

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

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 A.M., on Monday, the 20th March, 1944.

PRESENT

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

**QUESTIONS**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

**STARRED QUESTIONS**

(To which oral answers were given)

**Requisition of houses at Laitumkhrah Ward of Shillong Municipality**

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE asked :

\*79. (a) Is it a fact that the Deputy Commissioner, Khasi and Jaintia Hills, is preparing a list of houses situated in the Laitumkhrah Ward of the Shillong Municipality to be requisitioned under the Defence of India Rules ?

(b) Are Government aware that such a list will include the houses of many Government servants also who are required to remain at Shillong with their families throughout the year ?

(c) Are Government aware that other suitable houses for such Government servants have become very scarce now-a-days in Shillong ?

(d) Do Government propose to take steps to exclude the houses of Government servants from being requisitioned ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI replied :

79. (a)—No.

(b)—Does not arise.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—Government have already issued instructions that houses owned by and

in the occupation of Government servants should not ordinarily be requisitioned for the Army. Where however, such requisitioning is unavoidable, the Deputy Commissioner may provide alternative accommodation to the Government servant concerned, if he is unable to arrange it for himself.

(Starred Question No.80 standing in the name of Maulavi Mabarak Ali was not put and answered as the Questioner was absent).

**UNSTARRED QUESTIONS**

(To which answers were laid on the table)

**Tea Garden Schools**

Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN asked :

56. Will Government be pleased to state separately—

(a) The number of the existing tea garden schools, showing their classes in the Province ?

(b) The number of pupils, males and females of these schools in both the Valleys ?

(c) The amount of money spent for these schools by the Indian Tea Association and also by the Education Department of the Government in both the Valleys ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN replied :

56. (a), (b) & (c)—The particulars of tea garden schools have been shown separately in the statement below :—

Class of school.	No.	Enrolment		Total	Expenditure from		Total
		Boys	Girls		Government.	Garden	
A	9	305	60	365 +123	Rs. 3,907	Rs. 36	Rs. 3,943
B	76	2,211	452	2,663	9,480	11,474	20,954
C	372	....	....	16,635	....	1,27,405	1,27,405
Total	457	2,516	512	19,786*	13,387	1,38,915	1,52,302

†Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN : May I know, Sir, whether the teachers employed in these schools are whole time teachers or they do partly some other works of the tea gardens ?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Government are not aware of the correct position. But the schools have got fixed hours. So, I think, the teachers are part-time teachers.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT : May I ask the hon. questioner whether he has solved the problem which we have not of having brought the donkey to water making him drink, in other words, if he has discovered any way of making unwilling people learn their lessons ?

## DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

### GRANT No.11

(27—Administration of Justice)

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.9,04,600 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head "27—Administration of Justice".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.9,04,600 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '27—Administration of Justice'."

Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAIN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.47,654 under Grant No.11, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, Minor head—B.—Law Officers (total) at page 62 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.2, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.2.

By this Cut Motion, Sir, I merely want to draw the attention of the Government to the non-representation of this Province in the recruitment to the Bench of the Hon'ble High Court of Calcutta, and also to the Law Offices. I have tabled this Cut Motion under the Sub-head "Grant to the High Court". So, Sir, all these will be relevant under this Cut Motion.

\*Includes 123 pupils of 'A' class schools, the distribution of which by sex is not available. The distribution of the enrolment of 'C' class schools by sex is also not available.

†Speech not corrected.

The Calcutta High Court was established more than 80 years ago and this Province of Assam and its administered areas were tagged on to this High Court in the Province of Bengal ever since then. In spite of the fact that this Province is making a substantial annual contribution towards the maintenance charges of this Hon'ble High Court, excepting in one solitary instance of late Mr. Abdul Majid being elevated to the Bench only for a couple of months, during all these 80 years not a single one of the lawyers or Judicial officers of this Province was ever elevated to the Bench. With regard to lawyers of which there are quite a good number, except the present Leader of the House, the Hon'ble Maulavi Saiyid Sir Muhammad Saadulla, none of those who had the privilege of practising in the Calcutta High Court were ever admitted to the various Law offices of that Court. It is known to this House that Sir Muhammad was there as Assistant Government Pleader only for a brief period in 1936-1937. During the last 80 years the Government of Bengal or the Government of India or His Majesty's Government have not yet found fit to select any of the lawyers of this Province who practised or are practising in the High Court for the Bench. Sir, this is the position which is certainly very peculiar. If we compare the position of our Province with that of Bihar before that Province was separated with a separate High Court, we can appreciate the position correctly. Sir, during the brief period when Bihar was under the administrative jurisdiction of the Calcutta High Court, she had as many as two permanent Judges in the Calcutta High Court and also had a separate Legal Remembrancer in the person of Sir Sultan Ahmed, who is now adorning the Viceroy's Executive Council.

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Does the hon. Member refer to the appointment of Judges in the Calcutta High Court?

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAIN: Yes, Sir, that is the position with regard to the recruitment to the Bench and also with regard to the recruitment of Law Officers.

Even with regard to the appointment of lawyers for the conduct of cases on behalf of this Government, lawyers of Bengal have always been engaged. This peculiar arrangement is best known to this Government. There are as many as thirty lawyers belonging to this Province practising in the Calcutta High Court and it is very unfortunate that those lawyers have not been engaged for the cases of this Government.

Sir, it is only to vindicate the position of this non-representation, both in the Law Offices and also in the Bench, that I would urge upon the Government to make a separate and independent arrangement for the conduct of the cases on behalf of this Government.

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

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Motion moved:

“That the provision of Rs.47,654 under Grant No.11, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, Minor head—B.—Law Officers (total) at page 62 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.2, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.2.”

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I doubt very much if we can do anything in the matter. Unless and until we have a separate arrangement of our own it is very difficult to get the suggestions done as requested by the hon. Mover. We contribute certain amount to the Bengal Government for certain Law Offices, e.g., the Legal Remembrancer, Solicitor, Government Pleader and the Standing Counsel. We have entered into a distinct arrangement with the Bengal Government for these offices.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Cost of High Court Judge also?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Not for the High Court Judge. I think the Motion is not with regard to the High Court Judges. This arrangement which has been renewed expires on the 1st of April 1947 and nothing can be done in the matter now. Anyhow the suggestions made by the hon. Mover may be forwarded to the Bengal Government for consideration.

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAIN: In view of what I have heard from the Hon'ble Minister I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Has the hon. Member got leave of the House to withdraw his Motion ?

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

Srijut SURENDRANATH LURAGOHAIN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.4,10,668 under Grant No.11, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, Minor head—D.—District and Sessions Judges (total), at page 65 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100 *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

I want to draw the attention of the Government to the unusual delay that is taking place in regard to the appointment of the Subordinate Judge of Assam Valley Districts. The Government will remember that this post was advertised some time in the last year and in spite of elaborate arrangement for selection including interviews before the Public Service Commission, this appointment has not yet been announced and this is really creating certain misapprehensions among the members of the Bar in that Valley. I, therefore, request the Government to expedite the appointment of this officer in the Assam Valley.

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

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

"That the provision of Rs.4,10,668 under Grant No.11, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, Minor head—D.—District and Sessions Judges (total), at page 65 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100 *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise only to make one query and that is this : Under what provision of the Government of India Act the Public Service Commission was consulted to select a member of the Judicial Service ? So far as I remember when the last appointment of Subordinate Judge was made in the Assam Valley in the year 1937, this procedure was not followed and certainly it will be admitted that it was not necessary at all to consult the Public Service Commission in such an appointment. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister under what provision this was done and under what circumstances this had to be done. I should also like to know whether any person occupying the position of an expert was present when the selection of Judicial Officer was made by the Public Service Commission. We know that in the matter of selection of educational officers, the Director of Public Instruction generally remains present. In every case of responsible appointment the Heads of Departments are consulted and they remain present at the time of interviews. I should like to know why the senior Judicial Officer in the Province or anybody else was not present at the time of selection to aid the Public Service Commission ?

\*The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the vacancy was duly advertised in the *Assam Gazette* and we got recommendation from the Judge of Assam Valley and after receiving his recommendation we referred to the Public Service Commission. We thought it proper to refer the matter to that Commission. This appointment was finally made by His Excellency the Governor in his discretion. The Public Service Commission after granting interviews to some of the candidates sent their recommendation and we have selected one from the list recommended by the Public Service Commission and the whole matter is now lying with the Calcutta High Court for approval and the decision has been awaited. So far as the point raised by Mr. Chaudhuri about referring the matter to the Public Service Commission is concerned I may say that Government thought it desirable to refer the question and they did it.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : May I know, Sir, whether the Federal Public Service Commission or the Public Service Commission of Bengal are entitled to make appointments of High Court Judges ?

\*The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : That is not the point at issue, Sir.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : If the Hon'ble Minister does not want to reply I will not press, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Has the Hon'ble Minister finished ?

\*The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : As regards the point whether any Judicial Officer remained present when the selection was made, I may say that we followed the recommendation made by the Judge, Assam Valley Districts, and Mr. Stork, our Legal Remembrancer was also present there.

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAİN : In view of what I have heard from the Hon'ble Minister, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Has the hon. Member got leave of the House to withdraw his Motion ?

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

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMIRUDDIN : I beg to move that the provision of Rs.24,000 under Grant No.11, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, Minor head—D.—District and Sessions Judges, Sub-head—5.—Contingencies, Detailed head—Allowances to Jurors and Assessors at page 65 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.50, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.50.

In the district of Nowgong, owing to the presence of an immigrant element in the population, it has been found in the trial of sessions cases that immigrant accused do not get a fair deal in very many cases at the hands of the jurors, most of whom happen to be Assamese. Even on the floor of this House it has been seen from the speeches of the Assamese representatives that they look upon the immigrants in an air of dislike and prejudice. This being so, Sir, in sessions cases where jurors happen to be Assamese and the accused immigrants, the decisions very often go against the immigrants although materials do not justify a conviction. Sometimes the defence pleader finds it difficult to raise any objection against the selection of such a body of jurors, as, if supposing any objection is raised by a defence pleader against any particular juror and if that objection is disallowed the particular juror will be naturally prejudiced against the defence pleader as well as the accused whom he represents. I would therefore suggest that in some cases where the accused happen to be immigrants, in the selection of jurors for the trial, majority of them ought to be in all fairness immigrants while there is no dearth of suitable persons among the immigrants in the district of Nowgong to serve on the jury. In this connection, Sir, I would like to urge upon the Hon'ble Minister in charge to see that this sort of proportion is looked after in the selection of the jury and the nomination of jurors is made by the Circle and Thana officers jointly. But when a Circle Sub-Deputy Collector goes to assume charge of a new Circle after his transfer from another Circle, he is not supposed to know whom he is to select and naturally he has to rely upon his Mandals and Kanangoos who ordinarily choose as jurors persons that are in their good book, though undesirable to others of the locality and as such the Sub-Deputy Collector, without knowing whether they would actually make good jurors or not, recommend their names to the District Magistrate. Therefore, Sir, it would be fairer still if the nomination of jurors is left to the discretion of the Circle Sub-Deputy Collector as well as the officer in charge of the Thana of that particular Circle so that their joint recommendation may be scrutinised by the District Magistrate and the Sessions Judge. An opportunity should also be given to the pleaders of the local Bar and to the local Members of the Legislative Assembly who are supposed to know at least the status and antecedents of those persons who are so nominated by the Sub-Deputy Collector and the Thana officer, so that they can also scrutinise the list and give their views as to the fitness or otherwise of the eligibility of jurors and the final selection made thereafter. It is presumed that such a selection will be welcome to all parties concerned. With these observations, Sir, I bring this to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister and commend my Motion to the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

“That the provision of Rs.24,000 under Grant No.11, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, Minor head—D.—District and Sessions Judges, Sub-head—5.—Contingencies, Detailed head—Allowances to Jurors and Assessors at page 65 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.50, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.50.”

