believe that high wages for labour go with high productivity: but for *efficiency's* sake, please stop controlling our daily lives by amateur bureaucrats however enlightened those amateurs may be.

There is one item which the Finance Minister has not put into the Budget. That item is the cost of corruption in the Public Services. Corruption in this Province has increased so much that it is difficult to note what are its present limits. The

average person, like Walpole in the 18th Century, is beginning to think that every person connected with Government service has got its price. Every new control which is introduced makes it more difficult for the plain man to get that which he seeks. Every new organisation set up to handle articles in every day use brings in new and inexperienced men. In some cases the new men swallow the new morality by selling their services; in other cases, the new men are so incompetent that their underlings can take bribes with impunity. It is inevitable that the public services should be diluted in war times. But my charge against Government, made in measured language, made in the same measured language which the Hon'ble Premier uses in this Assembly, is that this Government have shown no resolution in seeking out and stamping out corruption which they know exists as well as I know it and as well as every Member of the Assembly knows it. If responsible Ministers will not act vigorously in the matter, corruption will continue to grow: it will be a recurring item in every Budget for the next generation. The disease is deep-rooted and its eradication requires a drastic surgical operation (*hear, hear*). I suggest that Government would save the tax-payer vast sums if they would set up a special branch of the Criminal Investigation Department manned by officers of proved integrity. I know I shall be told that there are no such officers available to which I must reply that there is no more important job than this and if the will exists, the officers will be found either in the Province or from outside. Here is a case in which His Excellency the Governor and his Ministers should act together. I would invite the attention of the Assembly to Article XX of the Instrument of Instructions issued by His Majesty the King to all Governors. This runs: "And generally our Governor shall do all that in him lies to maintain standards of good administration."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Is it permissible—criticism of any action of the Governor?

Mr. A. WHITTAKER: If it is not permissible, Sir, you can rule it out. Here is a case in which we can fairly appeal to all in authority over us—Ministers and Governor—to restore the administration to standards of probity.

The Budget in another respect is disappointing. I refer to the grant for the cost of the Police and the absence of any schemes for mechanisation. There can be no doubt that the Police of this Province are too thin on the ground. There can be no need to be substantially increased, but they should be so equipped that the new policeman can do the work of three policemen equipped in the old way. The needs are training schools, motor transport, wireless communication, modern offices and office equipment, a better type of recruit with better pay and a more specialised training. The Budget gives no clue as to whether these problems are receiving consideration.

Finally, Sir, I come to a criticism of the Budget which raises a fundamental question. Government for the last two and half years or three years have been the largest grocer in the Province and the largest owner of motor transport. Government have gone into business in a big way. But, Sir, if any officer of a Limited Company produced accounts such as Government have produced for their supply operations and their transport operations that private individual would have been arrested and after many, many adjournments, would be convicted and would now be languishing in jail. The statement at pages 155-156 is a complete travesty. Take the Supply Department—the essence of accounting is at the end of the year to produce a Profit and Loss account and a Balance Sheet. The Profit and Loss account shows the trading results with the year's income and expenditure, including the losses through deterioration and wastage. The Balance Sheet shows the Assets and Liabilities. The most important asset in the Supply Department is clearly the stocks in hand valued at cost or market rate, whichever is lower. The Balance Sheet should also carry a certificate of a competent Authority showing the quality of these stocks; particularly is this necessary where so many of the stocks are perishable and liable to become unfit for human consumption unless they have been properly warehoused and regularly turned over. What do we find? A Statistical Blackout. There is no trading account. Capital and Revenue transactions are bundled together. There is no valuation of

stock. There is no item for Cess although on my calculation the Industries in this Group alone have paid Supply Department up to date more than 20 lakhs of rupees. There is a figure in the Revenue estimates of Rs. 25 lakhs under Miscellaneous Contingencies and no other detail whatsoever. This, Sir, is the sort of accounting you would find in "Alice in Wonderland." Nice round figures. In the Budget Estimates the figure for purchase of foodstuffs is Rs 300 lakhs and for Miscellaneous Contingencies is Rs. 30 lakhs. In other words, the estimates are drawn up not to the nearest lakh but to the nearest 10 lakhs. Finance Department may find this nice comfortable budgeting, but I confess it makes me profoundly uncomfortable. All the Finance Minister says is that the real closing balance of Government accounts will be known when Supply operations have been closed down. Sir, with all respect, I can only describe that statement as nonsensical. Government have been trading for two and half years and they have not yet published any trading account, nor stated what Profit and Losses they have incurred. All I know is that they have exacted from tax-payers with rigorous punctuality a very large income indeed by way of Cess and for which they have published no accounts, and apparently have no intention of publishing accounts. Whilst approving of the levy of Cess, I cannot approve of the suppression of accounts.

Secondly, Assam Transport. Here too is a trading concern in which the risks are enormous and in which a yearly statement of trading as well as a Balance Sheet is essential. Members of my Group, particularly the Scottish Members, have a very great respect for Profit and Loss statements, Balance Sheets and for Audit certificates. We were told when Assam Transport first started that it was to be run on commercial lines, which in plain language could only mean a system of commercial accounting with an annual Profit and Loss and with a Balance Sheet showing the Assets which earn the profits. I am a supporter of Assam Transport for I believe it did a fine job in an emergency when there was no other agency. But I am a critic and, Sir, I am a hostile critic of the manner in which it presents its operations for public scrutiny. Motor Transport in this Province is an extremely risky business for damage, wear and tear, and the difficulty of getting spare parts can quickly play havoc with any fleet of lorries. What the Assembly has a right to know is the operational costs for each year of Assam Transport's life and the assets, together with the depreciation charged against the fleet earnings. The accounts are unintelligible to either the layman or the expert. As an example I quote—an entry in the Budget Estimates of 1945-46 under the all-embracing phrase, "Other items—Rs.45 lakhs." Again accounting in nice round figures. There is a suggestion in the Revised Estimates that Assam Transport made a profit of Rs.3 lakhs in 1944-45 because the recoveries exceeded the total cost. Similar in the Estimates for 1945-46 on the same unsound calculations, the suggestion is that the profit will be 12½ lakhs. I know that to be impossible for the profitability of Assam Transport has been reduced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister himself making special and extremely praiseworthy efforts to procure additional vehicles for public use in the Province of Assam. It is because the Hon'ble Prime Minister by his own personal efforts in Delhi has been so successful in pressing this demand that Assam Transport will no longer have a virtual monopoly and will no longer be able to charge excessive rates. It is as likely to make a loss as in 1945-46.

In making these criticisms I speak as a shareholder. If Government go in for trade, we the tax-payers become shareholders in Government trading concerns and have the elementary right to ask the Ministry, who constitute the Board of Directors, how they have handled our money. More specifically my criticism is against the Supply and Home Departments for putting forward these accounts and more emphatically against the Finance Department for accepting them. The Finance Minister is a trustee for the revenues of this Province. I would ask him a very definite question—Does he think that Finance Department has discharged this trust by swallowing these accounts, and in case the answer, as occasionally, is in the evasive, may I ask another question? How long will it be before Finance Department

will do the job for which they are paid, *viz.*, to extract from Supply Department and Assam Transport a faithful and punctual record of their trading operations?

Having made myself unpleasant, I ought to say that owing to the excessive rate of cess charged by the Supply Department and the very high freight rates charged by the Assam Transport, both these Departments may be able to show a credit balance on last year's working and the Supply Department at any rate to show a credit balance in 1945-46. That fact, however, does not invalidate the criticism that after two and half years trading, the information available of the accounts now published is precisely nil.

A conclusion which the Finance Minister has clearly established is that our revenues are elastic whilst our expenditure is highly inelastic. It will not be possible to reduce the expenditure on most Budget heads without either causing distress or reducing productivity. It is, therefore, all the more important to find new sources of taxation. I would suggest that Government take immediate advantage of the concluding portion of Sir Jeremy Raisman's Budget speech in the Central Assembly in Delhi whereby he suggested that the Central Government's assistance in the administration of a Sales Tax would be forthcoming if Provinces agree. In Madras the Sales Tax has already become an important source of revenue. In Assam the cost of administration would be prohibitive, but if the Centre would, as it so easily could, administer a Sales Tax either for the whole of India or for a region which might include Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam, the administration expenses per Province would be small whilst the yield would be substantial. I would also suggest for consideration a substantial increase in Court Fees and Stamp Duty so long as large amounts of purchasing power remain in the hands of certain sections of the public. I agree with Mr. Aditya that the war time boom has affected different classes in very different ways, but it is undoubtedly true that large sections of the people are in possession of wealth which will be largely squandered on litigation, and there is no reason why the State should not take some of that squandering.

Reconstruction is a subject which will be discussed later. The only point I wish to make here is that this Province, by prudent management of its finances during the war years, has acquired a good reputation in the money market. It is obvious that large programmes of development will require not only taxation but large-scale borrowing. Government's record so far will mean we shall be able to borrow at cheaper rates than would have been thought possible six years ago, and for this achievement Government deserve congratulations. How different the result might have been can be seen by looking at the Budget of our neighbour—Bengal—which was faced with problems not very greatly different from our own but which has managed them at a cost of a deficit amounting in crores to a sum greater than the whole of the revenues of this Province.

I therefore conclude as I began, with a verdict that the Budget might have been a great deal worse than it is.

Maulvi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have assembled at this House at a time when the enemies have been driven from the borders of Assam and the internal peace of Assam is not disturbed in any way by the aggressive armies of Nippon. I hope the black cloud of warfare will vanish within a short time and we shall enjoy the sunshine of peace and happiness. The war has opened the eyes of the people of the Province, and we have built high hopes in every sphere of our activities. Budget presented at such a time by the Hon'ble Minister, Finance, cannot satisfy the people and so the Budget for the year 1945-46 is not up to our expectation. The Hon'ble Finance Minister while presenting the Budget talked much of Post War Reconstruction though he did not give us any idea about the proposed reconstruction. We can talk of reconstruction only when we have got constructing. In this unfortunate Province of Assam, construction in the side of Nation Building is almost nil and as such to talk of reconstruction is nothing but putting the cart

before the horse. We have not got the minimum facility of communication. Even the different police stations are not connected with the headquarters of the subdivision; people take recourse to methods of communication that were prevalent before the 15th century; hundreds of people are dying without treatment and without medicine; bulk of the people are uneducated, resources in the Province are as were before, but people are suffering for every necessary article of life; every necessary article of life is existent in the land but for the people nothing is available. Not the law enacted by the representatives of the people governs the Province, but it is the Defence of India Rules that is ruling every administrative affair of the Province. Liberty of the people is curtailed and though popular Government is established with the real representatives of the people, still the prestige of the people has not in any way increased; all businesses are under the control of Government and the people are at the mercy of the officers strongly armed with the sharp weapon of Defence of India Rules. While the condition of the people of Assam is such, the talk of reconstruction is nothing but ridiculous.

Cloth famine prevails throughout the whole Province. Although the Hon'ble Prime Minister does not admit that the fault lies with the Assam Government but with the Government of India, still the fact remains that our people are not getting cloth. Bales of cloth that come on Government account, vanish away in such a manner that the cultivators do not get the mill cloth at all. Muslims generally do not wear Dhuties but Pyjamas, but in the market, no long cloth is available for making Pyjamas. Standard cloth removed the want to some extent, but not entirely. To meet the demands of people, so far as the cloth is concerned, Government should explore all possible avenues.

Government has not yet been able to place the Rice and Paddy Procurement Machinery in the field and so the cultivators are not able to sell their rice and paddy. This has rendered the economic condition gloomy in the rural areas. Cultivators are unable to purchase plough cattle, the price of which has gone fantastically high. Agricultural labour has become costly and as a result of this considerably large areas in Buro growing localities remained uncultivated. Injudicious restrictions put on the entry of the Bengal Bhagalos into the districts of Assam and the manner in which the rules of restrictions are brought into operation by the ill paid officers of the Rice Control Department, has created such a situation that I am afraid, sufficient number of Bengal Bhagalos may not come this year. Last year the number of Bhagalos was much less than the number that came in previous years and the cultivators had to undergo a considerable loss. If it is repeated this year too, the economic condition of the Province will be worse. I bring the matter to the notice of Government in time so that Government may revise their decision and take timely action.

I congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for his cordial treatment towards the Education Department. In spite of the difficult situation created by the war, a number of new schemes involving a total non-recurring expenditure of Rs. 1,13,775 and a total recurring expenditure of Rs. 3,40,248 have been included in the Budget. This is what ought to be.

But a minute observation will show that the Hon'ble Finance Minister has carried coal to New Castle. Murarichand College, Cotton College, Radha Kanta Handiqui Girls' College and Jail Road Girls School have consumed the lion's share of the new grants. The Hon'ble Minister proposes to spend the money in such areas which are educationally much advanced and where there is every facility of imparting education of high standard. Population of the rural areas needs education the most, but better attention has been paid to the towns of Sylhet, Gauhati and Shillong. In order to take over venture primary schools, Rs. 25,000 and for direct grant to venture and non-Government secondary schools for boys and girls, Rs. 50,000 have been provided. The Hon'ble Minister of Education has provided money for spreading education among the immigrants. With a view to encourage higher education among the Muslim girls Rs. 16,000 (Rs. 8,000 recurring and Rs. 8,000 non-recurring) has been provided. This I highly appreciate, but at the same time I beg to submit that in comparison with the demand these provisions are inadequate. I cannot appreciate the provision of less money for lower strata of education. In order to push the case of

boys and girls of rural areas and that of Muslim girls' education, more liberal grants are required. I take this opportunity to offer my heart felt thanks to the Hon'ble Minister for Education for making a non-recurring grant of Rs. 5,000 to the Sunamganj College.

Government held a Muslim Education Conference in 1943. That conference recommended certain changes in the curricula of Madrassas. But I am sorry that Government have not yet brought the recommendations of that conference into operation which according to me should be done immediately.

Another Muslim Educational Conference was held on 27th October 1944 at Sylhet. This conference recommended Diniyat and Urdu to be introduced into the Middle English Madrassas on an optional basis. Khan Sahib Maulavi Dewan Muhammad Ahabab Chaudhury and Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali do not approve of this change in the Middle English Madrassa curriculum.

My hon. Friends have perhaps forgotten that the so-called Madrassa education was introduced by Warren Hastings in 1781 not to give religious education to the Muslims. It was introduced for creating clerks of the East India Company—Warren Hastings while introducing the so-called Madrassa education established the Calcutta Madrassa with the money of a Hindu gentleman, Munshi Nava Krishna Deb, afterwards Maharaja Nava Krishna Deb Bahadur of Sovabazar. Warren Hastings did not take a single pie from the Muslims. Historical records rather show that the East India Company was not very much friendly with the Muslims. Circulars were issued by the Board of Directors of the Company to suppress the Muslim culture and education. When by Lord William Bentinck the system of education was changed and instead of Persian, Bengali became the court language, the products of the Calcutta Madrassa, who were thrown out of state-importance, launched the movement of boycotting the new system of education as it would according to them, lead the votaries of the new system to Doozakh or hell after death and not to the heaven, the ultimate goal of all pious people. From the ill-conceived idea of this boycott movement the Muslim community suffered to the backbone. How many persons have gone to Doozakh or hell I do not know but there is no denying of the fact that the great Muslim community has now accepted the new system and in order to keep the Hastings system-Madrassa as the seed-bed of Islamic education, some coating had to be applied on the system. I myself am...

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, Order. The hon. Member will continue after lunch.

Adjournment

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

After lunch

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: I myself am connected with three new schemes of Middle English Madrassas and I can boldly say that the little Arabic education that is imparted in these Madrassas produces no good result in the life of a student. My friends are also not votaries of Hastings system but the brilliant productions of the Bentinck system and still they are good Muslims. Leaving out Arabic literature from the new system Junior Madrassas will not put Islam into danger—this is my conviction. Urdu literature is a very rich literature and it is easier than the Arabic literature. Diniyat can easily be learnt through Urdu. I stand to support the recommendations of the 1944 conference and urge upon Government to bring the recommendations into operations without the least possible delay. I regret that I cannot congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for the provision he has made in the Budget for establishing a Tibbiya college at Sylhet. This is nothing but an idle scheme. In these days of scientific advancement, establishment of a Tibbiya college at Sylhet may remove un-employment difficulty of some particular person but I am sure will not meet the requirement of the Muslims. I humbly suggest that the Government, if they want to patronise the Unani system of medicine, can very well send two or three students to Delhi Tibbiya college for training. As far as

my information goes, India's best Tibbiya college and hospital at Hyderabad (Deccan) failed to attract students and patients as the medical college and hospital could. Will Government see their way to withdraw this item ?

As for agricultural improvement Government activities are much below our expectations. Only two or three schemes in this or that subdivision will not improve the condition of the cultivators. A regular programme should be drawn up and a country-wide reconstruction activities should be at once started. In each centre the experienced cultivators should be taken into confidence. Government should not think that our cultivators are idle and they need any sermon from the officers. Our cultivators do not require any help from Government for their agricultural works except when they meet difficulties which they are not able to solve themselves. My suggestion is that agricultural improvement societies should be started in every rural centre and with the help of these societies, improvement work should be started. As far as practicable, Government should not take shelter under the Post-war Reconstruction proposal.

I would now make a few remarks about communications. None is feeling the difficulty of communications more than the people of Sunamganj. This is the only subdivision in the district of Sylhet which is not connected with the headquarters station of the district. For four months in the dry season we have got Motor Bus Services and for the rainy season we have to depend on country boats. There is a steamer service between Sunamganj and Sylhet, but that is not at all regular. The boat journey is so tedious and costly that people when required to go to Sylhet think it as an insoluble difficulty of life. The service that was being rendered by the country boats in the dry season is also coming to an end in the subdivision of Sunamganj, because the river beds are going to be silted up soon, rendering the communication within the subdivision almost impossible. Boulders and shingles that would prevent the coming down of the silt from the hills have been taken away by the Military and the river beds are silted up. If Government do not take up any scheme to keep the water borne communication open, I am afraid, all business of Sunamganj will come to an end during the dry season. For rainy season a regular steamer service should be restored and the Sylhet-Sunamganj road should be made fit for all weather traffic by constructing wooden bridges. All the rural centres also should be connected with the subdivisional town.

People of the rural areas in my subdivision are not only suffering from want of cloth but from salt, sugar and other necessaries of life. It is learnt that the quota of sugar will be minimised in rural areas. Gur that is available through controlled shops is not at all fit for human consumption. But still our people are taking this rotten stuff for want of sugar which I am told is going to be reserved for the people of the urban or the semi-urban areas. Another oppressive rule introduced by the Supply Department is that none will get any sugar or salt unless he purchases *dal* from the controlled shop. The Hon'ble Prime Minister, the other day, informed the House that no order to that effect was ever issued by Government, but still this rule has been persistently followed in my subdivision. I have to request Government to take immediate steps against the enforcement of this unauthorised rule.

It will not be out of place to mention here that only on the 22nd February, Mr. Y. K. Puri, I. C. S., the then Deputy Commissioner of Sylhet made a statement in the Press Conference. He told the Press Reporters that the Central Government had made it compulsory for ration card holders to purchase *khesari* and *arahar dal*.

Whatever may be the order of the Central Government or of the Local Government, my humble submission is that no purchaser—whether townsmen or cultivators of a village should be compelled to purchase *masur*, *khesari* or *arahar dal* and if he does not purchase *dal* he should not be refused to be supplied with salt or sugar. I request Government to take immediate steps against the operation of this rule.

My time is up. Before I resume my seat I want to lay stress upon four points. These are (1) provision should be made to start schools in rural centres in such a manner that all boys and girls can receive education, (2) roads should be constructed in such a manner that each and every village can be connected with

the subdivisional town, (3) dispensaries must be established in such a manner that each and every patient gets medicine when needed, and lastly (4) the controlled shops should be so distributed that each and every house-holder could get his necessaries without any difficulty. With these words, Sir, I resume my seat.

Srijut RABI CHANDRA KACHARI: সভাপতি ডাক্তাৰীয়া, এই বাজেট অধি-বেশনত উপস্থিত থাকি আমাৰ অতি লাগতিয়াল কিছুমান গুৰুতৰ বিষয়ত দুআধাৰ কথা নকলে মোৰ পক্ষে নিতান্ত অন্যায হব। মই প্ৰথমেই কব খোজো যে আমাৰ গুৰুতৰ বিষয় হৈছে Land Settlement বা মাটিৰ বন্দবস্ত। আমাৰ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে ১৯৩৭ চনত ভূমীৰ বন্দবস্তৰ কাৰণে Land Line Committee পাতিছিল। তাত যি গিমাংসা কৰিছিল সেই মতেও গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে কোনো কাম নকৰিলে। তাৰ পাছত ১৯৪০ চনত যিটো সিদ্ধান্ত হল সেইটোৰ মতেও গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে কাম নকৰিলে। সৰ্বশেষত অলপতে যিখন Land Settlement Conference হল তাত যি সিদ্ধান্ত ও প্ৰস্তাব কৰা হৈছিল সেইটো মানি নলৈ Cabinet Meetingত এটা অন্য ধৰণৰ প্ৰস্তাব কৰিলে; কেবিনেতৰ নতুন প্ৰস্তাব মতে এইটো বুজায় যে ১৯৩৮ চনৰ পিচত অহা বনুৱাকো জিলাধিপতি বা মহকুমাধিপতিয়ে বিচাৰ কৰি মাটি দিব। গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ প্ৰস্তাব Conferenceৰ সিদ্ধান্তৰ ওপৰত ভিত্তি কৰা হোৱা নাই। যদি হে Conference কৰি তাৰ সিদ্ধান্ত এনে ভাবে উৰাই দিয়া হয় তেনেহলে তেনেকুৱা Conference কৰাৰ কোনো অৰ্থ নাছিল। তাৰ পাছত এই Conferenceত Tribal Belts কৰি আমাৰ Tribal মানুহ বিলাকক মাটি দিবৰ কথা স্থিৰ হৈছিল; কিন্তু গোৱালপাড়া, কামৰূপ ইত্যাদী জিলাত আমাৰ যিসকল Tribal মানুহ অন্য অন্য সম্প্ৰদায়ৰ মানুহৰ লগত মিলি জুলি আছে তেওঁলোক ট্ৰাইবেল বুকলৈ -নগৈও আগৰ আদিম ঠাইতেই মাটি পাব; সিহঁত যে Tribal Belt বালিময়লৈ যাবই লাগিব তেনেকুৱা কোনো সিদ্ধান্ত হোৱা নাছিল। তেওঁলোকক সাৰুৱা ঠাইৰ পৰা বালিময় ঠাই বিলাকত পঠোৱা অন্যায হব। আমাৰ Tribal মানুহৰ পক্ষে বৰ দুৰ্ভাগ্যৰ কথা এই যে দৰং জিলাৰ মঙ্গলদৈ Subdivisionত এটা টেমমচিঙ্গীয়া বনুৱাৰ নিমিত্তে খুলি দিয়া হৈছে। তাৰ পাছত দেখা যায় যে মৌজাৰ পতিত মাটি সকলৰ বিদেশী বনুৱা সকলক মাটি দিবলৈ তীব্ৰ আগ্ৰহ; সেই নিমিত্তে আমি কৈছিলো যে আমাৰ Officer লাগে কিন্তু তাৰ বাবে হলে একো কৰা নাই দেখি মই বৰ আচৰিত হৈছো। মোৰ দ্বিতীয় কথা হৈছে শিক্ষা। আমি প্ৰত্যেক বাবেই আমাৰ শিক্ষামন্ত্ৰীক কৈ আহিছো যে আমাৰ Tribal মানুহৰ কাৰণে কিছুমান Scholarship বেলেগকৈ লাগে। নিম্নপ্ৰাইমাৰী আৰু হাই স্কুল বিলাকত আমাৰ নিমিত্তে Scholarship দিব লাগে। এইবাব কিছুমান Scholarship বাজেটত মঞ্জুৰ দিছে সঁচা কিন্তু সেইবোৰ যদি বেলেগকৈ দিলে হেতেন তেনে হলে সুখী হলো হেতেন। আমাৰ Minor আৰু High School বিলাক টকাৰ অভাবত যি ভাবে আছে সেই বিলাকক যদি অতি সোনকালে recurring আৰু non-recurring grantৰ বৃদ্ধি নকৰে তেনেহলে স্কুল বিলাক একেবাৰেই উঠি যাব। বৰ্তমানত আমাৰ মানুহ বিলাকৰ দৈনন্দিন অতি লাগতিয়াল বস্ত বিলাক কিনিবলৈ টকা নাই এনে অবস্থাত তেওঁলোকৰ পক্ষে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে নতুনকৈ মঞ্জুৰ নিদিলে স্কুলবিলাক চলোৱা সম্ভৱ নহব। তাৰ পাছত আমাৰ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে এটা Supply Department স্কুলবিলাক কিন্তু এজন Tribal মানুহো তাত লোৱা হোৱা নাই। বহুত Supply Department ও খুলিছে আৰু Textile Superintendent গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে লৈছে কিন্তু Tribalৰ পৰা এজনো লোৱা নাই। তাৰ পাছত Supply Department খোলা সত্ত্বেও কোনো কোনো বস্ত বজাৰত কিনিবলৈ পোৱা নেযায়, Blackmarketত কিনিব লাগে। কোনো কোনো বস্ত বজাৰত ভ্যালীত আজি কালি ইমান কম দামত ধান কিনে যে এনে অবস্থাত Steel Brothers এ আসাম নে নিজেই খাব।