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have nothing to say against what has been argued by my Friend Khan Sahib Maulavi Muhammad Amiruddin. But he has made certain suggestions which perhaps should not go unnoticed. He has said that in the appointment of jurors, recommendations should be sought for from Sub-Deputy Collectors, Thana officers and also from Members of the Legislative Assembly. His suggestion is that after a report has come from a Sub-Deputy Collector this should go to Thana officers and then to Members of the Legislative Assembly who also, according to him, should be consulted. Sir, I think that the Thana officers or the Members of the Legislative Assembly should not come into the picture because there are Members of the Legislative Assembly who are also lawyers practising in Sessions Court. Now, if the jurors happen to be appointed on the recommendations of Thana officers or Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Thana officers or Members of the Legislative Assembly on whose recommendation the jurors are appointed will always have some influence over them. In cases in which the jurors selected happen to be people who come into the jurors' list on the recommendation of a Thana officer or a Member of the Legislative Assembly they may not discharge their duty properly if the Thana officer or the Member of the Legislative Assembly be interested in the case. I place my own view before the House and I hope the hon. Members will agree with me.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on this Motion as I think I shall be able to throw some light in the matter. The circumstances which have prompted the hon. Mover to bring this Cut Motion before the House are very much connected with a number of political and semi-political cases which were tried in the district of Nowgong. There was one case tried in the middle or a little before the middle of last year which was known as a spy murder case and in which the Jury returned a verdict of not guilty. Another political case followed in which the Jury was about to return a verdict and then the case was ordered to be transferred to Gauhati and tried there. That was a case of theft of gun. Henceforward on the advice of the Superintendent of Police and the District Magistrate all these gun theft cases are tried at Gauhati instead of Nowgong. The list of jurors in Nowgong contains men of right and independent judgment. These men showed a tendency to dispense with justice irrespective of political considerations and therefore they were, in the estimation of those persons who have a hand in the selection of jurors, considered disqualified, and in cutting out of the list of men who had some independent judgment and men who had some experience of judicial matters this way or the other, the list had to be confined to persons of comparatively lower order which has been described as a matter of indiscriminate selection by the hon. Mover. Furthermore, although the law prescribes that the District Magistrate should select the jurors, as a matter of fact the list is supervised by the Public Prosecutor, namely the Government Pleader before it is finally submitted to the Judge. The Public Prosecutor has a hand in the selection of jurors. So also, at the present moment the Police Department has an important voice in the selection of jurors. That is the reason why certain better class persons are excluded from the list of jurors and unless the list is brought out of control of the Police Department or the Public Prosecutor, you cannot expect a satisfactory state of affairs.

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the selection of jurors and assessors cannot be intentional. A distinct procedure has been laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code for the selection of jurors. Persons who are summoned to act as jurors are drawn by lot.

\*Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Selected for the trial?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: Any way the District Magistrate submits a list of persons to the Judge and when the jurors appear before the Judge, I think, the selection is made by lot. I do not see any reason that the provisions are being neglected in Nowgong.

\*Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: No provision has been made. As it is, I think, a list is to be prepared; it is left to the discretion of the District Magistrate or the Judge.

\*Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Selection is to be made by the Judge. But lot takes place only at the time of trial.

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: It is the District Magistrate who selects persons desirable for the purpose and it is laid down in section 326 of the Criminal Procedure Code. Hon. Members, I think, are aware of the provisions, and in view of the provisions laid down in the Code, I doubt whether we can do anything excepting that we can refer to the District Magistrate that the selection is made according to rules and I may also send the suggestions made by different hon. Members and bring them to the notice of the District Magistrate, Nowgong.

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

Khan Sahib Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMIRUDDIN: In view of what the Hon'ble Minister has said, I beg leave of the House to withdraw the Motion.

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

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

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Does Mr. Rahman move his Motion? It is a very old question.

\*Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: It is as old as this House is. I do not want to move the Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.9,04,600 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945 for the administration of the head—'27.—Administration of Justice'."

The question was adopted.

GRANT No.3.

(8.—Provincial Excise).

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.3,89,500 be granted to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head "8.—Provincial Excise"

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs 3,89,500 be granted to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '8.—Provincial Excise'."

There are some Cut Motions. Cut Motion No.1 † stands in the name of Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury. It is on a minor head. I have always desired that when question of policy is to be discussed, the Cut Motion should be on the main Demand. Of course all cuts are ultimately deductions from the main Demand. When an hon. Member chooses a particular item, it is indicated that he would confine his discussion to the subject-matter to which that item relates. So, it will be better if Mr. Mookerjee moves his Motion which is the proper Motion to discuss the policy of Government.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.3,89,500 under Grant No.3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, at page 34 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

Sir, I have tabled this Motion to criticise the Excise Policy of the Government.

Sir, it will be found from the Budget how this tainted revenue is being increased gradually. The hon. Members of this House were in favour of opium prohibition, and some steps to that effect were also taken by the Government, but I find that under some pretext or other this revenue is being increased gradually again. It will be found

\*Speech not corrected.

† 4. Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN to move:—

That the provision of Rs.3,38,510 under Grant No.11, Major head—27—Administration of Justice, Minor head—1—Criminal Courts (total) at page 66 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.9,04,600 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To bring to the notice of the Government the hard fate of the public attending Court at Habiganj who suffer a great deal for want of a witness-shed).

‡ 1. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:—

That the provision of Rs.22,778 under Grant No.3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, Minor head—A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment (total) at page 35 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To raise a discussion about the Excise Policy of the Government.)

in the Budget, Sir, that in 1940-41 the revenue from opium was Rs.2,23,000 ; in 1941-42 it was reduced to Rs.1,04,000 ; in 1942-43 it was further reduced to Rs.76,000. But, Sir, last year it rose to Rs.80,000, and this year, provision has been made for a lakh of rupees. Sir, this tendency of increasing revenue from this source is most deplorable.

Under country spirit, it will be found, Sir, that last year, the revised estimate for 1943-44 was Rs.15,00,000 and this year provision has been made for Rs.22,00,000, *i.e.*, about 50 per cent. increment.

Under hemp and other drugs it will be found that recently the revenue under this head is increasing by leaps and bounds. In 1940-41, the revenue under this head was Rs.5,80,000 ; in 1941-42 it was Rs.5,85,000 ; in 1942-43 it rose to Rs.7,36,000 ; the revised estimate for 1943-44 was Rs.10,00,000 and the provision for 1944-45 is Rs.13,00,000.

Sir, the other day my hon. Friend Mr. Dev rightly expressed his feeling—not only his feeling but the feeling of the sensible general public—that Government should not rejoice by saying that the fall of revenue under country spirit has been compensated by increase of revenue under hemp and other drugs. Sir, the other day it was also explained that this was one of the main causes of insanity. I hope, Sir, that when there are so many other fair and honest sources of realising money from the general public, Government should not seek to increase revenue under this most undesirable, immoral and unfair head.

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

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

“That the total provision of Rs.3,89,500 under Grant No.3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, at page 34 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.”

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also wish to make a few observations about the excise policy of the Government. From the receipts and expenditure under this head, as Mr. Mookerjee has just now stated, it will be seen that Government have not been able to carry out a firm and systematic policy in the administration of this Department.

First of all I will take up the question of country spirit. In the years 1940-41 and 1941-42 the receipts under this head were above 22 lakhs of rupees. In the year 1942-43 there was a sharp fall from Rs.22,14,000 to Rs.8,85,000. An amount of Rs.16,45,000 was budgeted for the current year. The revised has placed it to Rs.15,00,000, which again appears to have been over-estimated. As a matter of fact we apprehend that the actuals will fall far below this amount. The figures provided for next year's Budget seem to be too optimistic. There is scarcely any chance of its realisation, unless we change our policy and arrange for better supply. What are the reasons behind these variations and big loss to the provincial revenues ? Perhaps my hon. Friends who espouse the cause of the Assam Distillery will be able to answer these questions.

By now, the name of Mr. Nandeswar Chakravarty and his Assam Distillery are too familiar to the hon. Members. Some three years back the Government of Assam entered into a contract with this firm for a period of ten years for supply of country liquor. Government did so, it was explained, to encourage a local indigenous concern. How long could we look to Bihar for our supply ? But what has been the result ? In the first year, later in the season, the Company explained their inability as they could not procure their machinery due to war conditions. It was too late to arrange any supply from Bihar. The Province went totally dry and we sustained a net loss of Rs.13,29,000. This did not however prevent Government to grant an extension to the firm. In the second year, the Company obliged us with yet another explanation. Though the requisite machinery had been procured, they had not the time to install the same to ensure a regular supply. We did not hesitate to grant a second extension though it entailed a heavy loss of more than Rs.7,00,000.

What is the position at present ? It has been stated in the Budget Memorandum that the Assam Distillery has now been constructed but has not been able to procure the necessary molasses for the manufacture of country spirit owing to the necessary



transport not being available. It has therefore been necessary to continue to obtain supplies from outside the Province, and so we must grant them a third extension. The whole position is ludicrous. Patronisation of local industries is no doubt a sound policy. But it also has its limits. So much favours should not have been showered on this fortunate child. Why did not the Government take into consideration all these factors before they granted the lease? What amount do they intend to realise from this firm as compensation, we want to know? I submit, Sir, that the Government have got no right to play in this manner with the province's finance.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: On a point of information, Sir, may I know what finance has been given to the Assam Distillery?

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: That does not arise but the fact remains that we have lost a very considerable amount of revenue.

Then again the explanation furnished by the Government is hardly convincing. The Assam Distillery is flooding the market with foreign liquor. We can safely conclude that they have hardly any time or energy left to secure molasses for the preparation of country liquor. Should further extension be given to this firm? The make-shift arrangement with the Bihar concern is putting us to a heavy loss and unnecessary strain. The hon. Members might have noticed that the absence of country liquor has encouraged a larger consumption of charas and ganja which is sure to adversely affect the health of the people using the same.

No doubt the Government are adhering to the policy of total prohibition of the consumption of opium in the non-excluded and partially excluded areas of Assam. But that is in name only. Government have been deprived of their revenues but the evil persists in spite of all our efforts. The decision of the Government to supply opium to the labourers from outside the Province engaged on defence projects will provide sufficient scope for its wider consumption by the inhabitants of this Province.

Lastly, I would refer to the compilation and revision of the Excise Manual. Few years back, a Special Officer was engaged for the work. But we do not know what has been done in the matter.

With these words, Sir, I commend my Motions†.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have a ‡ Motion standing in my name dealing with an aspect of this subject, which incidentally I would have been better equipped to deal with, had Questions I submitted on the third day of this Session been answered before now.

†1. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:—  
That the provision of Rs.22,778 under Grant No. 3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, Minor head—A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment (total) at page 35 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.  
(To raise a discussion about the Excise Policy of the Government.)

2. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:—  
That the provision of Rs.22,778 under Grant No. 3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, Minor head—A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment (total) at page 35 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.  
(To raise a discussion about the consumption of hemp in the Province.)

3. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:—  
That the provision of Rs.22,778 under Grant No. 3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, Minor head—A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of Establishment (total) at page 35 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.  
(To raise a discussion regarding the Assam Distillery and the supply of country spirit in Assam.)

4. Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY to move:—  
That the provision of Rs.22,778 under Grant No. 3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, Minor head—A.—Superintendence, Sub-head—2.—Pay of establishment (total) at page 35 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.  
(To raise a discussion regarding the Prohibition Policy of the Government.)

‡6. Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT to move:—  
That the provision of Rs.22,505 under Grant No.3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, Minor head—C.—Distilleries (total) at page 36 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100.  
(To draw the attention of the Government to the apparent danger of the Gur requirements of distilleries endangering the availability of the commodity to the populace.)

However, Sir, Gur is a very necessary article of food and everybody knows there is a general complaint that it is fast disappearing from the market. It is not obtainable in sufficient quantities, and certainly not at anything like Government controlled rates. There are stories being widely circulated to the effect that the distilleries are paying considerably more than Government controlled prices for the commodity.

If the liquor produced by these distilleries were good wholesome country liquor, within reach of the ordinary people, I would not complain as bitterly, for, it would still be to some extent an article of food ; but in the present circumstances, the liquor produced is not worth the deprivation it represents to the people, more especially as its price, apart from quality, makes it available to Rajas and rich men only. Mr. Whittaker went so far as to give it in this House the name by which it is known in the Province. In passing, I should like to say that I am not prepared to take cognisance of the opinion of the bibulous signatory to the suspicious looking document circulated by Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri in these benches the other day. I suggest that because Gur is such an indispensable article of diet that supplies should be strictly regulated by Government and only be made available to distilleries if and when it becomes in excess of the demand for ordinary household consumption. On the other hand, the large revenue accruing to the Province from distilleries is indeed encouraging and I should hate to see it diminished. There is no reason why it should diminish ; for if Gur cultivation is extended, the demands of distilleries can be satisfied, the food of people need not be jeopardised, and revenue may be still more increased. Until that time comes, I say—hands off the people's food.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support this Cut Motion on the ground that food question is more important than the distillery question, I mean the country liquor and I oppose the opinion expressed by hon. Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury advocating retaining of the country liquor. The country liquor is much more detrimental to the health of the consumers than any other form of liquor. The foreign liquor which we are taking is not so injurious to health as the country liquor is. The ordinary 'laupani' even is not so injurious to health as the country liquor is. If we are going to encourage the manufacture of country liquor that will mean more injury to the health of the people. There was a country liquor shop in the Dhubri town and I remember at the instance of the public it was removed far away from the town. The country liquor shops are causing great injury to the health of the consumers. We have noticed in Tura town also that country liquor shops were very very injurious to the health of the people. So, for this very reason, Sir, I think, the distilleries should be discouraged, as far as possible, and ultimately stopped altogether.

Srijut SURENDRA NATH BURAGOHAJN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in rising to support the Cut Motion before the House I do not want to take any more time than is absolutely necessary for me.

Sir, I want to draw the attention of Government to the non-representation of my community to the services of this Department—both in the Provincial and in the Subordinate branches—and I hope in making future recruitments to these branches, Government will remember the under-representation of this community.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : My stand is that we should try to have total prohibition of liquor in Assam just as we had total prohibition of opium. The opium prohibition has on the whole, proved very successful though there may have been slight increase of the opium revenue and that is due to the fact that the present Government has no control over the excluded areas. But I should like to say this without fear of contradiction that the present Government is doing its level best to make the opium prohibition scheme successful. There may have been cases of smuggling—it is impossible to stop all cases of smuggling. But it is one thing to take smuggled opium at high cost and it is entirely a different thing to take opium cheaply without the fear of being detected and that makes a lot of difference.

As regards the Assam Distillery, my hon. Friend Mr. Blennerhassett has not perhaps forgotten the copy of a testimonial which I showed to his benches which was signed by no less a person than the Superintendent of the Training School of the 14th Army.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am entirely at one with my hon. Friend, Mr. Dev, when he said the other day, that we should have nothing to do with this revenue from Excise which come from questionable source. I remember and I believe my Hon'ble Friend the Prime Minister will remember that about 30 years ago, one Member of the Assam Legislative Council of pre-Reform days, viz., late Phanidhar Chaliha criticized Government for having taken revenue from opium and the retort of the then Governor or the Chief Commissioner was that he being a Government pensioner should not touch any bit of that money which comes from that source. That was the retort which he received and ultimately the hon. Member resigned his seat from the Legislative Council. Sir, I do not know precisely what attitude the present Government will take if we say that they should have nothing to do with the revenue from this source and that there should be total prohibition of liquor.

My hon. Friends Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury and Mr. Blennerhassett who have taken part to criticise the Government for starting a distillery in the Assam Valley districts had not any word to say about total prohibition. Evidently they want liquor to remain in the Province. They only want that liquor should come from some particular firms from outside.....

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: On a point of personal explanation, Sir. That is not my stand at all.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Is it my hon. Friend's stand that liquor should be totally prohibited in Assam?

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Total prohibition in every country of the world has been proved impracticable and as long as it is not practicable it is not my stand.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: My Friend is not for total prohibition. His only criticism is that the Assam Distillery should not have been established but so far.....

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: I do not subscribe to that.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: As regards the Assam Distillery, my hon. Friend has not forgotten the copy of the testimonial which I had shown to Mr. Whittaker, the other day. It was signed by no less a person than the Superintendent of the Training School of the 14th Army which is now fighting in Burma for us. I am not concerned with the blend of liquors. All that I want to say is this that if you are not prohibiting liquor in Assam then the next thing you can do is to try to have the industry in the Province itself. Instead of sending money from the Province to outside the Province, it is better to encourage it in the Province itself. (Hear, hear). But I should in this connection like to know from the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Excise, why a foreign firm, namely, Messrs. Abdul Jabbar & Co. has been given a license to blend liquor in Gauhati. Why in spite of the fact that this license was given a long time ago he has not been able to do anything in the matter and still why his license has not been cancelled? Why Government should make such frantic efforts to put him in possession of rectified spirit and still he cannot do anything? Was not the Assam Distillery able to supply the necessary quantity? I know, Sir, there are two opinions in this House. The first question is, whether liquor is to be prohibited or not. It seems majority are not in favour of prohibition of liquor. The next question is, when it is not prohibited whether we should get the supply from the local man or from outside the Province. My Friends, Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury and Mr. Blennerhassett prefer to have it from outside.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: The hon. Member is misrepresenting the facts.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: My hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury also possibly knows that Khan Bahadur Habibur Rahman of Bengal held license for importing country spirit into the Province and for that he has been given by Government an advance of Rs.1,50,000. I would ask the Hon'ble Minister why it was necessary to give an advance to a firm outside the Province? Was it a condition of the contract which was entered between Government and Khan Bahadur Habibur Rahman?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The Province was becoming dry.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: My Friend says that the Province was becoming dry, therefore, this additional inducement was given to him, but could not this encouragement be given to any firm inside this Province?

Then, Sir, another question about Gur. I do really admire Mr. Blennerhassett's concern for Gur, it is all the more laudable because probably he has never tasted Gur. It is very praiseworthy on his part. May I ask him if it is not a fact that the tea garden labourers have taken to illicit distillation? And Sir, this is being done with the connivance of the tea planters.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Question?

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I mean the tea planters of the Assam Valley districts. Are not they conniving this illicit distillation? I have very reliable information on this point; illicit liquor is openly being sold in Hats, such as, Titabar and other places and Excise officers have been instructed not to apprehend cases on account of the fact that Khan Bahadur Habibur Rahman has not been able to supply the liquor from his distillery. So it is now sold openly in Hats, I can prove it and I can challenge the Hon'ble Minister to disprove it. Because a particular license has not been able to supply liquor, illicit distillation has been openly allowed in certain parts of Assam and tea garden coolies are doing it. The excuse which was put forward by the Government is that the lessee did not get transport. An officer, I understand, was actually sent from Assam to Sultanganj to help the lessee in getting transport. After returning he said that the question was not of insufficiency of wagons but of shortage of country spirit. The complaint made by the lessee was absolutely unfounded.

Then, Sir, as regards hemp, it is tried to discourage hemp in view of insanity cases which are spreading in this Province. But it seems the policy of the present Government is to encourage insanity in every respect. Even the Medical Department takes good care to do so. Is it not a fact that Government is seriously considering the proposal of having hemp cultivation in the Province? Have they not asked the Excise Commissioner to have the services of the Agricultural Department of which my hon. Friend, Mr. Dutta is in-charge, to have hemp cultivation in the Province?

These are the charges to which the House would like to get an answer.

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have heard all the hon. Members who have spoken in support of their Cut Motions on various subjects with much attention. I find, the hon. Members have got the only objection that excise articles are injurious to health, and Government should not encourage the consumption of this and derive greater revenue. I would say, Sir, the fact that we are getting better revenue under different heads of excise articles, cannot be taken as a conclusive proof that we are encouraging these articles amongst the people. The reason for increase of our revenue under all heads of excise articles is due to the fact that we have raised the duties on those articles.

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEV: May I interrupt for a second, Sir? There is a clear statement in the Budget Memorandum that hemp and other things are being consumed in a greater quantity?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: I shall reply to it later.

First of all I take the case of *ganja*. Sir, the duty on *ganja* was in the year 1941-42, Rs.22-6-0 per seer; we have gradually increased it to Rs.66-6-0 per seer. Now it is increased to Rs.102-6-0 and greater receipt is due to this fact and not due to any greater consumption. Our requirement, so far as *ganja* is concerned, is about 500 maunds per year but due to the fact that we have not got *ganja* in our Province, we have to get it from outside. We could not get our necessary supply from outside also due to transport difficulty. Our supplies are curtailed much, but still our revenue is rising. If we increase the price that also goes to show that instead of encouraging people to take *ganja* we want to discourage them by increasing the price.

This is one way of discouraging people. When the prices are high, people necessarily become discouraged to take that drug. So also, Sir, in the case of country spirit, we raised duties per L. P. gallon from Rs.4-6-0 to Rs.18. The opium duty also was raised from Rs.95 per seer to Rs.255 per seer.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: On a point of information? Sir. May I know from the Hon'ble Minister whether there is any limit of such increment? If that is not the case, why not Government increase it to such a high pitch so that nobody can touch it?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: We are experimenting, Sir. Even if we raise the price to such a high level those who have the paying capacity will no doubt pay Government for the drugs they take.

Now, Sir, my hon. Friend Mr. Blennerhassett, I feel sure raised a very nice point. So far as this Gur is concerned, we all know that this is a very good food and everybody knows that it is rich in vitamin; it is very necessary for the health of the people.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sweet to the taste also, Sir.

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: But, Sir, Government is not at all trying to convert all of this important food-stuff into liquor.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: On a point of information, Sir, is Gur required only for the distillation of country spirit and not for foreign spirit?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Yes, Sir, foreign liquor is also made out of Gur.

I think Mr. Blennerhassett has got no grudge or any ill-feeling against the Assam Distillery. His points are that Gur being a very valuable article for food, plenty of it should be made available for the consumption of the people and that the Assam Distillery should go on manufacturing better quality of foreign liquor and not bad quality. We have nothing to say against these points. We are putting pressure on the Assam Distillery to have their own sugarcane cultivation as far as possible so that they can have their entire quantity of Gur that is necessary for the manufacture of foreign liquor and country liquor.

I am glad to know from the Assam Distillery people that by this time they have been able to cultivate about 150 acres of land with sugarcane out of which they can reasonably expect to get a large quantity of Gur that is required for manufacturing foreign liquor or country liquor.

Now, Sir, my hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury asked why Government was renewing license to the Assam Distillery from year to year. I should say—as he must have heard on the floor of this House—that Government instead of committing any wrong by renewing the license, they have by this time got a very good revenue from this Distillery. If the Assam Distillery people could get sufficient molasses from outside, I am sure, they could have given us a very large sum of money and there might not have been any clamour in this House that Government could not provide enough funds for this and other nation building purposes. I am sorry to say, Sir, that transport difficulty stood on our way and we have not been able to get sufficient molasses from outside for the Assam Distillery. Though they themselves are trying to get molasses from outside, they could not get it due to the fact that they could not get the priority of transport.

Now, Sir, my hon. Friend Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri asked me why Government granted a license for bottling and blending country made foreign liquor at Gauhati. I think, Srijut Chaudhuri knows that Government needs revenue and the Government find ample room for augmenting their income by granting more such licenses for blending and bottling liquor in this Province. When the military people need it at any price, is it a sin on the part of Government to give license for bottling and blending of the liquor at Gauhati?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The cat is out of the bag after all.

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: But, Sir, unfortunately these people could not supply any liquor due to the difficulties of transport. At the present moment, demand for liquor is so great that we could have earned a very decent revenue had we been able to arrange transport.

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

the present Government prepared to meet all sorts of things required by the military people ?

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Not necessarily, Sir.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The Hon'ble Minister has expressed that if they get more money in doing so they would certainly do it.

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Now about the point of my hon. Friend Srijut Surendranath Buragohain. I find that he is complaining that his community is not getting representation in the Assam Excise Service. Sir, not only his community but there are other communities who have not got their proper representation in the Assam Excise Service. I can mention the names of all those communities who are under-represented or un-represented in the Assam Excise Service. Surma Valley Caste Hindus are totally un-represented so far as Assam Excise Service in the cadre of Superintendent is concerned. Indian Christians other than Tribal Christians are un-represented. Tribals of the plains are also un-represented. Tribals of the hills are too under-represented, and the percentage of under-representation in the case of Surma Valley Caste Hindus is greater than that of my hon. Friend's community. I find, Sir, that in the permanent and temporary cadres of Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, there are altogether 88 permanent and temporary posts against which though my hon. Friend's community is entitled to 2.9 posts they are holding actually 3 posts.

Sir, in confirming people in the Assam Excise Service in the post of Inspector or Sub-Inspector we take into consideration the cases of those people who are in the temporary service of the Department and I am sure the people who are in the temporary service will also get their chance. In the staff of the office of the Excise Commissioner, Sir, I find there is one man though they are not entitled to get one. So, I think my Friend's grievance is not genuine. I hope my Friend also remembers that in the Assam Excise Service in the cadre of Superintendent, one of his community man Mr. Surendranath Gohain was holding the post for a long time. He only retired in 1942. In view of this, I think his community is fairly treated by the Government.

Then, about Excise Manual. My Friend Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury has raised the question of revising the Excise Manual. Sir, we have already appointed a special officer for that purpose. He is doing it satisfactorily and we are having it more elaborately this time and the officer has already rendered four or five months' service there.

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: In the course of his reply the Hon'ble Minister has admitted that the interests of Hospitals are being made subservient to provincial revenues. He said that a liquor blending establishment is being supplied with and being encouraged to take rectified spirits to turn into foreign liquor, because it will produce revenue.

Now, Sir, Hospitals are badly in need of rectified spirits for medical purposes and I do urge the Hon'ble Minister to arrange so that they may receive adequate supplies.

The Hon'ble Srijut HIRENDRA CHANDRA CHAKRAVARTY: Yes, Sir, I can tell for the information of the hon. Member that we have already arranged with the Assam Distillery to supply necessary quantity of rectified spirits to meet the medical requirements of the Province and the Assam Distillery has agreed to that. We approached the Supply Department also, Sir. If necessary, the Supply Department have agreed to get molasses from outside for the purpose of manufacturing rectified and methylated spirit. I think, Sir, there will be no dearth of rectified and methylated spirit in view of the arrangement we are making.

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

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, I want to make one thing clear that the Hon'ble Minister when he began to give reply to our queries and criticisms he began with the sentence that he would take *ganja* first and accordingly he took the rest afterwards, naturally after he took so many intoxicating drugs, one after the other, we could not get much light out of his speech. So, I am under the painful necessity of expressing my desire that I like to press my Motion.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the total provision of Rs. 3,89,500 under Grant No. 3, Major head—8.—Provincial Excise, at page 34 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.3,89,500 do stand reduced by Rs.100."