তাৰ পাছত Assam Civil Serviceৰ নিমিত্তে Public Service Examination pass কৰা বহু ছাত্ৰ থকা সত্ত্বেও Provincial Commission ৰ Tribal ৰ পৰা এজন মানুহকো চাকৰি নিদিলে। আমি সদায় শুনিবলৈ পাওঁ যে তেওঁলোকে আমাৰ মানুহে বিজাৰ্ডৰ জঙ্কলৰ পৰা খেৰ কাটি ঘৰ সাজি লৈছিল কিন্তু এতিয়া সেই বিজাৰ্ডবোৰ টেমমচিঙ্গীয়া বনুৱা সকলৰ নিমিত্তে খুলি দিয়াত খেৰ নোহোৱা হৈছে। ঘৰ কেনেকৈ সাজিব এই

বিষয়ে বহুত দৰখাস্ত দিয়া হৈছিল কিন্তু একো প্ৰতিকাব পোৱা নাই। মোৰ এই কেইটা কথা গভৰ্ণমেণ্ট যেন ভালকৈ বিবেচনা কৰে সেই নিমিত্তে মই অনুৰোধ কৰিছো।

Maulavi BADARUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I refrain from entering into the jugglery of figures of the Budget for the year 1945-46. I shall be failing in my duties if I do not place before the hon. House a few facts which most vitally concern the people. The main problem that concerns the people is food. People were encouraged and also they entertained high hopes as soon as the charge of supplying foodstuffs was taken over by Government. Now they have been disillusioned. Wheat products are too inadequate to meet the bare necessities of those who cannot take rice. Whatever is available, is time-worn and full of maggots. Original quota of sugar to the Mangaldai subdivision which was very inadequate to meet the requirements of the people has again been reduced by 50 per cent. without supplying *gur* for its substitute. The problem of mustard oil is most alarming. As soon as the price of mustard oil and mustard seeds was controlled and monopoly right of purchasing mustard seeds was given to a company constituted at Gauhati, mustard oil and mustard seeds disappeared from the market. The subdivision of Mangaldai has been going without mustard oil since December last. The Deputy Commissioner, Gauhati, who was given the charge of supplying mustard oil to Mangaldai has stopped to supply it since December last. The requirement of the subdivision is 900 maunds for a month. The Deputy Commissioner, Tezpur has given the subdivision some 50 tins to meet the requirement of the free ration of the Government servants. The Deputy Commissioner, Gauhati, stopped the supply due to dearth of oil at Gauhati. It is a fact that mustard oil is not available in the 'whitemarket', but, Sir, in the blackmarket, immense quantity of oil is available in all places. Then, who is to control the mills and dealers to make the commodity available in the whitemarket? Here, Sir, I pause for an answer. The people of the Mangaldai subdivision who cannot afford to pay for blackmarket (I know most of them cannot) have been compelled to take Badam oil, without considering what may be its consequence.

Next is the question of common salt. It is not an article of luxury. A man cannot go without it. The quota for the subdivision of Mangaldai is 3,000 maunds. The population of the subdivision is 3,25,000 according to the last Census and due to influx of immigrants since the last Census operation there may be an increase by 25 thousands over the aforesaid figure. Out of the 3,000 maunds, a family of one member has received half a seer, a family of three members gets 5 chattaks per head and a family of four or more members gets one *powa* per head. Hon'ble Prime Minister declared on the floor of this hon. House in the last November Session that salt would be made available at the rate of half a seer per head for the whole population of the Province. But, Sir, this declaration has yet remained un-redeemed for the Mangaldai subdivision. Government orders regarding supply of half a seer per head have been communicated to the local authority without supplying an increased quota over the original quota of 3,000 maunds. One *powa* of salt for a man per month, particularly for the villagers, is too inadequate. They have been compelled to fall upon the blackmarket to supplement their quota of salt.

Yarns have disappeared from markets. People have experienced a yarn-famine in the countryside. For dearth of yarn, making of cloths by hand-loom has been stopped. In the interior markets yarn is sold at a far higher price than the controlled price even before the inspecting officers freely. The introduction of Price Controlled Orders has given silly traders opportunity to make money and the unscrupulous officers to add an income to their monthly salary.

Controlled goods virtually have been denied to the people of Mangaldai subdivision. The distributing centre for the controlled goods has been opened at the Sadar of the district and wholesale shops for the commodities have been opened there. The retailers from Mangaldai for half a dozen of hoes, half a maund

of washing soap, etc. are to go 60 miles up to Tezpur in order to sell them at Mangaldai at the controlled price. The margin of profit, which is allowed to the retailers, is too inadequate even to meet the transit cost of the articles from Tezpur. The result is that the supply of controlled goods to the subdivision has been stopped.

Mangaldai town is notorious for bad water. All condemned officers are posted at Mangaldai by way of punishment. After a long period of time the Hon'ble Minister of Local Self-Government has attended to this long-felt public grievance and has made a provision of Rs. 5,250 for a tank in the town. Although it will not redeem the grievances entirely, still my hearty thanks and those of the rate-payers are due to the Government in general and to the Hon'ble Minister in charge in particular.

More than 50 thousand bighas of waste lands have been included in the colonisation area in the district of Darrang to provide land to landless. I must congratulate the Government for this. But I am sorry to point out the way in which the local authorities have distributed the land. The landless, who have open colonisation areas, opened out land there some three to four years before, at the cost of considerable labour and money. Their lands have been allotted to some other landless people, making the former holders again landless and directing them to go to some other area, ten to twelve miles from their home and homesteads. This, instead of easing the situation, will create endless trouble and harassment to the poor people. The Hon'ble Revenue Minister has been made aware of this fact in his recent tour to Mangaldai.

Grow-more-food campaign has given a satisfactory result. It would have been still more satisfactory if the Government would have taken timely steps to make plough cattle available to the cultivators. For want of plough cattle many of the cultivators could not bring their land under plough. Plough cattle have been rare and too dear. Government, I believe, will be up to the occasion for the coming year.

The condition of Government Aided and Secondary schools has become most deplorable. Most of the graduate teachers from these schools have left their services and joined temporary appointments under Government on better pay. The efficiency of these schools have suffered to an utmost extent for want of teachers with required qualifications. It is happy to note that the Hon'ble Education Minister has recognised it and has made some provisions in the Budget. Although it may not improve the situation entirely, it will give at least some partial relief.

Eastern part of Mangaldai subdivision has mainly been occupied by the immigrants from Eastern Bengal. The public have been running three Junior Madrassas and one Middle English school in this area with nominal aid from Government. In this area, beginning from the Mangaldai town to the Tezpur town, there is not a single Aided or purely private High school. One who desires to take High school education cannot but go to Mangaldai town or to Tezpur town. The poor illiterate guardians who know very little of the utility of education seldom send their sons to the town for education. Education of the children in these parts of the district has become too costly. Government should take early steps to raise the standard of one or two of the existing Junior Madrassas and Middle English Schools to that of High Schools.

One word more, Sir, and I finish. I want to know what steps Government have taken to stop blackmarketing? Everything of daily necessity of life is available in blackmarket but nothing is available in fair market. Host of officers in addition to existing police staff under various designations, have been appointed to control the market. But, Sir, among these officers a sense of competition of who can realise how much money by way of illegal gratification, appears to run. These officers instead of checking the blackmarketing have been encouraging it. Government should in no time think out some plan to check these officers. With these words, Sir, I resume my seat.

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA : মিষ্টার স্পিকার, মহোদয় ; মাননীয় অর্থ

সচিব ১৯৪৫-৪৬ সনের জন্য এই হাউসে যে বাজেটপেশ করিয়াছেন উহা অস্পষ্ট এলোমেলো ও জটিলতাপূর্ণ। যদিও বিভিন্ন উপায়ে দেশের রাজস্ব বাড়িয়াছে কিন্তু উহা দেশের জন কল্যাণে খরচের ব্যবস্থা না করিয়া অধিকাংশ শুধু গভর্নমেন্ট শাসণ দণ্ড পরিচালনার জন্য বরাদ্দ করা হইয়াছে। যদিও পুচ্ছলিত ব্যবস্থানুযায়ী কতিপয় প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্য কিছু টাকা ধরা হইয়াছে তাহা ভিজা মাটিতেই জলসেচন স্বরূপহইয়াছে। আমরা আশা করিয়াছিলাম যে দেশের আয়ের উন্নতির সঙ্গে সঙ্গে বর্তমান মন্ত্রীসভাসবর্বসাধারণের উপকারার্থে দেশবাসীর সম্মুখে নতুন কোন পরিকল্পনা তুলিয়া ধরবেন কিন্তু তাহাত দূরের কথা আসামের সকল জাতির পিছনে পড়িয়া থাকা দীন দরিদ্র বাংলা আগত ১৩ লক্ষ মুসলমান ও ৩ লক্ষ তপশীল শ্রেণীর হিন্দুর জন্য কোনই ব্যবস্থা করা হয় নাই।

অর্থ সচিবের ন্যায় বহুদর্শী, বিচক্ষণ, নিরপেক্ষ, শক্তমনা ব্যক্তি, সংখ্যা গরিষ্ঠ দুর্ভোগী দিগকে তাহাদের ন্যায্য পাওনা ও অধিকার হইতে বঞ্চিত করায় তাহাদের অশ্রুশিঙ ব্যথিত প্রাণ কখনই তাঁহাকে ক্ষমা করিতে পারে না। তাই তাঁহার বাজেট তৈয়ারীর পরিণামের পারিশ্রমিকের বিনিময়ে তাহাকে আমি অভিনন্দন করিতে পারিলাম না বলিয়া বড়ই দুঃখিত।

যে বাজেটে দেশের মেরুদণ্ড ১৬ লক্ষ হিন্দু মুসলমান গরিব কৃষকের সাহায্য ও উপকারের জন্য কোন ব্যবস্থা করা হয় নাই এমনকি তাহাদের নাম পর্যন্তও যে বাজেটে উল্লেখিত হয় নাই সে বাজেট কিছুতেই গ্রহণযোগ্য হইতে পারে না। কাজেই সেই প্রত্যাখ্যাত সম্প্রদায়ের পক্ষ হইতে আমি এই বাজেট প্রত্যাখ্যান করিতেছি।