The question was negatived.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.3,89,500 be granted to defray certain charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '8.—Provincial Excise.'"

The question was adopted.

#### GRANT No.17.

(37.—EDUCATION—OTHER THAN EUROPEAN).

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.45,51,100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '37.—Education (other than European)'.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Motion moved:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.45,51,100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '37.—Education (other than European).'"

There are as many as forty-five Cut Motions and I propose that the discussion should continue up to 3 P.M. I don't know which Motion should be taken up first. I think No.44 is the proper Cut Motion which stands in the name of Mr. Buragohain. A similar Cut Motion is in the name of Mr. Amiruddin. I think Mr. Buragohain should move his Cut Motion first.

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAİN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to move that the total provision of Rs.45,51,100 under Grant No.17, Major head—37.—Education, at page 83 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.45,51,100 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

In rising to do so, Sir, first of all I like to draw the attention of this Government to the situation created by the continued occupation by the military authorities of the different educational institutions of this Province. This question was raised by my hon. Friend Mr. Whittaker the other day when he was delivering his speech during the general discussion of the Budget. I hope the situation is so very urgent and that the effects are so very adversely affecting the education of our younger generation that the Government should take up this matter in right earnest and should immediately get these educational institutions released from the hands of the military authorities.

Sir, my next point is that as we have found from the Budget Memorandum and the speech delivered by the Hon'ble Finance Minister, the Hon'ble Education Minister had the lion's share of the additional expenditure incurred by the Government for the budget year. Though it is a fact, Sir, we see that his Department should get more than it is getting. There are more urgent matters which are to be taken up by the Government and for which more funds should have been placed at its disposal. For instance, there is the question of taking up the collegiate education for girls with more interest and vigour. We find particularly that the R. H. Girls' College at Gauhati is awaiting provincialisation. If that can be achieved a great step towards the education of girls at the collegiate stage will be done by Government and I hope this Government will lose no time in examining this question which is so urgent. In this connection of collegiate education I would like to invite the attention of Government to the affairs of the J. B. College at Jorhat. The buildings of the College with the hostel have been in the continued occupation by the Military for the past nearly two years. As far as I remember this is one of the first educational institutions that had been victimised in the Province. The result has been very disastrous. Some of the boys who were reading in that college have been compelled to discontinue their studies for want of accommodation to stay. Sir, for that college a non-recurring grant to provide for a temporary hostel is very urgent and I hope Government will be pleased to find some money to finance

that project and place it at the disposal of the college authorities without delay. As far as I have understood they have supplied the Government with the estimates with the proposal to that effect. I shall be very glad if the Government will do something in this matter before the next college session begins.

Sir, with regard to my own town, without giving away any secret to the enemy, I may tell this House that the position has become abnormal owing to the presence of a large number of Military personnel, and that it has become impossible for the girls of my town to attend their schools. Some sort of conveyance arrangement is urgently necessary to be made by Government. There are incidents that are taking place almost daily—the Military personnel every day obstruct the girls on the public highways, and I hope Government will be pleased to take up a proposal of placing funds at the disposal of the school authorities for providing necessary conveyance to facilitate the girls of that town to attend their respective institutions.

Then, Sir, as regards the Government aid to the schools of the Subdivision of Sibsagar, it has been very unfairly treated in the matter of distribution of grants to the Secondary and Middle schools of this Subdivision. I find it very strange that Government has been very favourably treating the Subdivision of Gauhati and neglecting the Subdivision of Sibsagar. For the schools of Gauhati Subdivision the Government grant is 6 times more than the grant to the schools of my Subdivision, though the population of my Subdivision is very much in a par with that of Gauhati and though the people of my Subdivision has been paying generously to the Government in the shape of revenue and even greater amount of revenue is paid by my Subdivision than the Subdivision of Gauhati. I find it very unusual that the Gauhati Subdivision has been enjoying as much as 6 times the grant for the educational institutions in comparison to the lot of the Sibsagar Subdivision. Sir, is it because that both the Leader of this House and the Opposition Leader happen to come from Gauhati Subdivision that this Subdivision is being so favourably treated in the matter of grant to schools? In any case, Sir, I would request the Government to pay some attention to the educational institutions of Sibsagar which have been suffering greatly for want of funds. I hope necessary assistance from Government will be forthcoming to the institutions of this Subdivision of Sibsagar. With these few words, Sir, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Motion moved :

“That the total provision of Rs.45,51,100 under Grant No.17, Major head—37.—Education, at page 83 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.45,51,100 do stand reduced by Rs.100.”

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : Sir, I intend to speak a few words about the educational policy of the Government. Within the year a quinquennial report from the years 1938-42 was published which furnishes very interesting statistics regarding the progress in the matter of education within the quinquennium. This, however, does not reveal any bold change in our educational policy, nor does it reveal any serious attempt on the part of the Government to liquidate the preponderance of illiteracy within the masses.

Primary Education in the Province is maintaining a very precarious existence. The poorly paid school teachers were hit hardest by the soaring prices of all essential commodities. A dearness allowance of rupees three, 60 per cent. of which was borne by the Provincial Government, could not help them materially. As a result, a good number of trained teachers are being compelled by circumstances to leave their permanent jobs and search for a living elsewhere. The Local Boards with their limited resources could not provide them with free ration or ration at controlled prices. The Government do not recognize that they have any responsibility in the matter.

As regards the spread of Primary Education, we deplore that a bigger sum could not be provided in the new schemes for taking over venture schools by the Local Boards. You know, Sir, that of all the Indian Provinces, Assam spends the lowest percentage of her income for the spread of Primary Education. The Hon'ble Education Minister—himself a veteran educationist—should exert his influence in the Cabinet and secure adequate grants for the cause of Primary Education in the Province.



Here I may be allowed to mention the most important point of Mr. Sargent's Report relating to Basic (Primary and Middle) Education. It envisages a system of universal and free compulsory education for all boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14. It is estimated that such an elementary education for British India alone will cost Rs. 200 crores a year. I submit, Sir, that the Government of Assam should be alive to the situation and should take full advantage of the report—whatever it is worth.

Regarding Secondary Education, the first thing that comes to our mind is the miserable condition of the teachers of the Aided High Schools. We are grateful to the Hon'ble Minister of Education for providing a sum of Rs.50,000 for meeting the demand for an increased salary by the teachers of the aided institutions. But the Hon'ble Minister might have realised that the amount is too meagre to meet the situation. In the Budget this amount has been shown as non-recurring. We hope it will continue at least during the pendency of the war.

Sir, if Bengal with two Universities of its own have got the need for a Secondary Board of Education, Assam's need is still greater. I would request the Hon'ble Minister in charge to come forward with a Bill for establishing a Board of Secondary Education for Assam in the next Session of the Assembly.

I deeply mourn the premature death of the Assam University Bill—a Bill which entailed so much expenditure from the provincial revenue. Lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Education Minister is mainly responsible for the catastrophe. Within the last two years Orissa could found a University of its own. The small Province of Sind is going to have its own University. But in Assam on the pretext of war condition, the Bill, after so much labour, had to be shelved. The attitude of the Government cannot be too severely criticised.

The standard of education in the Province was never high. Recently it has further deteriorated. The same is reflected in the All-India Competitive Examination, where the Assam boys have never fared well. This deterioration is partly due to our policy of recruitment in the Educational Services. I submit, Sir, that there is no dearth of efficient candidates in any community. So even keeping the allotted quota of communal representation, the standard can be raised if the Hon'ble Minister wants to do so. Within the current year, we had two very important educational conferences held—one at Sylhet under the presidency of the Hon'ble Premier and the other at Shillong under the presidency of the Hon'ble Education Minister. But I am sorry to find that no provision has been made to implement any of the recommendations. As per recommendation of the Muslim Educational Conference, some junior Madrasas for girls have been started, but there is no provision in the Budget for subventing these new ventures.

Sir, I am never tired of speaking about the utter futility of the expenditure for the Mass Literacy Campaign. In a Mass Literacy Centre at Sylhet the Hon'ble Education Minister was an interesting witness—when with a good deal of effort only 7 adults could be procured to make an exhibition before His Excellency the Governor of Assam when His Excellency was pleased to visit the Centre. Will he still persist to run after the shadow?

Sir, for the last few years we are receiving more than 30 lacs of rupees on account of agricultural income-tax. This is a new source of income. I would urge upon the Government to allot the whole receipt for the spread of Primary Education. It will mean a very big investment for the regeneration of the country as a whole. With these words I support the Motion.

Khan Sahib Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY:  
Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have tried to discuss the grievances of the Muslim public in my Budget speech and placed them before the Government for their favourable consideration. But as the time at our disposal is very short, I shall be very brief and I only like to reiterate our demands which are as follows:—

(1) That a Muslim officer be appointed as Director of Public Instruction in the Province.

(2) That provision be made in the Supplementary Budget for starting two Islamic Intermediate Colleges—one in the Surma Valley and the other in the Assam Valley.

(3) That immediate steps be taken by extending the principle of Muslim representation in Classes I and II of the Assam School Service.

I sincerely appreciate the principle of appointing a truly Porhezgar Ulama as the principal of Sylhet Madrasa. We want that an Ulama of All-India reputation be appointed and no question of provincialism should interfere in selecting the candidate for the post.

I also like to draw the attention of the Government to a great injustice done to the people of Assam. The Calcutta University has been annually deriving a substantially large proportion of its total income from the University Examination fees and other payments made by students belonging to the Province. We like to make a demand for a fair measure of representation of Assam in the services under the Calcutta University. May I urge upon the Government of Assam to move the proper authority to safeguard the interest of the people of the Province in respect of the services in the Calcutta University? I also draw the attention of the Government to the paucity of the representation of Assam in the Senate of the Calcutta University and may I request the Government of Assam to move the proper authority to increase the number of representation from Assam in the Senate of the Calcutta University?

Aligarh has now become the centre of Muslim culture in India and the Muslim students of the whole of India have got a special attraction for the Muslim University at Aligarh. I know that a great number of students from Assam are now prosecuting their studies in the University of Aligarh. The number of students from Assam in the Aligarh University is going to be increased year by year. So in order to look to the welfare of the students from Assam, our Government should move the University authority at Aligarh for making accommodation of at least five members in the Court of the University of Aligarh.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I like to give a few suggestions to the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Education. Sir, I am not going to criticise the policy because I think I shall be failing in my duty if I do not admit that so far as this Department is concerned we find that there is a genuine desire to make a headway.

My hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury has tried to impress that the Mass Literacy Campaign should not be continued any more. Sir, he has missed to find out where the defect lies. The campaign is not a bad one, but the way in which it is being pursued is defective. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will take proper care of this campaign so that it may be really successful and the criticism that has been levelled against this campaign may not be raised in future.

Sir, in this connection I like to mention about the girls' education in the Province. There is a Girls' school at Jail Road, Shillong, and Government has taken charge of it only upto Middle English Standard, though there are 4 upper classes, that is upto Matric Standard. They are being managed by the public with great difficulty. I think it is high time that the Government should take up the entire school upto Matric Standard and finance the whole expenditure of this school. Again there is a Girls' school at Baniyachong. Both the Deputy Inspector and the Inspector of Schools have recommended for grant, but I understand that nothing has been done up till now. Sir, this is a very deserving case and I hope the Hon'ble Minister will make a note of it so that adequate grant-in-aid may immediately be sanctioned. There is another girls' school at Sylhet—I mean the Kishori Mohan Girls' school. Though there is a Government Girls' High School at Sylhet, there was great demand for another girls' school and this Kishori Mohan Girls' school is now serving the need of the public there. Though Government has given some grant, the grant should be increased so that the school may continue in a proper way imparting education among the girls.

Sir, I must thank the Hon'ble Education Minister for increasing the grant for some of the non-Government Arts Colleges for boys and for increasing the grant of the Sylhet Women's College. But, Sir, in this case though I thank him, I am under

the painful necessity of mentioning that the increased grant is so small that it will be practically of very little help to Sylhet Women's College. At present the college is running on a huge deficit. The number of women students in that college is near about 100. I hope the Hon'ble Education Minister will see his way to increase the grant of this institution to meet its requirement and come up with a Supplementary Demand.

As regards Sanskrit education, Sir, several times we requested several Ministers in charge of Education to appoint a whole-time Class I officer to be in charge of the Assam Sanskrit Board and for inspection of the *tois* of the Province. But so far as I know there is a move for appointing a Class II officer for this purpose. Sir, if Government really feel that there is a necessity for such an officer they must provide us with a real type of man for this work. During the last Budget Session I brought to the notice of Government the hard lot of the clerks of the Sanskrit Association. Sir, they are supposed to be in the same category with the clerks of the Local Boards, but they do not get the facilities enjoyed by the Local Board clerks in the shape of dearness allowance, foodstuff at concession rates, and scale of pay, etc. I hope the Hon'ble Minister will try to remove the real grievance of these poor clerks who are only two in number.

Sir, as regards Primary Education, though an increased amount in comparison with the last year has been provided, I think it would have been better if more money could be provided. Sir, I have got faith in the Hon'ble Minister in charge of this Department, and I hope next year we shall see a Budget which will provide an adequate amount for Primary Education in the Province.

With these few words, I beg to resume my seat.

Babu BALARAM SIRCAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is indeed painful to see that no provision has been made in the Budget for encouraging education amongst the scheduled castes. It is our common knowledge that it is only the scheduled castes which alone deserve special treatment in matter of education. The Muhammadans have made rapid progress in education, because of the appointment of a series of special officers for Muhammadan education, and also because of special grants for Maktabs and Madrassa education.

Have the Government appointed even a single officer for encouraging scheduled caste education? The Maktabs and Madrassas have separate allotments in the Budget. Even among the primary venture schools those having majority of Muhammadan students get their aids in preference to others, while many scheduled caste schools after continuing for 7 or 8 years without any aid are ultimately forced to close down for want of monetary help.

Sir, it is a well-known fact that the scheduled castes are extremely poor and cannot afford to pay for a venture school for a pretty length of time. I would suggest, Sir, there may be an Assistant Director of Public Instruction for scheduled caste education and under him Inspectors and Deputy Inspectors to promote education amongst them. The need for such an appointment is greater to-day for scheduled castes than for any other community.

Sir, last year some venture schools of the Karimganj subdivision were taken up by the Government on a representation made by me to the Hon'ble Education Minister. I am grateful to him for the consideration he has shown. But, Sir, there are still many schools of several years standing in the Karimganj subdivision which are on the verge of extinction. I hope this year also the Hon'ble Minister will try to save them by making suitable grants-in-aid available for them even though separate provision has not been made in the Budget for scheduled castes' education.

With these few words I beg to resume my seat.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, much has been said by my hon. Friends about education. I would like to begin with the Public Library of Shillong which is the only Government institution of its kind in the whole Province. From the Budget I find that a sum of Rs.5,103 is spent

for this Library, out of which only Rs-1,000 is provided for the purchase of books, maps, etc., and the remaining amount goes toward the cost of establishment and contingencies. Out of Rs.1,000 provided for purchase of books, maps etc. something like Rs.500 goes for purchase of magazines and only Rs.500 is spent for purchase of books which is undoubtedly a meagre sum. I will now give some names of books which were purchased by this Library not long ago. I begin the list with—

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Gurur Puran.                 | 21. Jagyabalkya Adwaitabad.                            |
| 2. Matsya Puran.                | 22. Banglar Dharma Guru.                               |
| 3. Kurma Puran.                 | 23. Vedavedya Dwaitadwaita Sidhanta.                   |
| 4. Utkalkhanda Puran.           | 24. Different versions of Gita, Upanisad and Bhagabat. |
| 5. Brahma-baibarta Puran.       | 25. Islam in the world.                                |
| 6. Devi Puran.                  | 26. Islam the only religion.                           |
| 7. Bhakta Chintamani.           | 27. Islam on the cross road.                           |
| 8. Bhaktir Sarbasresta.         | 28. Mystic tendencies in Islam.                        |
| 9. Banglar Baisnab Dharma.      | 29. The psychology of Faquirs.                         |
| 10. Tatwa Chandrika.            | 30. The Persian mystics.                               |
| 11. Puran Probesh.              | 31. Gita Bible.  |
| 12. Bramha-sutram.              | 32. Tibbetian Joga.                                    |
| 13. Sakti-bhasyam.              | 33. Studies in scriptures.                             |
| 14. Garga Sanhita.              | 34. The invisible helper.                              |
| 15. Premdharm.                  | 35. The other side of death.                           |
| 16. Sankhya Parichoy.           | 36. Mystical interpretation of Christmas.              |
| 17. Abatar-tatwa-               | 37. A golden treasury of Bible.                        |
| 18. Rashlila.                   | 38. Heaven or hell.                                    |
| 19. Nabadwip-mohima.            |  |
| 20. Sri Sri Gaur Govinda Tatwa. |  |

Now, Sir, we are living in the twentieth century but I find that the gentleman who is in charge of selecting books is looking for the life to come and not for the life of the present day progress and advancement. He does not like to give any knowledge to the reader about the present day world but he is very keen about giving the knowledge about the world to come.....

Babu DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: You are in heaven.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Well, all are desirous of going to heaven.

There are readers who want to read books on History, Science, Economics, Politics, etc. but from the list I have placed before the House you will find that the books in the library are dealing not with subjects of the present-day world but they are fit to be kept in the 'Asthana of a Sheikh or hermitage.....

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Is it a complete list?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: No, but I gave some of the names.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: When were these purchased?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Only recently, Sir.

It is a matter of surprise, Sir, that the library does not contain a complete set of work of Rabindra Nath Thagore, Najrul Islam or any modern writer of Bengal. Many readers go there in search of knowledge but they can know only those things which will be beneficial to them for the world to come. With these few words, Sir, I bring the matter to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister who, I think, will look into the matter and see that the manner of selection is changed and if required, the person in charge of the library be changed. Of course, I do not cherish any ill-feeling or grudge against anyone.

We cannot forget that we are living in the twentieth century and we should know everything about the scientific and economic progress of the world.

Sir, I now like to speak a few words.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Will the hon. Member take long?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Only a few minutes more, Sir.

### Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned for lunch till 2 p. m. of the clock.

### After lunch

(The Assembly re-assembled after lunch with Mr. Deputy Speaker in the chair.)

Maulavi MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Khan Sahib Dewan Ahbab Chaudhury tells me that the Public Library does not subscribe Muslim magazines and newspapers, such as *Muhammadi* and *Azad*. It does not contain any volume of the works of Iqbal. I should like the persons in charge of the library to give the readers some knowledge of the aspects of modern science and development.

I want now to make a few observations about Muslim girls' education. Sir, some time ago a conference was convened at Sylhet under the presidency of the Hon'ble the Prime Minister. That conference adopted a scheme for the spread of education among Muslim girls. I understand that that scheme was accepted by Government; but to my utter disappointment I find that not a single pie has been provided in the Budget. I hope the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Education will kindly take note of it.

Sometime in July last there was a conference presided over by the Hon'ble Minister of Education. The aim of that Conference was to find out ways and means for the expansion of Primary education and for removing the faulty distribution of schools. I remember, Sir, that some valuable resolutions were accepted in the Conference and the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Education agreed to those resolutions, but up till now we have not known what became of the fate of those resolutions. We do not find provision in the Budget, list of new schemes to see if the Hon'ble Minister brought these suggestions in the shape of resolutions into action. In this Conference a compromise was brought about between Mass Literacy and Primary Education. The Hon'ble Minister gave us hope that he would spend as much money as would be required for the expansion of Primary Education and that a Mass Literacy Officer for Surma Valley would very soon be appointed. But so far these two items are concerned the Hon'ble Minister has not as yet made any provision. I bring these facts to his notice so that he may take immediate action in the matter.

Now, I want to speak a few words about difficulties of the students which have been brought to my notice by some college and school students. They are experiencing great difficulties with regard to paper and kerosene. They are unable to defray the charges of hostels due to abnormal prices of commodities. In some places the hostels and institutions have been occupied by the military people, while Government could not give any relief to the students. I bring this to the notice of the Government with the hope that they would remove the difficulties of students and try to give them proper facilities to procure paper during these days of paper famine. Now paper can be obtained only from the black market.

(Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: There is paper.)

But it is not adequate to meet the requirements of the students without going to the black market. They cannot get sufficient supply of paper. I would request the Hon'ble Minister to make such arrangements that students who require paper may get it easily and at controlled price.

With these few words, I resume my seat.

Maulavi OSMAN ALI SADAGAR: মাননীয় Deputy Speaker মহাশয়, আমি বিদ্যাহীন লোক—আমি দুই চারিটা কথা বলিব। বেশী কথা বলিতে পারি না, কারণ আমি অক্ষম। আমি গরীব ছিলাম সেজন্য পড়াশুনা করিতে পারি নাই। আমাদের ওখানে একটি—High School দেওয়া হইয়াছে। আমাদের প্রধান মন্ত্রী, শিক্ষা মন্ত্রী এবং নারীর মন্ত্রী ঐ স্কুল দেখিয়া আসিয়াছেন। এই স্কুল উপযুক্তরূপে সাহায্য পায় নাই। গরীবের

ছেলে বেতন দিয়া পড়াশুনা করিবে—এই শক্তি তাহাদের নাই। আমি আশা করি সরকার এই স্কুলে সাহায্য দিয়া আশাদের বাধিত করিবেন। (Voices—কোন স্কুল ?) নগাঁও, আলিটালুনি ওগ্‌মানি হাই স্কুল।

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to say a few words about the points raised by my hon. Friend Srijut Surendra Nath Buragohain. In his discussion he made some complaints regarding the policy of Government. The first thing he spoke about was the establishment of a separate female college in the town of Gauhati. I think, Sir, and it is my candid opinion, that a separate college for female education is not very essential because co-education can serve the purpose of higher education of our women, as it is doing in other civilised countries of the world, namely in Europe and America. Then, Sir, the question of finance is also to be considered. Does my hon. Friend not consider what a huge amount of expenditure Government will have to incur if the female college at Gauhati be provincialized.

Then, Sir, my hon. Friend made another complaint that the Sibsagar Subdivision is not getting as much facilities as the Gauhati town is having. In this connection, I should say, Sir, Gauhati is the capital of the Assam Valley Division and it is but natural that it should get preference over others in every matter. For instance, Shillong is the capital of Assam, are we then to envy the Khasi people for having advantages of this capital town? Certainly not, Sir. So, my Friend's complaint is not reasonable. I am sorry, I cannot agree with him in this point. Gauhati being the capital of the Assam Valley is entitled to get more facilities in all matters than other smaller towns of that Valley and we should not be jealous of this.

Then, Sir, the hon. Member, who has just spoken, has complained that the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Education is not taking any steps on the reports of the Education Conference. Sir, the report of that conference has just been placed before this House during this present Session. So it is not yet time for the Hon'ble Minister to take any steps in this matter and he should not be criticised for not taking any steps.

My hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury said that progress was unsatisfactory. But this is due to the fact that many experienced teachers and professors have volunteered for war service. But my Friend Maulavi Abdul bari Chaudhury complained that there are sufficient qualified men to take up the places of those teachers and professors who volunteered for war service and the Government is not doing anything for the recruitment of such men. But, Sir, in this respect also I should say that my hon. Friend cannot expect good results from such new and inexperienced teachers. These new teachers will not teach the students as effeciently as the old experienced teachers used to do with the result that there will be surely bad results in the examinations. So, Sir, this criticism is not reasonable, and with these words, I oppose all the Cut Motions.

Then, Sir, my hon. Friend. Mr. Momin drew Government's attention to the vacant post of a teacher in the Tura High School. Of course, it was the duty of the Head Master of the School to bring the matter to the notice of the Managing Committee of the school and then to bring this fact to the notice of the Government. However, I being a member of the Managing Committee of that school bring this matter to the notice of the Government and hope the Hon'ble Minister will take immediate steps in filling up that vacancy.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: That vacancy has been filled up already.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, while I rise to speak on the Motion now before the House, I should, at the very outset, express my appreciation for the progress which the Hon'ble Minister of Education has been able to make in this Department. Since he took over the charge of the Department, I find there has been some progress, but at the same time I should observe that the progress which we are appreciating is not quite enough up to the present-day demand of the people of the Province. With the progressive ideas of the nations,

with the progressive outlook of the people of the country, is it not expected that our Education Department should be much more wider in its scope to bring forth certain reforms and changes throughout the whole educational sphere of the Province? Is it not expected that the people of our Province should be infused with new ideas so that they can stand on an equal footing with the people of other nations of the world? What is this Education Department meant for? This is the Department which can alone boast of making our future generation imbued with progressive outlook and ideas so that they can stand as equals with the other progressive nations of the world. But what do we find, Sir. We find that our Education Department is going in a stereotyped way making only some progress in imparting education in certain branches. I do not think, that we can be satisfied with the manner in which the departmental authorities are proceeding. While beginning my observations I was expressing my appreciation to the Hon'ble Minister of Education. But at the same time I was remarking that what we expect from this Department we are not getting. I simply make my severe protest against the manner in which the officers who are adorning the high positions in the Department are functioning. The high salaried officers who have been put on the top of the Department, can hardly be justified to the posts they hold. Is it not a fact that the Directorate of the Education Department of this Province has totally failed? It is a general cry in the Province that the Directorates in the Education Department are not doing what has been done in the past by other officers. I for myself cannot appreciate and do not appreciate the present manner of work of the Directorate. Since after the retirement of the permanent incumbent the post of the Director could be filled up by a highly qualified suitable man. No matter if he be a man of this Province or outside.

Then what is about the Assistants to Director of Public Instruction? I am rather reluctant to admit that the present incumbents are suitable to conduct the Education Department of a province. At least they could not justify their existence.