যদিও এই বাজেট আসামের সকল সম্প্রদায়ের সকল প্রকার অর্থনৈতিক কার্যের উপর প্রয়োজ্য এবং দেশের সমস্ত বিষয়ের আলোচনার বিষয়ীভূত কিন্তু দেশের অন্যান্য বিষয়ে আমি আমার পরিষদ বন্ধুদের উপর ভার দিয়া, আমার উপেক্ষিত সম্প্রদায়ের জীবন মরণ সমস্যা গুলি শুধু আমি আলোচনা করিতে চাই। এই পথহারা নিরনু বাঙ্গালীদের দুঃস্বস্তার বিষয় হাউসে পেশ করিতে আমার একটু বেষা সময়ের দরকার হইতে পারে। যদিও আমরা আসামে প্রজাতিসাবে সর্বপ্রকার সমান অধিকার হইতে বঞ্চিত হইয়াছি কিন্তু এই পরিষদ সভায় আমার সম্প্রদায়ের প্রাণের ব্যথা, মনের কথা প্রকাশ করিবার জন্য সভাপতি মহোদয়ের দয়া হইতে বঞ্চিত হইব না বলিয়া আশা করি।

পূর্ব বঙ্গের জেলা সমূহের লোক সংখ্যা বাড়িয়া যাওয়ার জমিদার ও মহাজনদের শোষণে বহু কৃষক তাহাদের আবাদের জমি হারাইয়া বড়ই অসুবিধায় পড়ে। তৎপর তাহাদের অবশিষ্ট ভিটা মাটি জিনিসাদি বিক্রয় করিয়া চির তরে জন্মভূমি ত্যাগ করিয়া স্ত্রীপরিবার সহ তাহাদের জিলার নিকটবর্তী আসামে আসিয়া ব্রহ্মপুত্র নদীর উভয় পারের খাস, পতিত, নীচু জমির বাঘ ভাল্লুকের সহিত লড়াই করিয়া ও কতক আত্মবিসর্জজন দিয়া বহু অর্থব্যয়ে ও শারীরিক পরিশ্রম দ্বারা গভীর বন জঙ্গল পরিষ্কার করিয়া বসতি স্থাপন ক্রমে ধান, পাট, সরিষা, কলাই, তরি তরকারী আবাদ ক্রমে তাহারা বহু পরিমাণে আসামের রাজস্ব বাড়িয়াছে ও যথেষ্ট উন্নতি সাধন করিয়াছে ও আসামকে সোনার দেশে পরিণত করিয়াছে।

ব্রহ্মপুত্র, মানাস, বেকী, আই, ইত্যাদি নদীতে immigrant দের বহুগ্রাম ভাঙ্গিয়া যাওয়ায় নদীভঙ্গ লোকেরা আভ্যন্তরিন খাস, পতিত, জঙ্গলা জমিতে বসতির চেষ্টা করে তখন স্থানীয় কতিপয় ব্যক্তিদের মিলিত পরামর্শে বাঙ্গালী মুসলমানগন যাহাতে তাহারা তাহাদের প্রয়োজন মত ভাল জমি পাইতে না পারে তজজন্য তাহাদিগকে জেলখানার কয়েদীর ন্যায় আবদ্ধ রাখিবার জন্য ভেদনীতিমূলক লাইন প্রথার সৃষ্টি করা হয়।

গত ইং ১৯৪৩ সনে বাংলাদেশে ভীষণ দুর্ভিক্ষ দেখা দেয়। বাংলা সরকার তার দেশের গরিব লোকদিগকে খাওয়ার দিতে না পারায় দেশের প্রায় অর্ধেকোটা লোক অকালে মরণ বরণ করিয়াছে। সেই সময় জীবন রক্ষার জন্য বাংলার লক্ষ লক্ষ ক্ষুধাতর হিন্দু মুসলমান ভারতের বিভিন্ন দেশে গমন করিতে বাধ্য হয়, আসামেও কয়েক লক্ষ আসিয়াছিল তাহারা মাটি ভিটা, খাল ঘাট ইত্যাদি বিক্রয় করিয়া সর্বহারা হইয়া অবশেষে একমুঠা ভাতের জন্য কক্ষাল দেহে, পেটের জ্বালায়, স্ত্রীপুত্র সহ আসাম সরকারের বাধা সত্ত্বেও আসামে আসিয়াছিল; তাহাদের অর্ধেক প্রায় দুনিয়ার বুক হইতে অপসারিত হইয়াছে। পূর্বেবাক্ত নদী ভাঙ্গা ও এইসব দুর্ভিক্ষ পুপীড়িত লোকের সংখ্যা প্রায় ৪১৫ লক্ষ হইবে। আসামভ্যেীতে প্রায় অর্ধেকোটা একর

জঙ্গলা খাস, পতিত জমি পড়িয়া থাকিতে ও এযাবত তাহাদিগকে কোন জমি পওন দেওয়া হয় নাই। তাহারা কোন কাজ কর্ন এখন পাইতেছেন, পেটের জ্বালায় পাগলের মত ঘরে ঘরে ঘুরিয়া বেড়াইতেছে।

বর্তমানে আসামভোলাতে মুসলমানের সংখ্যা অনুমান ১৭ লক্ষ হইবে তন্মধ্যে বাংলা আগত মুসলমানের সংখ্যা অনুমান ১৩ লক্ষ হইবে। বক্রি অনুমান ৪ লক্ষ মাত্র আসামী মুসলমান হইবে। আসাম, বাংলা, পাঞ্জাব, আরব, মিসর—পৃথিবীর মুসলমান আমরা পরস্পর ভাই ভাই। কাজেই আসামী ও বাঙ্গালী মুসলমানকে আমি পৃথক করিতে চাই না। কিন্তু আমাদিগকে বাঙ্গালী বলিয়া আসামের প্রজা হিসাবে সর্বপ্রকার নাগরিক অধিকার হইতে বঞ্চিত করিয়া দুরে রাখা হইয়াছে।

আসাম ভৌলীয় মুসলমান সম্প্রদায়িক বাটরা হিসাবে চাকুরী মনোনয়ন ইত্যাদিতে ১৩টি অংশ পায়। Immigrant দের সংখ্যানুপাতিক হারে তাহাদের অন্ততঃ ১০টি অংশ পাওনা হয়, আসামীদের ৩টি অংশ ন্যায্য মত পাওনা হয়। কিন্তু ইমিগ্রেন্টদিগকে প্রবন্ধনা করিয়া সম্পূর্ণ অংশই তাহারা ভোগ করিতেছেন—ইমিগ্রেন্টদিগকে একটীমাত্রও দেওয়া হইতেছেন। তাহার প্রমাণ :—

১। সমস্ত আসামে immigrant দিগকে কোন food-stuff এর wholesale এবং retail দোকান দেওয়া হয় নাই, তজজন্য তাহারা মফঃস্বলে মাথা পিছু তিন ছটাক—এক পোয়ার বেশী লবন, অর্দ্ধ পোয়া কেরসিন পাইতেছেন। চিনি, গুড়, ময়দা, আটা কিছু মাত্র পায় না। উক্ত লবন দ্বারা তাহাদের দুই সপ্তাহের অধিক চলে না, বক্রি দুই সপ্তাহ তাহাদিগকে লবণ ছাড়া খাইতে হয়, তজজন্য তাহাদের মধ্যে সংক্রামক পীড়া আরম্ভ হইয়াছে। কেরসিন অভাবে রাত্রিতে খাওয়া, লিখাপড়া ও কাষ্যাদি বন্ধ হইয়াছে।

২। Immigrant দের মধ্যে নদী ভাঙ্গা জমি শূন্য বহুসংখ্যক লোক মফঃস্বলের গ্রামাঞ্চল হইতে ধান, চাউল, কলাই, সরিষা ইত্যাদি খরিদ করিয়া মোকামে, সহরে নৌকা ও গাড়ী দ্বারা নিয়া বিক্রয় করিত কিন্তু বড়ই দুঃখের বিষয় এবার তাহাদের কাহাকেও উক্ত ব্যবসার license দেওয়া হয় নাই, ফলে তাহাদের জীবিকানিব্বাহের পথ বন্ধ হইয়াছে।

৩। Immigrant দিগকে কোথাও কোন consumer goods এর wholesale এবং retail দোকানের permit বা license দেওয়া হয় নাই।

৪। Immigrant দিগকে কোথাও কোন মিলের কাপড়, standard কাপড় ও সুতার wholesale এবং retail দোকানের license বা permit দেওয়া হয় নাই, কাজেই তাহারা কাপড় পায় না।

৫। বাঙ্গালী মুসলমানদের মধ্যে বহু তত্ত্বায় অর্থাৎ জোলা আছে। তাহারা তাত ও সুতার সাহায্য করা হয় নাই। তাহাদিগকে তাত, সুতা বা একটী পয়সা দিয়াও

৬। Immigrant দিগকে এযাবত কোন মটর বাস্—লরী সাভিসের license বা permit দেওয়া হয় নাই। বহু চিৎকারের পর কেবল সেদিন মাত্র একখানা truck খরিদ করিবার order দেওয়া হইয়াছে।

(At this stage the Hon'ble the Speaker vacated the Chair and Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya, Chairman, occupied it.)

৭। Immigrant দের মধ্যে B. A.; B. A., B. L.; M. A.; M. A., B. L., ইত্যাদি উচ্চ শিক্ষিত থাকা সত্ত্বেও তাহাদিগের একটি লোককেও A. C. S. এর কোন পদে বা কোথায়ও কোন বিভাগে চাকুরী দেওয়া হয় নাই। যদিও কেহ ২।১ জন কেরানীর পদে আছে তাহাদিগকে স্থায়ী করা হয় নাই।

৮। P. W. D., Forest ইত্যাদির কোন বিভাগে কোন contract এর কাজ immigrant দিগকে দেওয়া হয় নাই তজজন্য জমিশূন্য হাজার হাজার শ্রমিক কাজ না পাইয়া মাঠে মরার পথে।

৯। Immigrant অঞ্চলে ১০টি গ্রাম মিলিয়াও একটি প্রাইমারী স্কুল, মস্তব মাদ্রাসা না থাকায় তাহাদের হাজার হাজার ছেলে মেয়ে সমস্তই মূর্খ থাকিয়া যাইতেছে। তাহাদের উচ্চ শিক্ষার কোন হাই স্কুল নাই। দুই একটা যাহা স্থাপন করা হইয়াছে গভর্নমেন্ট হইতে তাহার সাহায্য মঞ্জুরী দেওয়া হইতেছে না, ফলে তাহাদের উচ্চ শিক্ষার পথ সম্পূর্ণ রুদ্ধ হইয়াছে।

১০। বাঙ্গালী immigrantদের সকলেই কৃষক। গরুই তাহাদের চানের একমাত্র সম্বল। উক্ত গরুর মূল্য বর্তমানে প্রত্যেকটি ১০০—১০০ পর্য্যন্ত হইয়াছে। প্রতি বৎসর তাহাদের হাজার হাজার গরু সংক্রামক পীড়ায় মরিয়া যাইতেছে। উক্ত গরুর চিকিৎসার জন্য তাহাদের অঞ্চলে কোথাও একটা মাত্র ও পশু চিকিৎসালয় দেওয়া হয় নাই।

১১। ইমিগ্রেন্টদের কোথাও কোন ডাক্তার খানা দেওয়া হয় নাই, ফলে বৃক্ষপুত্রের চরের দূর পল্লী অঞ্চলের সহস্র সহস্র লোক প্রতি বৎসর সংক্রামক পীড়ায় অকালে দুনিয়ার বুক হইতে বিদায় নেওয়ার পূর্বেই চিকিৎসা দূরের কথা এক কোটা ঔষধের ব্যয় পর্য্যন্ত লইয়া যাইতে পারেনা।