Then again to speak about the Inspectorate, what have we seen in the past Sir? Whenever a visiting officer visited a particular institution his very presence had created an atmosphere both to the teacher and the taught. But now-a-days whenever a visiting officer visits a school no body feels his presence. My hon. Friend Mr. Abdul Bari was complaining about deterioration in the Department. Is it not due to the defect in the Directorate? The educational institutions are very rarely visited by the officers. It is up to the Department and specially the Head of the Department to see that the defects are rectified at once.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member should finish now.  
 Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Yes, Sir, I am finishing within two minutes. Sir, during the general discussion of the Budget last year I pointed out to the Hon'ble Minister the desirability of opening two commerce classes attached to, both the Government Arts Colleges and so far as I remember I was assured by the Hon'ble Minister that the question would receive consideration and that Government would examine it, but this time I do not find any indication whether that question was at all taken up by them. May I reasonably now expect that the Hon'ble Minister will give a suitable reply to my point.

Then again, Sir, if you go through the Budget provisions which the Hon'ble Minister is going to give to a number of non-Government Arts Colleges you will find that the Hon'ble Minister has been pleased to favour all the non-Government Arts Colleges in the Province except the unfortunate College at Habiganj. I may state it without fear of contradiction that the Habiganj College stands first in the Province and the Hon'ble Minister is quite aware of the fact that the present grant which the College is receiving is not sufficient enough to meet the expenditure of the big staff which the College has to maintain. May I enquire of the Hon'ble Minister—although at his last visit to the Habiganj College he was kind enough to commit himself that he would see that the College receives an additional grant from this year—why nothing has been done in this direction? I just point out to him the omission. The other day I saw him in this connection and he said that the College authorities

should make a representation. But I have been informed by the Principal who is the Secretary also, that they had already applied to the Hon'ble Minister for increasing the grant.

Then, I may point out to him the case of Habiganj Middle English School. I may remind him of his inspection note dated 19th February, 1944, which runs thus: "I visited the Habiganj Middle English School this day with the Subdivisional Officer, Habiganj and the Inspector of Schools. Its enrolment is 243. It is one of the best managed schools that I have so far visited in the Province. Its examination results are very satisfactory. This institution should receive better attention from the Department. Its grant-in-aid which stands at Rs.38 per month should be increased to its former level if not more and the building grant of Rs.900 which was recommended by the Inspector of Schools in the past, should be given without any further delay". I may remind the Hon'ble Minister that the School used to receive Rs.60 per month formerly.

Only one point more and I have finished. I may also remind the Hon'ble Minister about the restoration of the original grant of the Shaistaganj High School which is a very promising institution. He was pleased to give them hope of restoration of the full grant.

With these words, Sir, I resume my seat.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my reaction to the Education Budget was mixed feelings of praise and pity for the Education Minister. I praise him, because he has not forgotten any of the institutions or any worthy cause but I pity him for the very small grant which he has been able to carve for his Department. Sir, at a time when the land revenue is being realised at full rate after 12 years of reduction and at a time when our forests have been practically denuded in order to get alarming amount of revenue and at a time when excise revenue has increased by 60 per cent. is it not a pity that the Education Department should be granted less than 2 lakhs of rupees. I know that the Education Minister of Assam has to meet two formidable foes. These two foes are—the Secretary of the Education Department and the Secretary of the Finance Department. These two formidable foes always belong to the Indian Civil Service. When they land on our soil or before they join their office they are told that there is a general tendency of the popular Government to spend more money on the education than on roads, etc., and they should always take care to see that less money is spent for education and it is also instilled in their mind that this Educational Institution of India gives birth to revolutionaries, and therefore they should be kept under control with a firm hand. They do not forget this lesson whether they are in charge of Districts or Subdivisions or whether they are in charge of the Secretariat. This lesson which they get in the infancy of the service is not easily forgotten. It is for this training and for their efficiency in carrying out what they were taught to do that the Education Minister always gets a poor share of the Government revenue.

Sir, I admire the Hon'ble Education Minister for his gift to the Women's college of Sylhet and the Barpeta college. But I feel sorry when I think that the Radha Kanta Handique College has not received the same generous treatment in his hands. This is a college which was founded by a magnanimous donor whose name is associated with this institution and whose name will be remembered by the posterities for his various magnificent gifts given to the people of Assam. He gave as much as Rs. 30,000 for this institution with the fervent hope of fostering real education amongst the women of this Province. Sir, I join my voice with that of the hon. Mover of this Motion that steps should be taken for early provincialisation of this college and I do not hesitate to say that money should be found, if possible, for provincialisation of the two women colleges, because we must have full-fledged Government colleges for women and it should not be entirely left to the public efforts alone.

Sir, I also admire the interest which the Hon'ble Education Minister has taken for spread of education amongst the tribal people. I always feel that the tribal people are the real and unmixed children of the soil. I feel that with the education and enlightenment and with the material progress of our tribal brethren are bound the



good name and progress of the whole Province and of the whole Assamese nation. Sir, it is therefore quite in the fitness of things that an Assistant Inspector for tribal education has been appointed. I hope a really qualified and experienced man will be found for the job.

Sir, I expect at the same time that the Hon'ble Education Minister would give some attention to Sanskrit education. He has given a grant to the *tols*. But I would ask him to appoint an Assistant Inspector or officer of any designation he chooses, to give his whole attention to Sanskrit education and see that the money which has been allotted and is being allotted for the last 4 years, is properly utilised and spent. It is a matter of great gratification to us that the aided school teachers have not been forgotten but what would a sum of Rs.50,000 really mean? There are more than 10,000 teachers in different aided schools.....

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : Sir, on a point of personal information, the other day while discussing about Primary education I put a question whether the Garo Hills will be affected by the new appointment of the Assistant Inspector of Schools for the scheduled caste peoples' schools.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : But, Sir, the amount which has been given is much too small to bring any remarkable relief. So, I ask the Hon'ble Education Minister to see if further amount can be allotted for the purpose in course of this year out of the savings from other Heads.

The retention of the educational buildings for the purpose of the Military remains a disgrace to this Government. I quite understand that when a large number of soldiers had to come at a time suddenly and had to be accommodated at once it was necessary to allow them to occupy the educational buildings. But what excuse there can be to allow these buildings to be retained by the Military even after two years? As Mr. Whittaker suggested the other day, if we really cannot turn the Military out of these buildings because we are to look to the comforts of the Military who do not want to part with such comforts which they get in these educational buildings, could not the Government think of starting constructing buildings elsewhere for housing colleges and schools? Well, in order to prevent their occupation by the Military they should be built in a less luxurious style, and that is the only way to prevent occupation by the Military.....

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : May I know, Sir, whether Mr. Rohini Chaudhuri's house has been requisitioned by the Military?

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Not yet. That is not an educational building. But I hope to see that this kind of interruptions is less frequent. I can attribute this state of affairs of occupation of them to negligence and slow movement of the Government who in this way is making a good profit out of the rent received by letting out the educational building to the Military Department, and they are not utilising that rent for substitution of the occupied buildings that are let out. For instance Government is realising about Rs. 300 per month as rent of the quarter of the Principal of the Cotton College who has been given 50 per cent. of this rent to hire a house for his own occupation and thus Government is making profit. I hope Government will take steps to get all institutions released out of the clutches of the Military people.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN : Sir, I hope to be given some time to reply. We have got only 20 minutes left to 3 p. m.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : One thing for which I could not praise the Hon'ble Education Minister in as glowing terms as I have done in other cases—his utter apathy towards the student security prisoners. As Minister-in-charge of Education, his first duty was to look to the question whether these students should be detained for any length of time as security prisoners, whether there is any justification for detaining them as security prisoners and whether full facilities have been granted to them for carrying on their education inside the jails. After all, it should have been borne in mind by the Hon'ble Minister that these student security prisoners have not been convicted of any offence whatsoever. And as we have spent money for the education of the ordinary prisoner inside the jails, why should a sufficient provision be not made for these student prisoners?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I hope the hon. Member will finish.

Srijut ROHANI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I will finish. As regards kerosene oil, the other day I received a most unsympathetic reply from the Hon'ble Premier when he said that they are not given more than half a seer for preparing their studies. He said if he gave more allowance to the students, he would have to starve the families and therefore it could not be done. What is the use of maintaining educational institutes and a staff, if the Government do not give proper facilities to the students preparing for their examination? The hostels are still under the occupation of the military department. I am glad and I pay my compliments to the Hon'ble Minister again for his paying the rents of some messes in Gauhati. But properly managed messes for the majority of students are very few. The preventive cost of about Rs.40 a month for mere messing charge will certainly stand in the way of higher education among the students. Already the number of students have fallen off by nearly 40 per cent. So something effective must be done by the Hon'ble Minister in this direction before it is too late.

I now come to the necessity as well as the feasibility of providing for some Post-Graduate studies in the Cotton College as well as in the Murarichand College. In the Cotton College, the Post-Graduate classes in Assamese and Economics can be easily started without much further expenditure and I hope the Hon'ble Minister will take early steps in this direction.

Sir, I have only one or two words more to say and then I will close. In spite of all the criticisms—venomous and strong, which have been hurled against the Mass Literacy Campaign by some hon. Members of this House, I must say that the Hon'ble Education Minister has done well by carrying on the campaign. But I must at the same time say that the Mass Literacy Campaign has not been able to make as much progress as we expected, on account of various impediments, and want of kerosene oil is one of the most serious impediments. Therefore, unless the Hon'ble Premier comes to the rescue in this matter the Mass Literacy Campaign will not make much progress. Another defect to which my attention has been drawn in this Department is the irregular way in which salaries are paid to the Mass Literacy employees. It is the task of the Mass Literacy Officer to distribute the salaries, but many of the officers do not get it at proper time and the travelling allowances are never paid till the end of the year. I know of one officer who has resigned. His travelling allowance has not been paid, although more than 6 months have elapsed since his resignation was accepted. Others who are in service do not dare complain about the non-receipt of their salaries.

Sir, one word about the invidious comparison that was made between Gauhati and Sibsagar. My Friend Mr. Buragohain should remember that for the last 40 years, Gauhati has given education to the Sibsagar people at least since the establishment of the Cotton College in 1902. Of course, my Friend also knows that Gauhati is now practically the colony of the Sibsagar people. Many Sibsagar gentlemen have, after retirement, settled in Gauhati. Of course, if the hon. Member resents, I am prepared to withdraw my remarks on this subject.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is now time for the Hon'ble Minister to reply. In view of the importance of the discussion on this grant of Education, I think, it would be desirable to extend the time till 3-15 P.M. This is in addition to the time allotted, if, of course the hon. Members concur with me. May I know the sense of the House?

(Voices—Yes, Yes).

Srijut RABI CHANDRA KACHARI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to speak a few words on this Cut Motion. Government has no doubt allotted some money in the Budget for education, but strangely enough there are hundreds of tribal venture schools still waiting for grants within backward tribal areas, and the Hon'ble Minister has not looked to the interest of those schools. A very small amount has been allotted in the Budget for tribal education. Specially during the past year some amounts were earmarked for expenditure on tribal education but this year no money has been earmarked. Secondly I bring to the notice of the Government that in Secondary education very insufficient aid has been given to some particular schools. Specially I would like to mention the names of Kokrajhar High School, Borama Middle English

School, Dhomdhoma High School and Harisinga Middle English School. For want of funds these schools are suffering so much that they are quite unable to pull on with their business in a proper way. So, I hope Government will look into the interest of the tribal people and see that they give a fair amount of money to these schools.

Srijut BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, as I have got a Cut Motion in my name, *viz.*, Cut Motion No.30\*, I would like to say a few words, I am compelled to speak something about the education of the labour population in Assam. Sir, I want to make Government realise the terrible backwardness of the labourers in education, so that they may take some special steps for the education of these unfortunate people. My Cut Motion concerns the Venture Primary schools of the *ex-tea* garden labourers. There are not sufficient Primary schools for them, and so I would wish that more schools should be opened for them. There are some Venture Primary schools where mostly children of the labour population attend and I would like that these schools should be recognised and be provided with grants either by Government or by Local Bodies. I may mention here some of the Venture Primary schools which if the Hon'ble Education Minister will kindly take note of and provide them with grants I shall be greatly obliged. I give the names of a few schools for instance:

Nowgong—Balijuli Lower Primary School.

Sibsagar—Moranhabi Lower Primary School,

Hilkaguri Lower Primary School.

Gojali Lower Primary School.

Dibrugarh—Chariali Bansbari Lower Primary School.

Tongra Cerabari Lower Primary School.

Kamaldai Lower Primary School.

Jorhat—Pahukatia Lower Primary School.

Manrupia Lower Primary School.

I would like that these few Venture schools should be immediately taken up. There are also some 30 more schools, and if the Hon'ble Minister likes I can give him a list of them. Sir, I hope the Hon'ble Education Minister and the Local Bodies also will give special attention for the education of *ex-garden* labour population on account of their extreme backwardness. I have nothing more to add, Sir. With these words I support the Cut Motion moved by the hon. Members.