১২। সবেবাপরি বাঙ্গালী দিগকে উচ্চস্থানে ভাল কোন জমি দেওয়া হয় নাই কাজেই তাহারা শালী ধানের আবাদ করিতে পারে না। নীচু চর স্থানে সামান্য জমি যাহা কিছু পাইয়াছে তাহা প্রতি বৎসর বর্ষায় ডুবিয়া যায় কাজেই তাহারা উচ্চ স্থানে ভাল জমির চেষ্টা করিলে ও দেশীয় লোকের নিকট হইতে খরিদ করা আরম্ভ করিলে তাহাদিগকে লাইনের প্রাচীরের মধ্যে আবদ্ধ করিয়া রাখা হইয়াছে ও পতিত সমস্ত জমি রিজার্ভ নামে আটক করা হইতেছে। আমরা উক্ত অবৈধ লাইন প্রথা উচ্ছেদের চেষ্টা করিলে গভর্নমেন্ট বাঙ্গালী মুসলমানদিগকে জমি না দেওয়ার মিলিত মতলব সাব্যস্ত করিয়া লোক দেখান তদন্ত, কমিটি, প্রস্তাব, স্কিম, Development scheme, সার্ভে আরও কত কি স্বজ্ঞা দেখাইয়া বাঙ্গালী দিগকে উৎখাত করিবার জন্য দেশীয় অনুসন্ধান ব্যক্তি গণকে সঙ্গে লইয়া, Commander স্বরূপ কর্মচারীগণ পুলিশ বাহিনী সহ বাঙ্গালীদের বিরুদ্ধে যুদ্ধ আরম্ভ করিয়াছেন। এযাবত যত আক্রমণ হইয়াছে উহাতে ঘর বাড়ী ভাঙ্গা-পোড়ান-বিভাঙন ভাঙ্গামারী, বক্রার পাখার ইত্যাদি বহুস্থানে হইয়াছে। এই মুসলিম লীগ নামধারী মন্ত্রীসভার রাজস্ব সচিব মাননীয় মৌলভী মনোয়ার আলি সাহেব বড়পেটায় উপস্থিত থাকাকালিন তাহার সরকারী কর্মচারীগণ সশস্ত্র পুলিশ বাহিনী সহ কৈমারীর কৃষকদের ঘরবাড়ী ভাঙ্গিয়াছে, মারপিট করিয়াছে, বন্দুকের গুলি চালাইয়া দুই জনকে গুরুতর জখম করিয়াছে, পবিত্র কোরাণ শরিফের অবমাননা করিয়াছে এবং উহা পোড়াইয়া দিয়াছে।

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: This is not a fact, Sir.

The CHAIRMAN (Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya): The Hon'ble Minister will get the opportunity to refute.

Maulavi MATIOR RAHMAN MIA: সরবেশ মোল্লার বাড়ী হইতে একখানা কোরান শরিফ নিয়া উহা টুকরা টুকরা করিয়া ছিড়িয়া ফেলা হইয়াছে। আব্দুল ছত্বারের কোরান শরিফ পোড়াইয়া ফেলিয়াছে। এই আক্রমণ ৩২১৪৫ ইইতে ১০২১৪৫ পর্য্যন্ত অবাধে চলিয়াছে। আক্রমণকারীরা যুদ্ধ জয়লাভ করিয়া প্রকাশ করিয়াছে যে বাঙ্গালী মুসলমানদের প্রতি অত্যাচারের এই সূচনা হইল; উহা ক্রমান্বয়ে আরো ভীষণতর হইবে। মহোদয়, এই কথা যদি বাস্তবিকই সত্য হয় তবে Immigrant দের উপায় কি? আজ আমি এই হাউসে আমার বন্ধুদিগের নিকট হইতে immigrant দের ধন, মান, প্রাণ রক্ষা করিবার জন্য সাহায্য চাই।

Immigrant গন জাপানী বা জার্মানী নয়। তাহারা যুদ্ধ করিতে আসে নাই; তারা আসিয়াছে এদেশে প্রজা হিসাবে স্থায়ী ভাবে বসবাস করিবার জন্য। কাজেই আমার অনুরোধ, ভেদনীতি মূলক অবৈধ কুপ্রথা—লাইন প্রথা আসামের বুক হইতে অগৌনে উঠাইয়া দিয়া immigrant দিগকে মুক্তি দেওয়া হউক এবং এযাবত তাহারা যে যেখায় যে অবস্থায় ঘরবাড়ী বাঁধিয়া চাষাবাদ করিতেছে তখায় তাহাদিগকে নিবিবধে বাস করিতে দেওয়া হউক।

Immigrant দের প্রতি উপরোক্ত অত্যাচার, পৃথিবীর মুসলমানের মহামূল্য রত্ন—পবিত্র কোরান শরিফের অবমাননা এবং ছিড়া এবং পোড়ানের জন্য আসাম, বাংলা, পাঞ্জাব এমন কি ভারতের বাহিরের সমস্ত দেশের মুসলমানের মনে দুঃখ, ক্ষোভ, চাঞ্চল্য ও উত্তেজনার সৃষ্টি হইয়াছে; তজজন্য নিরপেক্ষ তদন্ত ও উহার ন্যায় বিচার হওয়া একান্ত দরকার এবং উহা চাই।

পূর্বেবক্ত সর্ববিষয়ে immigrant মুসলমানদিগকে সংখ্যানুপাতিক হারে সমঅধিকার ও সুবিধা পাওয়ার অগৌনে বিহিত ব্যবস্থা করিবেন কিনা, মাননীয় প্রধান মন্ত্রী মহোদয়ের নিকট হইতে অদ্য হাউসে উহার স্পষ্ট জবাব শুনিতে চাই। অন্যথায় immigrant সম্প্রদায়ের পক্ষে এই মন্ত্রী সভাকে আর এক মুহূর্ত্ত ও সমর্থন করা সম্ভবপর হইবেনা এবং তাহাদের আসামে প্রজা হিসাবে বাস করিবার জন্য ও তাহাদের ধন, মান, প্রাণ রক্ষা করিবার জন্য তাহারা মিলিতভাবে দণ্ডায়মান হইতে বাধ্য হইবে। তাহার পরিস্থিতি কল্পনাহীন হইতে পারে।

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROOAH: Sir, preferring not to offer any fruitless criticism on the Budget which fails to seize opportunities of bringing about orientation in spite of windfalls in every direction I shall endeavour by brief references as to how far the present Ministry have been able to save the civil population from the ruinous effect of the war of present magnitude—a war which has been forced upon the country against the wishes of its people.

Sir, that India is not at war under the constitutional law is no longer a secret to the world. The decision to drag our people to the war had not the sanction of the Legislatures and is no longer unknown to the world. Sir, recent utterances of Messrs. Phillips and Luis Fisher in United States of America, and Mr. Sorensen in the homeland of the British people illumined the world mind in spite of sinister efforts of Halifax, Amery and Linlithgow to hoodwink it. Sir, the stifling deadlock prevailing in this unhappy land of India, inhuman and unwarranted incarceration of the Ministers of seven out of eleven Provinces in India and of the flowers of the nation and world figures like Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad amply demonstrates that India is not constitutionally a belligerent country. Sir, if there was any doubt in spite of those outstanding events, that doubt has been constitutionally and effectively cleared by throwing out the Finance Bill in the Central Assembly last year by the votes of two great political parties, *viz.*, the Congress and the Muslim League and other progressive elements in the country and thereby, Sir, the cup of humiliation brought upon by the Lords of New Delhi and White Hall themselves for ignoring the constitutional law, was filled. Sir, in the midst of such distressing circumstances the present Ministry took up the reins of administration of this Province fully knowing the hardship and privations that the poor inhabitants of Assam shall have to undergo for her being a frontline Province of India in this war and it is worthwhile to take account how far this Ministry has been able to acquit itself. Sir, first effect of the war felt by the poor inhabitants of this Province was when their movable and immovable properties were requisitioned or acquisitioned for military purposes. Session after Session for the last few years we have been hearing of the harrowing tales of misery brought upon the people by requisitioning and acquisition of their hearth and home upon the floor of this Government to afford the necessary relief. Instances were cited on the floor of the House by almost all the Members of this House irrespective of their political allegiance, how the Ministry have failed to check the tendencies of the officials, both high and low, to trade on the misery of the people. This Government have been charged by all Members of this Assembly for their failure to grant compensation to agriculturists for requisition and acquisition of their property according to instructions issued to the Provincial Governments by the Central Government.

Taking advantage of the negligence exhibited by the Ministry, the District Magistrates in several districts of both the Valleys have been awarding compensations to persons affected by compulsory acquisition or requisition of their property according to their sweet will. My district which has been bearing the main brunt of the Asiatic Eastern theatre of war has been the worst victim of the vagaries of its District Magistrate. * * * Villagers there are ordered to leave their homes, crops in the fields, grains in their granaries within the shortest possible notice, without at the same time tendering any percentage of compensation or without providing any land for them or arranging any facilities for removal of their grains in the granaries, the livestock or poultry which are their mainstay and without arranging any land for them or victims of war should go. * * * The lands and houses of the poor villagers were requisitioned and being disappointed for not being able to get any compensation by dancing attendance at the Deputy Commissioner's office for months, they left all hopes of getting even the bare marketable price of their property and whereabouts of many are now unknown.

Hon. Members know that I have been forced to live the life of a recluse. The poor villagers sought my help. Owing to the many humiliating restrictions on my movements, I was not able to ascertain what was their trouble and to ascertain as to what relief they are entitled to under the law. With great difficulties I could

gather that neither the Mandal nor the Sub-Deputy Collector nor the Extra Assistant Commissioner in charge of requisition was responsible for the delay in awarding the compensation. It is the District Magistrate who was responsible for depriving the poor villagers of their legitimate right to receive the price of their properties. The Mandal and the Sub-Deputy Collector submitted their assessment list to the Extra Assistant Commissioner who also checked them and submitted to the Deputy Commissioner for approval. The District Magistrate put off sanctioning the compensation recommended by the Sub-Deputy Collector and the Extra Assistant Commissioner in charge of requisition, on the plea that he proposed to have a personal inspection of sites and the houses and trees for which compensation was recommended. The inspection was put off for months during which all the traces of *kutch* houses, crops and trees vanished owing to occupation of the sites by the military personnel by building camps and by plying heavy lorries. The District Magistrate naturally finding no trace of the houses, crops and trees, cut down the amount of compensation recommended by the Officers and thereby deprived the poor owners of property their due. To add to the misery of the villagers no arrangement was made by the Deputy Commissioner to pay the land revenue of the lands occupied by the military. As no compensation for the properties was paid in due time, there was delay in paying land revenue of the sites and as a consequence, their estates were put up for sale—this happened in last summer. I shudder to think what has happened to these estates of the poor villagers!

Sir, the civil population throughout the Province have been in the mercy of the District Magistrates for five long years in the matter of getting their due compensation for the failure of this Government to publish the rules embodying uniform principles in granting compensation to the people. After repeated hammering on the Government by the hon. Members of this House, such a set of rules has seen the light of the day only a few days ago, but a perusal of the rules framed by the Government will reveal that they do not make a near approach to the liberal manners in which compensations are directed to be awarded by the Central Government. Sir, a few days before leaving my headquarters, I gathered that orders have been received from the Government to award compensation at a revised rate to the people of my subdivision, but owing to the long lapse of time intervening between the period of actual requisition and recent final orders, whereabouts of villagers have been unknown to the officers. The much needed due was not available to the villagers at the time of their direst necessity, I am pained to say, owing to the inexcusable delay of the District Magistrate in according his sanction.

Sir, I feel I shall be guilty to my conscience if I do not comment on the ruthless ways adopted by this Government in interfering with the civil rights of several citizens of the Dibrugarh town. Sir, several Congressmen of Dibrugarh town have been kept under externment orders since 1942. The cases of the following gentlemen deserve special mention. Dalbir Singh, a young man of Dibrugarh, suffered rigorous imprisonment for one year for his offering *Satyagraha* in 1941. While at Gauhati jail, he underwent a major operation a short time before his release. I had the painful experience of seeing him at Gauhati in December, 1941. I saw him absolutely wrecked in health, pale, anaemic and hardly able to walk unaided. With this state of health, Dalbir Singh, somehow arrived in his native town of Dibrugarh.