Mr. C. GOLDSMITH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have got two Cut Motions† standing in my name, and so I would like to say a few words.

First of all, I would like to draw attention to two Middle English schools of the backward communities; one is the Gohalkona Middle English School in Kamrup for the Garos. This school had some grant during the war emergency period, but that grant is not at all sufficient, only Rs.5 was increased last year. I hope the Hon'ble Education Minister will increase this grant to meet the increased expenditure owing to the war-emergency. The other school is the Lutheran Middle English School at Tezpur amongst the *ex-tea* garden community. To encourage these people, *viz.*, the

\*30. Mr. BINODE KUMAR J. SARWAN to move:—

That the provision of Rs.11,01,775 under Grant No.17, Major head—37.—Education. Minor head—J.—Grants to Local Bodies for Primary Education (total), at page 88 of the Budget be reduced by Rs.100, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.45,51,100 do stand reduced by Rs.100.

(To urge the Government to earmark an adequate amount for the Venture Primary schools of the *ex-tea* garden Labour population.)

†27. Mr. C. GOLDSMITH to move:—

That the provision of Rs.4,76,932 under Grant No.17, Major head—37.—Education, Minor head—F.—Direct Grants to Non-Government Secondary Schools (total), at page 87 of the Budget be reduced by Re.1, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.45,51,100 do stand reduced by Re.1.

(To bring to the notice of Government that grants made to certain schools of the backward communities are not at all adequate in these war-times.)

37. Mr. C. GOLDSMITH to move:—

That the provision of Rs.1,47,590 under Grant No.17, Major head—37.—Education, Minor head—S.—Scholarships (total), at page 92 of the Budget be reduced by Re.1, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.45,51,100 do stand reduced by Re.1.

(To bring to the notice of Government that even after repeated petitions Government have not seen their way to provide even one Middle Scholarship for the backward people of the Indian Christian community while other backward communities have been provided.)

ex-tea garden community, I think it would do credit to the Hon'ble Education Minister to give an increased grant to this school also.

About the other Cut Motion standing in my name, I want to say that there are no Middle English scholarships given to the Indian Christians who compose a lot of backward people. Sometimes the plea is made that their population is so small that the percentage that falls to their lot is nil. But the Hon'ble Education Minister cannot continue with that plea for all time to come. Taking a decade or 20 or 25 years, cannot a single scholarship be granted to this small minority community? Sir, weightage is given to other minority communities. If you admit Indian Christians to be a minority community they should also be given some sort of weightage. On this principle, at least one scholarship should be granted to this minority community.

Maulavi BADARUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to speak a few words regarding the Madrassa education in the Assam Valley. Sir, the Madrassa education in the Assam Valley is in a moribund condition. You know, Sir, that the Muslims get their religious instruction from Koran and Hadis; the Koran is written in Arabic, and Hadis in Arabic and Urdu, and this makes it extremely difficult for students to get any instruction from them unless they get some education in Madrassa.

Now, Sir, there are two reasons for the Madrassa education in the Assam Valley being in a moribund condition; the first is the funds of the Madrassa are very meagre, and secondly, there is no efficient supervision over them. Some enterprising people on their own initiative first started Madrassa and for some years they continued to run these Madrassas raising subscriptions and donations from public. Government have of course given them some grant, but it is very small in comparison with the needs of the Madrassas. So, I request the Hon'ble Education Minister to come forward with more decent grant for Madrassa education in the Assam Valley.

Again, Madrassa education is suffering for want of proper supervision. Some Special Officer should be appointed at least for the Upper Assam Valley. The Assistant Director of Public Instruction for Muslim Education is busy in office works. He has little time for inspection and he cannot give his attention to the inspection of the Madrassas. He has got to tour throughout the whole Province, he can hardly visit one Madrassa in one year. So, control over Madrassa has been lacking.

Lastly, Sir, the curriculum is so vast that the pupils cannot cope with the instructions given by the teachers. I would request the Hon'ble Minister to see that the curriculum is changed in a suitable way. With these few words, I beg to resume my seat.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, rising to reply to the debate I really feel bewildered by the volume of criticisms that have been levelled against this Department. While I am grateful to the Members for the compliments that they have paid on what I have been able to achieve, I offer my blessings for the shower of abuses that have been poured over my head. We must realise that we are spending more and more money on Education every year but we are living in an abnormal time. Apart from paucity of funds due to the limitation of the Provincial Budget, the war conditions have affected this Department very adversely. There is the difficulty of accommodation, there is the difficulty in the economic conditions of the teachers and there is the further difficulty in the conditions of the taught due to war conditions. So the hon. Members should be surprised that this Department has been saved from a state of total collapse. Our immediate concern is to keep the Department going. This is not the time for taking up ambitious new schemes for expansion of education. My hon. Friend Mr. Abdur Rahman said that ours is a stereotyped Budget. I admit that there is no scope for doing much under this abnormal time. But there has been a very well thought-out scheme brought out by Mr. Sargent which has been now submitted to the Post-War Reconstruction Committee to the Government of India. I hope the hon. Members will have an opportunity of going through the report—a copy of which I have just received. I am sure, in the near future, if a well thought-out scheme is made out, our Province will be able to keep pace and implement that scheme as far as possible.

Now the first criticism that I want to meet is about the occupation of the educational buildings by the Military. Mr. Chaudhuri said that it was a standing disgrace to the Government that these buildings have not been released as yet. I can assure him that since the assumption of office I have been moving heaven and earth to get these educational buildings released and I have not failed to represent this matter to the highest authority in India, I mean the Viceroy. (*A voice*:— What is the result?). The result is, as you know, that our immediate object being to win the war, it is indispensable that some of these buildings should still be in the hands of the Military for achievement of that object. My hon. Friend Mr. Chaudhuri also made a serious insinuation that this Government is allowing them to occupy these buildings because they are making a profit out of it. But I can assure him that with the money that has been obtained, we are going to build a hostel for the Cotton College at a cost of Rs. 50,000 and I hope that the project will be completed by the next session.

Now my Friend Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury has been complaining that the University Bill has been shelved. He knows very well that this question of a University cannot be taken up now. He ascribes this to the want of enthusiasm on my part but I think, the hon. Members will realise that while this Bill was being discussed in the Select Committee there was a sharp difference of opinion about the location of the University. I will leave it to the House to judge whether this controversial question of the location of the University can be settled satisfactorily in a depleted House like this. Apart from this question, even if the location is settled, I doubt very much if under the circumstances there would be accommodation anywhere either in Shillong or in any of the places in the two Valleys where this University can be housed. (*A voice*:— But the caravan is passing). So although in two places, *viz.*, Poona and Orissa they are giving serious attention to this problem, I think, so far as Assam is concerned, it being in the front line of the war, it is impossible to think that this scheme can materialise during the continuance of the war.

Now connected with the question of the University my Friend Khan Sahib Maulavi Dewan Ahabab Chaudhury raised the question of more representation in the University in the Senate and the Syndicate. I am glad to inform him that we have recently represented to the University to have more representation from this Province.

Connected with the University is the question of Secondary Board of Education. Although this matter has been agitated for a long time, I think, unless we have a University we cannot think of a Secondary Board of Education. My Friend Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury the other day brought forward a Bill, the Assam Primary Education (Amendment) Bill in which there is a proposal to form a Central Board for Primary Education. I think, if the Bill is passed through both the Houses, we shall be able to form one Board for Primary Education by the next year and the question of formation of a Secondary Board of Education will have to wait for the future.

Now, much has been said by several Members of this House about the inability or failure of Government to implement the recommendations of the Muslim Educational Conference and the Primary Education Committee. I can assure the hon. Members that Government is not sitting idle over them. Some of these recommendations were received by Government in October last. As the hon. Members know, the time for submission of new schemes for Budget is 31st October. So within the short time at my disposal, I could put in some of the schemes in the Budget. The schemes for reorganization of the Assam Provincial Madrassa Board and the creation of a post of Assistant Inspector for Muslim Education have been included in the Budget. One of the chief recommendations of the Muslim Educational Conference was that the curricula for Maktabs, Madrassas and Title classes should be revised to bring them into the lines of modern requirements. An expert committee already sat and deliberated over this matter and they have submitted their recommendations to the Director of Public Instruction, but these have not reached Government as yet. As soon as we receive these, I will implement them from the next year, if possible.

Then another criticism has been levelled against the Department by some of my hon. Friends here for not taking steps for conversion of Middle Girls' Muktabs to Madrassas. That matter is being looked into by the Inspector. I am awaiting his report ; on receipt of it, I shall see if money can be provided in future.

Now, about Sanskrit education, several Members have spoken in favour of an Inspector for Sanskrit education. A Resolution to this effect was passed by the Upper Chamber. Of course, they wanted a man of Class II. Accordingly I sent up a proposal for an Inspector of that rank, but, unfortunately, we could not finally adopt that proposal. I can assure the hon. Members that I shall make every attempt to provide this post in the next year's Budget.

Now, many of my Friends of the Scheduled community have been complaining that we have been apathetic towards their cause. But I need say that we have been doing our very best. We have been providing every possible facilities for the students of the Scheduled castes. For Primary education of Scheduled castes, Government have granted 17 scholarships, 6 in the Assam Valley and 11 in the Surma Valley. Amongst college scholarships there are 5 scholarships reserved for the Scheduled caste people. A suggestion has been made that there should be a whole-time officer for looking after the education of the Scheduled castes. This suggestion will be carefully considered by me.

Now, Mr. Goldsmith wants to make a special plea for the Indian Christians. I think, the Indian Christians come under Tribal Plains and Tribal Hills. The number of those Christians who do not come from the Tribal Hills or the Tribal Plains is very small. They are entitled to 3 per cent. Our Educational Rules and Orders are in course of revision, so also the Scholarship Rules. While we revise these rules, we shall certainly consider the case of all the communities having regard to the number of schools, the number of students and the availability of funds.

My hon. Friend, Mr. Sarwan drew attention to the necessity of paying special attention to the education of *ex-garden* labourers. This morning while I was replying to a Question hon. Members must have seen that we are already spending about 13 to 14 thousand rupees yearly for the education of the *ex-tea-garden* labourers and we are taking up venture schools on the recommendation of the committee in which Members of the Legislature have a voice. If my Friend Mr. Sarwan is interested in any of these schools he should ask the members of the committee to plead his case. In case he wants any school especially, he can send a letter to me for my consideration.

My Friend Mr. Rabi Chandra Kachari complained that in the Budget there has been no money earmarked for the Tribal people. We already gave assurance several years back that one-sixth of the money allotted for venture schools will be spent for schools in tribal areas. Following this procedure we will see if we can allot some money for schools in the tribal areas this year. As regards more schools I hope I shall be able to examine the necessity of giving grant to these schools.

Now, my Friend Mr. Buragohain complained that Sibsagar has been neglected in the matter of grants to Primary and Secondary schools. We took as many as 9 venture schools and we gave grant to 9 Secondary Schools in his subdivision this year. It may not compare well with other districts like Kamrup. He might not have got this full share, but I can assure him that there will be no invidious distinction in the matter of distribution of grants at my hands.

Now, coming to Mass Literacy Campaign, much has been said both for and against this campaign. Hon. Members will remember that this matter was discussed threadbare about a year and a half back. Since then we called two committees to consider how to make it a success and when the last committee met, some suggestions or resolutions were adopted by us, and we are now giving effect to those resolutions. As regards the necessity of Mass Literacy Campaign, I crave the indulgence of the House to read some remarks about post-war educational development from the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education a copy of which I have received just now :

"To secure an early and effective solution of India's educational problem, the provision of facilities for adult education on the widest scale and the introduction of a free and compulsory system of Primary education are of equal urgency and must be

treated as complementary to one another.

While the literacy campaign is only one aspect of the adult education movement, the prevalence of illiteracy in India at the present time makes it the aspect to which immediate attention must be devoted.

Literacy is a means to further education and must not be regarded as an end in itself. The primary aim of the campaign must be not merely to make adults literate but to keep them literate. To achieve its object the attack must be launched on the widest possible front with the help of every agency, human or material which can in any way contribute to its success. Continuous and effective propaganda of all kinds is essential."

We are re-orienting this movement now. We have already reduced the number of centres from about 900 to about 400. We are concentrating on post-war literacy work and as regards the appointment of additional staff, one Mass Literacy Officer for Sylhet will be necessary; of course we could not provide money for this this year but if the whole House approves that this movement should continue then I shall be glad to provide for officers who will be required for this purpose. So long, however, I have been dubious about it because there has been sharp difference of opinion amongst the Members of this House as to whether this Mass Literacy movement should be continued or not. If the House agrees there will be no delay to put in more officers and to accelerate this movement with greater vigour and greater energy.

Now, Sir, some hon. Members represented that the student communities are experiencing great difficulty in matters of paper and kerosene. Only a few days ago some students waited on me on a deputation and these matters were represented to me and I am glad to tell the hon. Members that I am taking action on those grievances.