The hon. Members will be surprised and shocked to hear that he was hardly two or three days in the midst of his relations, when an externment order was served on him from the Government of Assam demanding his expulsion from all the districts except Goalpara without making any provision for his stay and maintenance. For several months, this youngman, dogged by police at Goalpara had to live on charity. His repeated requests to Government to grant him a subsistence allowance were not heard. He lived at Goalpara with the greatest imaginable difficulty. Sir, he was carrying on existence at Goalpara with the wrecked health, being weak and

emaciated, had also an accidental fall due to which he sustained severe injury resulting in fracture of his leg in 1943. After repeated applications to the Deputy Commissioner to allow him permission to return to his home at Dibrugarh where facilities for X-ray examination of the leg is available, he was allowed a short period of time to go to Dibrugarh to get his leg examined on X-ray. He was under treatment of an Assistant Surgeon and as he was not completely cured within the time allowed by the Deputy Commissioner of Goalpara, he applied for extension with certificate of his attending surgeon well ahead in time but as the Deputy Commissioner delayed in sending his orders, Dalbir Singh had to overstay his first leave. Sir, in spite of everything that Dalbir Singh did to get an extension of his leave from his sick bed, a warrant of arrest was issued at the instance, I think, of the Superintendent of Police, and on prosecution of which, Dalbir Singh was dragged out of his sick bed and entreaties of his women relatives with tears in their eyes to stay his arrest by a few days, were not heard and Dalbir had to limp to the lock-up surrounded by constables, weeping and weeping. He was thus taken to the Thana before me and my heart bled when I saw this pathetic sight.

Sir, if the hon. Members of this House excuse a personal reference I may say that even since my childhood a look at the picture of Jesus Christ at the Crucifix arouses in me a flood of emotions and tears roll my cheek as I brood over the plight of God's messages of peace and love to this world at the hands of the heathens and pagans. Sir, the question arises in me and dies in me whether that sight is any the less agonising than Jesus at the Crucifix. Sir, young Dalbir's heart's blood has paid for his treading the path outlined by Mahatma Gandhi who is recognised in the Christian world as an apostle of peace. He has been in banishment for long four years and he has been punished more than a burglar, more than a murderer. Can I, Sir, cry a halt to heaping up of further miseries on this young man? Can I, Sir, the Hon'ble Premier to restore him to his native town in the name of humanity? The CHAIRMAN (Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya): I hope the hon. Member will try to finish soon.

Srijut LAKSHESVAR BOROAH: Yes, Sir. I am finishing.
Another Congressman of Dibrugarh in the person of Sardar Bairam Singh was similarly thrown into prison in 1941 for one year and similarly externed. He was suffering from gastric troubles in jail. Being an aged man of about 60, his suffering was immense. I understand, he badly required treatment which he could avail from any of his friends and relatives at Dibrugarh better and at a lesser expense than any other place. I appeal to the Hon'ble Premier to permit Sardar Bairam Singh to stay at Dibrugarh and if necessary, he may be interned at Dibrugarh. Srijut Dasiram Bora is the third gentleman who has been externed at Dibrugarh. 24 hours' notice from Dibrugarh and all the other districts of Assam Valley except Goalpara. He has been in externment at Goalpara since 1942 leaving his wife and little children, the eldest of whom is 16 years to take care of themselves. He has got a shop at Dibrugarh which is going to wreck and ruin for his absence from Dibrugarh town. Srijut Bora did not take an active part in Congress besides subscribing to its creed which millions in India are doing. It is only meet and proper that Srijut Bora should be allowed to return to Dibrugarh.

Dr. Binoy Bhusan Chakravarty is the fourth gentleman who after his incarceration in 1941 was expelled not only from all the districts but from Assam proper in 1942 and let loose somewhere in Bengal. Dr. Chakravarty has got a son who lost his mother while he was quite young. This boy is aged only twelve or fourteen years. He feels quite forlorn and helpless for being left alone. Dr. Chakravarty had to leave his father Pandit Parbati Charan Bidyabhusan, who is aged over 80. The revered Pandit is bed-ridden owing to many kinds of ailments due to extreme old age and he is only counting his days. Dr. Chakravarty is the eldest son of the revered Pandit. May I ask the Hon'ble Premier to look to this case and see that Dr. Chakravarty is brought by the side of his sick and old father?
Sir, under similar distressing circumstances, Srijut Nilmony Barthakur who has

subscribed to communist creed and Srijut Kedar Nath Goswami, the late editor of the *Times of Assam*, has been externed since 1944. Instances like these may be multiplied, Sir. The District Magistrate, Dibrugarh has been really unreasonable in refusing permission to hold meetings to discuss matters unconnected with war efforts. Last year, he refused permission to hold meetings to discuss the land settlement problem of Assam. Very recently he refused permission to hold meetings to observe the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, which as I said, had no reference to any war efforts. It is unfair and the Ministry should see that such inroads upon civil rights are removed.

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Budget for 1945-46, as has been presented before this House in this war time, is a relief to us to some extent, though we expected much more than what has been provided for various needs of the Province. Sir, I would like to draw the attention of Government to the following few subjects:

Sir, the Government has provided for the distribution of foodstuffs and other materials in the urban areas by the ration system, which is working fairly well, to remove the grievances of the consumers, though they get some inconvenience. But in this war time, everyone ought to deny his comfort and ease and be content. But, Sir, I must point out to the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Supply that the proper supply of foodstuffs and other materials in the rural areas is not very satisfactory. The people in the rural areas are very illiterate and so the Government controlled shops do not distribute the essential foodstuffs and other materials in a fair manner, taking advantage of their illiteracy. For instance, I have found complaints that in the rural areas the poor illiterate people do not get proper supply of salt, kerosene, Dal and sugar. The Government controlled shopkeepers in order to show their record registers to their authorities just fill in the entries that they were given such materials which the poor illiterate people are ignorant of, but they are not receiving them. Will the Government please take steps to see that the poor illiterate people in the rural areas do get the proper supply of foodstuffs and other materials? Thanks to the Indian Tea Association for the splendid arrangements they have made for the distribution of foodstuffs and other materials for their tea garden labourers.

Sir, the other point which I would like to remind the Hon'ble Revenue Minister is that he may not forget the case of the landless *ex-tea-garden* labourers settled permanently in Assam, in the allotment of waste lands and some Reserve lands. There are about a lakh of *ex-tea-garden* labourers in the Province who are landless and require land for cultivation. It is right that these people should get sufficient land for their cultivation. They have contributed much to the wealth of the Province by cleaning jungles and opening out tea gardens throughout the Province. The Tea Industry and we all have been benefited by that. So, they should get preference in getting culturable land. I request the Minister in charge of Revenue and Forest to see that no discrimination is made by the Sub-Deputy Collectors in providing land to these landless *ex-tea-garden* labourers.

Next point, Sir, is that since there has been the question of compulsory primary education being taken up, I fully agree that compulsory primary education should be introduced as soon as possible. The introduction of compulsory primary education is of utmost importance for educating 90 per cent. of the illiterate people of Assam. It is by the education of the illiterate people of Assam that the progress in all respects will be achieved like other advanced countries.

Now, Sir, I have one more point which I would like to bring before the Hon'ble Minister of Excise. The Excise authorities and their Inspectors in the districts do not detect the profiteering by the lessees in selling liquor to the customers at unauthorised rates. For every bottle of 60 U. P. liquor, as fixed at authorised rate of Re. 1-15, Rs. 3 is charged from the customers and for 30 U. P. liquor per bottle, as fixed at authorised rate of Rs. 3-7, some Rs. 6 or Rs. 7 is charged per bottle by the lessees from the customers. I would like to suggest to the Minister-in-charge of Excise that he may give a circular order to

all the Excise authorities and their Inspectors to have regular inspection of these lessees' shops and thereby check profiteering by the lessees in selling liquor to the customers. I would also suggest that the Excise staff of the district of Darrang should be transferred immediately.

Sir, lastly, I bring to the notice of Government that transport difficulties may be removed by adding more trains in the Railways which at present are limited and by giving more motor service permits for the routes which are badly needed for the public. I need not detain the House with my lengthy speech. So with these few words, I resume my seat.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: The Hon'ble Finance Minister tells us in his budget speech that there has been depletion of the number of cattle owing to various causes; but he has carefully omitted the cause or causes of such depletion of cattle in the Province. While he has come forward with various schemes of cattle breeding, animal husbandry, goat breeding, so on and so forth, he does not tell us that this depletion is due to starvation of cattle population owing to throwing open of the grazing Reserves for settlement of his people. The main cause of the depletion of cattle population is mainly, in my opinion, due to the dereservation of grazing grounds.

The opening out of grazing Reserves has been the cause of great unrest among the indigenous population of the Province. The Government have undermined the decisions arrived at the All-Parties Conference held in December 1944, with the result that the immigrants are going on merrily in occupying the grazing Reserves, to the detriment of the interests of the population of the Province. Only yesterday I received a report that within the last fortnight, the immigrants had forcibly occupied the professional grazing Reserves of Kurhimari and Sitalmari in the Gauhati subdivision and that the district officer and Government had not taken any measure to stop such forcible encroachments. In spite of assurances from Government, the evictions from the grazing Reserves have not been carried out and what I presume is that the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister has advised the local officers not to evict the encroachers. In the Muslim League Council meeting held recently at Gauhati, he has assured the conference that if he could remain as Revenue Minister at least for another two years, - he would convert this Province into a Muslim majority Province.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: This is travesty of truth. Srijut BELIRAM DAS: I can prove this.

From this, I doubt very much the sincerity of Government regarding eviction of immigrants from grazing Reserves. In December last, I visited regarding eviction of and village grazing Reserves in Darrang, Nowgong and Kamrup districts and to my astonishment, I found that encroachments to professional and village grazing grounds are going on unchecked and unhindered. Even after the Land Settlement Conference, the Laokhowa Game Reserve has been opened out for the immigrants. Sir, I secured an order from the Hon'ble Revenue Minister to allow the graziers to graze their cattle in Laokhowa Game Reserve but the Hon'ble Minister's order has not been given effect to by the local officers with the result that a fine of Rs. 5 has been imposed on the graziers for each buffalo and they have been put to great hardship and loss. Sir, while the Government have opened out the so-called surplus grazing Reserve, they have ignored the cases of the Reserves that are deficit in areas, such as Langia, Batuli Beel, Burachapari, etc. The graziers of these Reserves used to send their cattle also to the Bhurbandha, Barguli, Kacharibari and Laokhowa Game Reserves; but owing to opening out of these Reserves for settlement, the cattle population of these reserves are starving. I think this is how Government propose to improve cattle breeding in this Province.

At Borghuli and Bhurbandha, which have been opened out for settlement, I have been told that unlawful gratification has been resorted to by the officers concerned in distributing lands to the deserving persons who have not been given lands. Those persons, who have been able to influence the settlement staff, have been able to get large portion of lands in different names. The Napalee *bustee* consisting of about 500

families is going to be ousted and it has been difficult for them to fetch water from Borghuli Beel for their domestic use, as lands round this Beel have been settled with immigrants.

I have been told that Government had given to know the Members of the Land Settlement Conference that Bhurbandha and Borghuli were settled before March 1944. But from my personal local enquiry, I have found that these Reserves were settled and thatched houses raised, after the last November Session, in feverish haste. I was staying there in December for two days; and during my stay of these two days I saw about two hundred houses raised. Still now, most of these houses are without occupation and untenanted, and lands are practically uncultivated. I do not see any reason why Government give untrue information to the Members of the Conference.

The very fact of throwing open grazing Reserves for settlement, pre-supposes that there are no surplus lands in the lower districts for settlement. The figures supplied by the land settlement staff are mostly fictitious and most of these lands are unfit for cultivation. In my district the figure of waste land has been shown as 20,000 bighas, but these lands do not form compact blocks; these are full of marshes and very low lying; these are scattered as one bigha here and one bigha there. Therefore, there is no prospect of getting culturable waste lands in my district and so is the case, I think, with the other lower districts. Therefore, I want to suggest to Government that there should not be further settlement of lands with immigrants in these districts. What little surplus lands remain should be kept reserved for the indigenous people.

Sir, the land settlement policy of Government has been tending the country to civil war, breach of peace and lawlessness. The people have lost all sense of security in the hands of Government. The indigenous people have suffered much and they have endured most and there is a limit to this toleration. The indigenous people will very soon take aggressive steps like the immigrants and the result will be that there will be breach of peace in the country. Let Government take this as a warning for their future guidance and if they are unable to tackle this problem let them vacate their seats for the cause of safety of the Province.

Sir, the invasion of immigrants has not only disturbed the peace of the Province but has created abnormal situation in the Province in other directions also. This invasion has increased the river dacoities; there have been piracies going on in the Brahmaputra river in the Kamrup and the Goalpara districts. Piracies are going on between Tulshibari and Chandordinga under Lakshipur and Bilashipara Police Stations, unchecked and unhindered by Government. In the Kamrup district, and specially under Tarabari Police Station, piracy is going on and river dacoities are increasing. Boat journey in these places has been quite unsafe and there is a large number of victims of these piracies. Within the Kamrup district, there has been organised looting of fish by immigrants and in one or two cases, police have received assaults from fish looters in the Barpeta subdivision. Under Tarabari Police Station there have been three fish looting incidents by immigrants within the course of about a month with consequent loss of thousands of rupees to the fishermen. The district and subdivisional officers have not been able to protect these fishermen from their fish being looted. They say that there is no police. Even to-day I have received a telegram that unless police protection is given, fishermen cannot fish within Tarabari Police Station. I put a few Questions this time on the subject but my Questions have still remained unanswered. Government cannot shirk responsibility simply by saying that there is no notice.

Sir, this is how the country is drifting towards lawlessness and anarchism. If Government do not sincerely desire to maintain the peace and tranquility in the Province, it is up to them to shake off this show of civil Government.

As regards looting of fish, I would suggest to Government that as the law Courts cannot give relief to the fishermen and as the immigrants are not afraid of jail going for looting fish, collective fines should be imposed upon the villages where such looting took place and in the meantime let Government raise a party of river police to protect the fishermen from their fish being looted by immigrants in future.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the presentation of the Budget, as far as it is concerned, has been made in the usual trite manner without anything particular to comment upon, except two features, which have been touched upon by you yesterday and by hon. Mr. Whittaker today. One is that, in it, we find a want of foresight and incapacity to estimate the revenue and expenditure approximately and the other is, as Mr. Whittaker has remarked, that in certain respects it lacked in necessary details as for instance, in the accounts of the cess imposed by the Supply Department for which he has characterised it as "nonsensical". Sir, in making a general survey of the administrative affairs of the Province, the most striking feature of vital concern to us, the Assamese, is the gloomy prospect of our future existence brought about by the land settlement policy of the present Government. Though the Assamese race including the Tribal people are the natural owners of the soil of the Assam Valley districts, which they had defended as their hearth and home in the pre-British days successfully against hordes of invaders from Bengal, now they find themselves in a precarious position as their own Government have now allowed the progeny of those invaders to occupy their land, by coming in huge numbers without any check. What little checks and restrictions had been provided by some district officers in the shape of the so called Line System have not only been greatly relaxed but have been altogether done away with, with the result of the Development Scheme or rather the manner in which the said scheme was sought to be worked by the Hon'ble Sir Saadulla's last Government. The working of the scheme was so palpably to the detriment of the indigenous population that soon a hue and cry was raised against it. The benefit of the Development Scheme was mainly meant for the immigrants while very scant regard was paid to the interests of the children of the soil. The last conference of the Leaders of the parties had it from the evidence of the colonisation officer of Nowgong that out of 12,000 bighas of land settled, only 2,600 bighas have been allotted to the people of the soil, the remaining 9,400 bighas or more than three-fourths having gone to the immigrants. This state of things inevitably led to the resignation of Hon'ble Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri from the Cabinet and to the fall of the then Saadulla Ministry.

Even now in giving shape to the actual recommendations of the recent Land Settlement Conference, an attempt is clearly visible on the part of Government to whittle down some of the safeguards which were provided to protect the interest of the indigenous people, so much so, that the party Leaders representing them, felt perturbed when they received the official report and hastened to send a joint note of protest against certain omissions and modifications which affected the interests of indigenous people adversely. A forecast of the actual working of this scheme also can be had from a hint thrown out by the Hon'ble the Revenue Minister, as reported in the papers, to the effect that the Line System will cease to exist with the introduction of the present Government scheme and that no separate announcement was needed as the abolition of the Line System was explicit in the policy adopted by Government. He is also reported to have said that within two years, every Muslim immigrant will obtain land for settlement in Assam. And as a matter of fact, we find that soon after the Conference, settlement of lands with immigrants was started post-haste in areas like the Laokhowa Game Reserve and Bhurbandha, Barghuli, Balijuri and Soraguri grazing Reserves in the Nowgong district as well as in different Tribal areas, particularly in the Mangaldai subdivision. It is borne out by a letter which the non-official Assamese members of the Provincial Standing Committee on Land Settlement had to address to the Hon'ble Revenue Minister on the 28th January, 1945 and also by two telegrams received from responsible persons of Nowgong, one of whom is Rai Bahadur Brindaban Chandra Goswami. This unseemly haste is sought to be justified on the handy plea of "Grow-More-Food Campaign".

In this matter, Sir, the attitude of Government has been nothing else than a steam-roller policy to crush the people of the soil and to favour the huge and rapid influx of Muslim immigrants from Bengal—so as to convert Assam as speedily into Pakistan as possible. In their anxiety to accelerate settlement of lands with immigrants by de-reserving professional grazing Reserves, so much coveted by the landless

immigrants, they have thrown open large areas of these Reserves for settlement with them driving away large numbers of graziers from them. This in its turn greatly accelerated the influx and soon, not to speak of the dereserved areas, but even the reserved parts of professional grazing Reserves and other Reserves also, were encroached upon by the land-hungry new comers, as there is already a scarcity of culturable waste lands outside the Reserves in the Province, as pointed out by my Friend Srijut Beliram Das a little before. In this, the encroachers have been emboldened by the conspicuous lack of firmness on the part of Government in enforcing the orders by eviction though the Line Enquiry Committee and all subsequent committees and conferences—both official and non-official—have pleaded for firmness in this matter. The Line Enquiry Committee recommended in the report at page 19, as follows:—

“All our recommendations, however, will come to nothing without firmness of administration, avoidance of unnecessary interference, and an adequate and competent staff to enforce the executive orders which are passed. The more unruly new immigrant very soon gets out of hand if he finds he can disobey orders with impunity and no solution of the problem is possible unless he is firmly kept in order and made to understand that he only breaks rules at his own peril. Officers to be placed in charge of areas where the problem is acute, particularly in Barpeta, should therefore be specially selected and well backed up, for by no other means can the protection which it is desirable to give to the weaker people—especially the Kacharis—be ensured, until such time as the immigrant has settled down, acquired more peaceable habits and qualified himself for the further relaxation and finally a complete abolition of restrictions which must be the ultimate goal at which we should aim.”

We understand in the conference which the Hon'ble Revenue Minister had with the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioners of Nowgong and Kamrup, in June last, the Deputy Commissioners pressed for larger powers in this matter; but in spite of the support he received from the Commissioner and the Revenue Secretary, the Hon'ble Revenue Minister resisted the demand.

Though it is obvious that the district officers have only one effective weapon of control, namely, eviction and that unless they are given a free hand to use this weapon, they would be unable to implement Government's declared policy, the Hon'ble Revenue Minister, for reasons best known to him, could not accord sanction for such use of this weapon by the district officers. The non-official Assamese members of the last Land Settlement Conference in a joint note in vain pleaded:—

“The entire Government policy is being viewed and will be viewed with suspicion and distrust so long as the Government will not be prepared to bring about order in the matter of all settlements by enforcing their orders by means of evictions.

The protection guaranteed to the Tribal people since the beginning of the present Constitution in this behalf, has been maintained more in their breach than observance. This fact has been no less true of blocks in other areas also.

Government policy of regularisation of encroachments has been carried to the extreme end. The safety to the Tribal and the indigenous people is now nil. Unless Government withdraw this policy it is more or less useless to pursue any scheme of ordered settlement.

If in the blocks to be created for communities other than the Muslim immigrants, encroachments by the immigrants subsist as before, how can Government expect to carry out an agreed recommendation? Therefore, eviction must be resorted to.

The action of Government hitherto has been responsible in making the immigrants believe that they have only to occupy any land anywhere to get a 'patta', and this has resulted in immigration in such large numbers that not only are

there no more land for settlement, but the immigrant leaders have made the situation worse. We feel that the only way of effectively telling these sojourners for land is not to allow them to squat in prohibited areas.

Our earnest request to Government therefore is that they give by eviction and otherwise, the clearest indication that there is no more land to settle."

The Hon'ble Revenue Minister instead of doing anything of the sort is reported to be conniving at—nay encouraging—acts on the part of Muslim immigrants by which all lands including large plots of patta lands of indigenous people, in land settlement areas, have been forcibly occupied, waste lands reserved for people of the soil have been freely encroached upon and many local people have been goaded to leave their hearths and homes, as mentioned in the Adjournment Motions standing in the name of our hon. Friend, Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan and the one sought to be moved by my hon. Friend, Srijut Kameswar Das this morning, and also some instances just now mentioned by my hon. Friend, Srijut Beliram Das. In many Reserves hardly any land is left for the grazing of buffaloes and cattle or for a peaceful life of the graziers. While orders for settlement of the dereserved grazing Reserves seem to have been issued with indecent haste, those for allowing the graziers ousted from them to take their cattle to the Laokhoa Game Reserve, as decided in the Conference, have not yet been issued to the Forest Department, with the result that the animals taken there by the helpless graziers, have been seized and impounded and heavy penalties were realised. We hear whispers that the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Revenue, instead of doing anything to protect the interests of the helpless graziers and indigenous people, has been plainly telling the immigrants, in talks with them, in course of his frequent tours in these areas, that they need not have fear from anybody—not even from the Deputy Commissioners—as the *Raj* was a Muslim *Raj*.

Sir, in giving settlement in the land settlement areas—both legal and illegal—bribery and corruption are said to be rampant, making the whole settlement a means of money-making for the Colonization Officers' staff and not a question of finding lands for the landless people. Our Leader, I am told, made a request to the Hon'ble Revenue Minister to cause an enquiry to be held by a Committee into widespread bribery and corruption in the settlement of Bhurbandha and Barghuli Reserves and also to see how many landless people got settlement there. But he has not chosen to say anything on the subject. On the other hand, he seems to be directly ordering the opening of Reserves at his sweet will. He fore quite clear that Government is not there to deal with an equitable policy but only to encourage lawlessness and anarchy in society and to bring about feud and bloodshed among the various sections of the people.

As already touched upon by me, the recommendations of the Assamese party leaders—in several respects—have been either omitted or materially altered in the official report for which they had to submit a joint note pointing out their objections in that matter. The first and foremost of these was the "five bigha" landless clause which is likely to hit the Assamese families hard, in as much as the percentage of Assamese families owning less than 5 bighas of land is microscopic, if not altogether nil. Moreover, the joint family system is largely in vogue among them. On the basis of this definition of "landless" almost all such families will be debarred from getting lands in spite of their present holding being quite inadequate and uneconomic. To meet this exigency, it was provided in the Government Resolution adopting the recommendations of the 1940 Conference—that especially in the case of the indigenous people, Government did not wish to exclude from the benefit of the scheme those who, though possessing more than the minimum, have not yet enough and for their maintenance. But in the present Resolution, they have not made any provision for the Assamese families holding barely more than the minimum of five bighas. The next point on which objection has been taken, in respect of the proposal to confine the Tribal people to a belt in the submontane areas which are infested with malaria and are deficient in with water supply. This has been

surreptitiously introduced in the Government Resolution though absent in the Report of the proceedings of the Conference. Then, there is no means suggested either in the report or in the Resolution of working out the 1938 limit, in other words of finding out the immigrants who came after 1937. This has practically rendered this clause nugatory and all kinds of immigrants without any restrictions are being settled. No steps are being taken to appoint an officer to find out the number of indigenous landless people in the four districts where the scheme is being put into operation, so as to comb out the surplus population in the densely populated areas for settlement in blocks under the scheme so as to reduce uneconomic holdings and to help the Grow-More-Food Campaign through the indigenous people. Other similar points urged by our representatives in the Conference and again reiterated in their joint note seem to be ignored by Government. Lastly, as regards the Advisory Committee—both Central and District—the Hon'ble Revenue Minister has acted as if they did not exist. He has issued instructions to the Deputy Commissioners and Sub-Deputy Collectors without letting the members even to know what the instructions are, much less giving them any chance of giving advice. What is then the meaning of the Advisory Committee?

The whole Land Settlement Conference seems to us to be a big hoax.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: It is Budget discussion that we expect from the hon. Member instead of a speech on the land settlement.

The CHAIRMAN (Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya.): Order, order.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: I could not follow the hon. interrupter. The object of the Ministry, it seems, was to secure consent of the parties to abolish the Line System and to continue the policy of aggression on an innocent and unarmed people by means fair or foul. No body of people can be a party to such a scheme; and we feel that there should be an end of this state of affairs. Let Government do its worst in their way and face the inevitable consequences of such a reckless policy, but it must not go in the name of all parties. Sir, in these circumstances, we feel it incumbent on us to ask our Leader to wash his hands off in this business if the points raised by them in the note are not settled to our satisfaction

In other spheres also, especially in civil liberties and denial policy followed by Government, the same steam-roller policy is seen in operation. As these subjects have been or are to be dealt with by some colleagues of mine fully, I should content myself with mentioning only two points. One is the Congress flag phobia of this Government to justify which the Hon'ble Prime Minister the other day propounded a curious theory, that since the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress was declared an illegal Association, the Congress flag though it did not belong to the Working Committee, but was a national symbol, adopted by the Indian National Congress, was to be put under a ban. This reminds us only of the amusing fable of the wolf and the lamb. If the Hon'ble Prime Minister sticks to his views, in that case, I am afraid, I should warn my hon. Friend, Babu Nirendra Nath Dev to put off his Gandhi cap which carries the Congress flag—as it amounts to exhibiting the flag in public.

The CHAIRMAN (Babu Rabindra Nath Aditya): I hope the hon. Member will finish.

Srijut SARVESWAR BARUA: I will finish soon, Sir. The denial or control policy of this Government has not only driven our necessities of life under ground and given rise to all-round corruption, but has also deprived Government of the power of seeing things in true perspective. In their zeal for meddling in every sphere of the country's life with executive fiat they have usurped the function of this House in imposing an indirect tax on the consumers of goods in the shape of the cess, the administration of which has been so thoroughly exposed by our hon. Friend, Mr. Whittaker this morning. This cess was imposed without any legislative authority and I believe the Hon'ble Finance Minister has therefore dealt with it as a matter of their private concern without giving a proper account of it to this House. With these observations, Sir, I resume my seat.

Srijit KAMESWAR DAS : Mr. Chairman, Sir, although many hon. Members have participated in the debates of the Budget discussion and have covered a wide field, I cannot check myself from the temptation of making also a few observations regarding some general features of the administration of the Province as disclosed in the Budget presented to us this year.

Sir, it has already been rightly complained, that the Budget under discussion has been framed as a matter of form only and that no serious attempts have been made to improve upon the present state of things to any appreciable degree except for the provision of small sums here and there; mostly for organisation and betterment of conditions of the service people. Adequate provisions have not been made for money which is to go to the use and service of the general body of the mass people direct, specially in the rural areas.

Sir, it is certainly not enough for Government to say that they are building up funds for Post-War Reconstruction schemes and remain content with that. We do not know what these schemes will be and how far they will go in for the betterment of the conditions of the general mass. We also do not know the amounts of the fund allotted or that will be available for individual schemes of different departments. We have heard it said that the introduction of free compulsory primary education is one of the Post-War Reconstruction schemes of Government. May we enquire of them whether the schemes for intensive betterment of secondary, technical and University education, for establishment of a University for Assam at Gauhati, for installation of hydro-electric power stations to develop industry, agriculture, transport, etc., in the different parts of the country, are also taken into account in that connection? Then again may we enquire of Government what steps they want to take for measures to be adopted for the intervening period between now and the time by which the Post-War Reconstruction schemes are likely to come into existence and execution? I expected Government to show really a living interest in the matter. But I am much constrained to say that Government have failed to do full justice to any Post-War Reconstruction scheme with a provision of 50 lakhs, which has again not been added to in the Budget year and which is not adequate enough even for one good scheme, such as the free compulsory primary education scheme, on the showing of the Hon'ble Premier himself.

In the explanations for the very great variation between the Budget and the revised revenue figures for 1944-45 the Hon'ble Finance Minister has said that the improved financial position of the *ryots* enabled them to pay their revenues at an earlier date in 1944 than in former years. I would like to sound a note of warning to Government—if they think of pursuing their course of action on assumptions of like nature for the next year also—that conditions of the *ryots*, if at all, these were better comparatively during the current year, are deteriorating and are very likely to deteriorate further in near future on account of price of paddy falling low and the prices of many other articles of their use which they have to purchase in the black market remaining still very high. I would like to warn that it will not be long before Government will have to consider again the question of re-introduction of remission of land revenue to give relief to the poor cultivators of the Province, specially of the Assam Valley.

The explanations that no large scale recruitment of youngmen of same age group could be undertaken by Government to meet the innumerable new needs in connection with food and other control—which will remain as post-war needs—for fear of serious promotion blocks in the distant future and that Government were therefore to take in some senior pleaders and re-employ a number of retired officers to strengthen the Provincial Civil Service temporarily, as a solution, are really amusing and not convincing at all.

It is now several years past that the Embankment and Drainage Department is actively engaged in surveying and executing drainage and embankment projects in the Province. But it passes one's comprehension to think that the Department was able during all these years to survey and execute only a small number of projects not in themselves very big ones. Then again some of the subdivisions have totally been neglected by this Department in complete disregard of the importance of the projects

suggested. None of the projects suggested for Barpeta by the then Subdivisional Officer and by some hon. Members of this House hailing from Barpeta, including myself, several years back, were enquired into, nor any projects therein have been taken up yet by the Department. Can there be any valid reasons for neglecting the claims of a subdivision because it is backward and can give no effective pressure upon Government? Everyone knows that one half of the Barpeta subdivision is composed of high and the other half of low lands. There are vast areas there requiring the services of the Department and if projects are selected intelligently there, the returns in the shape of increased yield of food crops will compensate more than any expenditure Government may undertake there. Similarly in the matter of communication also, the claims of the Barpeta subdivision have, as before, been neglected. The small project of the Sarupeta feeder road involving a cost of Rs.10,000 only has been dropped. Improvement of the North Trunk Road lying in the subdivision of Barpeta is also left to its own fate. The portion of the Public Works Department road from Barpeta to Tarabari, which is only 12 miles, is still being maintained as a fair weather track in spite of its having to serve at least one third of the population of the subdivision.

In the Departments of Public Health and Medical, there are constant complaints everywhere for dearth of medicine and proper equipment. Then again Public Health Officers put in charge of some subdivisions, including Barpeta, have no office rooms of their own to maintain their offices when there is apparently unavoidable necessity for them. What is the meaning therefore to maintain paper offices for public health doctors in charge of subdivisions if they are not actually provided with office rooms and equipments?

If the campaign of "Grow More Food" is to be a permanent feature of the Provincial Government of future and not simply a war measure, it would have been a bold step for Government to take up at least some model schemes with large areas of Government waste land to be brought under cultivation by means of tractors. That would have not only given fair opportunity to young people to learn the technique of the tractors but would also have helped the campaign by actually producing more food grains. If the Bihar Government could procure tractors for their own schemes, there was no reason why the Assam Government also could not have procured tractors for their's.

In the matter of food procurement and distribution policy of the Government of Assam, there appear to be too many intermediary agencies between the consumers and the producers. Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co. who are the Government procuring and distributing agents at Calcutta for Assam, for articles of food produced outside Assam, naturally have a large number of their own local sub-agents appointed in the different producing centres of the different Provinces of India who would naturally make a fair charge on the cost price of the articles purchased and distributed by them—large enough to meet the working cost and ensure a fair margin of profit to themselves. If that is so, then where are the necessity and justification of maintaining the other sets of agencies for distribution works only? I do not know if Messrs. the Assam Valley Supply Syndicate and the approved wholesale dealers, who are not to do any retailing or sell out things to consumers but are required only to distribute goods, general rate payers' money. What else do Messrs the Assam Valley Supply Syndicate and the wholesale dealers do than act simply as godown keepers? If distribution by Messrs. Shaw Wallace & Co. of Calcutta, direct to the retailers, is not found possible, why not get the same thing done through the Government officers of the Supply Department of which there are already too many in every subdivision? The result of having too many intermediary agents who are allowed handsome commissions for their works cannot but be unwholesome. The presence of so many intermediaries is bound to increase the incidence of price, to cause delay for the articles to reach the retail dealers and consumers, and to cause deterioration for the same. Over and above, the chances of corruption and black-marketing, which are already ruining the people under the pressure of heavy prices, are greatly increased by the appointments of so many intermediary agents. Deteriorated articles, which are often sold out to consumers much against their wish, are telling upon the health of the people

of the country generally. Black-marketing not only by private individuals and firms but also by the appointed agents is the order of the day and is taking place before the very eyes of the officers of Government. It is in the lips of the general public that the approved dealers are appointed only after a good deal of unfair expenditure and trouble and only when they can satisfy the appointing authorities by means other than fair and justifiable. If this be the state of things, then we can simply condemn the Government for their failure to check corruption and black-marketing which are still rampant in the Province.

The policy followed by Government as regards articles of food produced in the Province, is also as unsatisfactory and unfair as it is faulty. As is clear from the above, the food policy of Government has not been to the best interests of the people of Assam. Fixing of ceiling prices but not at the same time bottom prices of things like paddy, has given unscrupulous appointed agents or their employees sufficient loopholes to deceive the illiterate poor cultivators or small village traders, coming from distant places to collection centres, by employment of secret sub-agents and making the purchases in *benami* at prices very much lower than the market price of the time.

In the matter of selection and appointment of the wholesale and retail dealers also, the authorities are seen to have no consideration whatsoever for the general good of the mass people. It is an open secret that those who can win the favour of the power that be by some means or other are appointed dealers. The result is that honest men with fairly good business experience at their credit and the consumers' co-operative stores, who, by their constitution and system of accounting, cannot undertake improper expenditure, are left in the lurch and they are able to secure only a stepmotherly treatment from the authorities. The other day the Hon'ble Finance Minister in his speech introducing the Budget seemed to have taken pride that the activities of the Co-operative Department have greatly been intensified and more than 1,600 consumers' co-operative stores have been established. Yes, so far as their registration and establishment are concerned, he is right; but if we look to the facilities that are given to these stores by the officers of the Supply Department, it becomes at once crystal clear that the activities of these stores have remained much below the normal not due to any lack of intelligent interest on the part of the organisers or even of the people of the Co-operative Department itself, but owing to complete lack of sympathy of the people of the Supply Department influenced probably by an atmosphere of corruption. Even in the cases when the co-operative stores are fortunate enough to be appointed wholesalers or retailers, they are generally allowed to deal in a lesser number of articles or in more unimportant among these; and the individual dealers are often given either the bulk of the goods or the more important areas of operations also invidious distinctions are made in favour of individual dealers, who are given greater areas than the co-operative stores in the very same localities. The reasons can very well be guessed.

As regards fixation of rationing quota in respect of salt, kerosene and sugar, there is a good deal of iniquitous distinctions between the urban and the rural areas. Sugar is not at all given to rural areas; kerosene is given at a terribly low rate, *viz.*, for Barpeta Subdivision at least at $1\frac{1}{2}$ pows per family per month irrespective of the number of persons in it. The rationing quota of salt is equally inadequate throughout. The appointed dealers often sell out unwholesome, adulterated and rotten things to consumers against their will. Adulterated mustard oil is being sold by the retail shops with impunity.

The CHAIRMAN (Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA): You have spoken for 20 minutes.

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: When this is the general state of things prevailing in the country, is it not fair for Government that instead of sitting tight and feeling complacent, they should come forward to revise their food policy with a view to rectify the defects and thereby to give the much needed relief to the poor?

Adjournment

The House was adjourned till 11 A. M., on Thursday, the 8th March, 1945.

SHILLONG:

The 25th April, 1945.

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