My hon. Friend, Maulavi Abdur Rahman said that there is a deterioration in education due to the fact that the Directorate and the Inspectorate are not up to the standard. Sir, I do not admit that this deterioration has anything to do with the personnel of these posts but I admit there is slackness in supervision due to insufficiency of staff. During my recent visit to many of the places I have seen that many of the schools have not been visited by the inspecting officers. I have drawn their attention to the necessity of periodical inspection and supervision of all grades of schools by the high officials.

My hon. Friend Srijut Surendranath Buragohain as well as Mr. Chaudhuri raised the question of provincialisation of the Radhakanta Handiqui Girls' College. Government has treated this College very liberally in the past. They are giving a grant of Rs. 500 monthly; they have also given buildings to them. They have very recently granted a conveyance grant of Rs. 100 to them.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: But the buildings have been taken away by the Military.

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: I think you will get back the buildings from the Military. Further this year we have been able to provide about Rs. 1,000 as non-recurring grant. But there is one thing very depressing about this College, namely, small number of students. In the Women's College at Sylhet I am glad to tell that the number is about 100 whereas in the Radhakanta Handiqui College the number is near about 50 only. So there is great disparity in the condition of these Colleges and if the question of provincialisation arises, I think, first consideration will have to be paid to the Sylhet College.

Now, Sir, my Friend Mr. Chaudhuri raised the question of opening Post-Graduate classes in the Gauhati College. Last time when I went to Gauhati representation was made to me and similar representation was made to the Hon'ble the Prime Minister also. We are examining this question and if possible we will do our best to open Post-Graduate classes at Gauhati.

Lastly, Sir, I am very much obliged to my hon. Friend Maulavi Maqbul Hussain Chaudhuri for giving us an insight into the Public Library of Shillong. I myself did not know that this Library was in such a bad condition. I shall

be very glad to look into the matter and see what improvements can be effected.

My hon. Friend, Mr. Mookerjee, raised the question of the Shillong Jail Road Girls' School. We are already moving in the matter and we want to raise it to the standard of a High School.

Regarding the Government Girls' Middle English School and the Girls' High School of Jorhat we have received no representation so far. It is for the first time we have heard from the hon. Member about this matter and as soon as any representation is received we shall go into the matter?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: Are not Srijut Surendranath Buragohain and I representatives from Jorhat?

The Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Written representation should come through the proper channel so that I may take action on it.

Then, Sir, about the hostel accommodation in the J. B. College of Jorhat, I am glad to be able to say that the representation has just been received by us and we are considering the matter and if possible we shall try to provide some money for the purpose from the saving in the Budget even this year.

Then, lastly, Sir, my Friend Maulavi Abdur Rahman pleaded for increasing the grant of the Brindaban College of Habiganj. I may tell my hon. Friend that we have received no representation from that College for increasing the grant. It was only during my last visit, last month, I knew of it. That matter will receive due consideration next year.

As regards many other local institutions which have been named by different Members of this House for increase of grants, we shall be very glad to consider their cases very carefully.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will now call upon Srijut Buragohain to say whether he wants to press his Motion.

Srijut SURENDRANATH BURAGOHAIN: In view of the assurance given by the Hon'ble Minister, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 45,51,100 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '37.—Education (other than European)' "

The question was adopted.

#### GRANT NO 20 (40—AGRICULTURE)

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 26,65,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head "40.—Agriculture".

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motion moved:

That a sum not exceeding Rs. 26,65,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '40.—Agriculture'.

I find there are as many as twenty Cut Motions of which Cut Motion No. 19 deals with the policy of the Government regarding the Agriculture Department and I call upon Mr. Mookerjee to move his Cut Motion.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 26,65,400 under Grant No. 20, Major head—40.—Agriculture, at page 109 of the Budget be reduced by Rs 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 26,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

Sir, I have tabled this Motion to criticise Government policy with regard to Agriculture Department. Every civilized Government in this world counts upon



agriculture as the basic foundation for building up national prosperity. Sir, we do not depend on agriculture only for our food, but we also depend for raw materials for the improvement of the industries in the Province. Sir, if we go through the provision made in the Budget for different items under this department, we shall find that where there was necessity for increasing the amount those heads have been left out and where there was no necessity the amount has been increased. Sir, at the very beginning you will find that the amount under Direction has been increased. The amount under Superintendence also has been increased. Then when the question of experiment comes in, you will find that though a number of officers in the Direction and Superintendence have been increased, the amount in the Experimental Farms has been decreased. Last year there was a provision of Rs. 1,17,599 under Experimental Farms,—Jorhat, Titabar, Karinganj and Upper Shillong farms. This year Rs. 83,773 have been provided. Sir, so far as Shillong Fruit Garden is concerned, you will find that therein also the provision is less than that of last year. But when you come to the scheme for Agricultural Marketing you will find that more money has been provided. Sir, I hope all the hon. Members will agree with me that at present the demands for all kinds of fruits and other food stuffs are so great that there is no necessity of continuing this Marketing Department any more. Sir, we shall get a chance of dealing at length with this subject. So I am not going to dilate on this point here any more.

Then, Sir, you will find the scheme for sugarcane research. The other day we heard a good deal about this scheme and in reply to a Question of mine the Hon'ble Minister said that last year Government did such and such things and so far as for the next year for which the Budget is concerned, they will make more provision. But here I find that last year Rs. 16,000 were spent but there is a provision of Rs. 9,000 under this head this year. Sir, in all these cases where there was the necessity of increasing the amount, I find, that they have been left altogether neglected and where there was no necessity more money has been provided. It may very well be said that a huge amount has been provided against Grow More Food Campaign. Sir, so far as this Grow More Food Campaign is concerned, on various days during this Session we discussed about the success of this scheme. I shall touch it afterwards. In the Live-Stock Department you will find an amount much less than the amount that was provided last year, has been provided this year. One thing I fail to understand is why this Live-Stock Department is not transferred to the Veterinary Department. Sir, one deals with the disease and the other with the health of the cattle. Another striking feature is this that the Office of the Deputy Director of Live-Stock is at Shillong. Sir, I can understand that so long Mr. Woodford, the present Director of Agriculture, was in charge of this Department, there was some necessity for the office being located here. But when this Department is now under the charge of one who is an inhabitant of this Province, I think, he will be able to stand the heat of the plains and it is high time that this Department, if not amalgamated with the Veterinary Department, should be transferred to Gauhati where the Veterinary Department is located. I don't know, Sir, whether this Live-Stock Department also looks for the health of the officer who is in charge of this Department and for his health a Sanitarium is necessary with the cattle. Be that as it may, there is no justification of keeping this office here any more.

Then, Sir, you will find that there is an Economic Botanist. If we see the degrees behind his name anybody and everybody will be surprised. But we know nothing about this man's activities. We do not know whether he gets proper facilities to show his worth or not. We must know whether he has got any worth in the practical field or he only holds the degrees. It is not that we should be satisfied with a bit of sugarcane research. There are other articles which can very well and easily be grown in this Province. What has he done in other directions? I hope the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Agriculture will look to this side as well. Sir, it is commonsense that if we want to get our food cooked nicely we require a good cook at the same time good raw materials. So, here also if we want good results from this Department, we require good seeds, good land and good directors. By director I do not mean the man at the top, only, but all who will give direction to the cultivators

The number of assistants to the Director of Agriculture and assistants to the Economic Botanist and assistants of the like has been increased. But we want more men for the field—in this direction you will find no improvement. Sir, according to a Bengali saying this may be called “কামারকে ইস্পাত কাঁকি দিলে নিজেই ঠকতে হয়”. Its meaning in English is: if you want a good “Dao” you must give good steel to your blacksmith. But if you give iron and say to the blacksmith that it is a first class steel, and ask him to make a Dao, he will make a Dao, but ultimately you will suffer. This is the case with our Agriculture Department. Government is passing iron as steel and courting failures. The Grow More Food Campaign, in my opinion, is a total failure. There must be some one entirely in charge of this Department. If that is not done, haphazard measure will be of very little use to the Province. So far as supply of good seeds to the cultivators is concerned, we hear many ugly things. There are some contractors who supply seeds that are not of good quality and the seeds which are brought from outside the Province are also found in most cases rotten and insect eaten. Sir, I hope here also the Hon'ble Minister will take proper care. Sir I like to say that the Grow More Food Campaign should be called “loot more money” campaign. Here I am quoting a verse

ভাণ্ডার দ্বার খুলেছে সরকার  
অর্থ যেতেছে বহিয়া ;  
ছানা ঝুড়ি নিয়ে, এস সব ধেয়ে,  
যত পার নাও লুটিয়া । (laughter)

I will resume my seat after explaining to my European Friends here in English the meaning of the verse by a poem.

“Treasuries' doors by “Sarcar” unlocked,  
Stand opened wide, no guards them keep,  
So all money thus unblocked,  
Flows in streams not wide and deep ;  
Come ye all, in galloping strides,  
With baskets big, long sacks besides ;  
Pick as much, no ban ye stand,  
As in “loot” with dexterous hand.” (laughter)

Sir, I hope the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge will get a hint from me and would do justice to this Province.

Mr. R. A. PALMER : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have a Cut Motion\* in my name to draw the attention of Government to the urgency for the immediate increase in the area of pyrethrum under cultivation. At the beginning of this Session I put some Questions on the subject of pyrethrum and I am disappointed to find that they have not been answered in time to use the information for this Cut Motion.

The importance of Pyrethryn a product of the Pyrethrum flower, in the work of malaria control and anti-malarial measures is well known, but it may not be so well known that the world shortage of this product and particularly the shortage in India, has reached a state to cause serious anxiety to those responsible for the health of the nation, as on the supply of this product in sufficient quantities to combat malaria depends the health and lives of thousands in both the army and civil populations.

The Government of India realizing the gravity of the situation has approached several Provincial Governments including Assam, asking for the immediate extension of this crop, offering financial and other assistance under terms which guarantee the grower against loss. For many years past, there have been demands from all sides

\*13. Mr. R. A. PALMER to move :—

That the provision of Rs. 1,672 under Grant No. 20, Major head—40.—Agriculture, Minor head—C.—Experimental Farms, Sub-head—A.—Jorhat, Titabor, Karimganj and Upper Shillong Farms—1.—Pay of establishment, Detailed head—Temporary establishment for Pyrethrum cultivation scheme at page 110 of the Budget be reduced by Rs. 100, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 26,65,400 do stand reduced by Rs. 100.

(To draw the attention of Government to the urgency for the immediate increase in the area of Pyrethrum under cultivation.)

for the opening up of new industries and the cultivation of new crops in the Province and the value of pyrethrum is not unknown to this Government. Experiments have been carried out which show that the quality of pyrethrum grown in the Hills near Shillong is as good if not better than that grown in any other part of India. We were promised 300 acres of pyrethrum in 1943. And here we are in March 1944, and what do we find? Only the ridiculously small area of about 40 acres have been planted and I have no doubt we shall be offered the pious hope of further areas in the nebulous future. I have no hesitation in saying that I am voicing the views of everyone when I say "This is not good enough." We are tired of listening to the same story year after year—this nibbling at problems that require bold action.

It becomes increasingly evident that this Department is incapable of launching a scheme, large enough in conception to be a success on a commercial basis, and if this is the case we demand that private enterprise should be called in to supplement their efforts. Whatever scheme is adopted however I ask that it should be started at once. Pyrethrum is a seasonal crop and unless planted within the next few weeks a whole year will be lost. It is no use thinking in terms of 40 to 50 acres or 300 to 400 acres in future years to come. What is wanted is at least 500 acres at once. As an example I understand that the Madras Government has already sanctioned a scheme for the immediate planting of 1,000 acres in the Nilgiri Hills. If the Madras Government can do it, so can we.

We insist that the present policy of dilly-dally shall stop and that this golden opportunity for the introduction of the pyrethrum industry into the Province shall be grasped with both hands.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wish to speak a few words about the agricultural policy of the Government of Assam. Excepting the Grow More Food Campaign, the Government have not undertaken any other bold scheme for the agricultural development of the Province, within the current year.

As the Grow More Food Campaign constitutes the major part of the Government policy, it should receive our first and foremost consideration. In the current year, we provided a little over six lakhs of rupees for this campaign. But the scheme was largely expanded and it is estimated that a sum of Rs. 18,54,000 would be spent this year. Out of this big amount, we have received a subsidy of 4 lacs of rupees from the Government of India. The Central Government also favoured us with a grant of 9 lacs of rupees free of interest repayable within a year. In the next financial year, we have estimated for Rs. 22,93,000 for the same. The Government of India will provide Rs. 5,16,000 as subsidy and 10 lacs as repayable grant. The question is how we are going to utilize the amount. In the present year, we could not take full advantage of the situation owing mainly to three factors.

Firstly, in spite of our vast cultivable waste land we could not bring under plough sufficient additional lands. The target figure allotted by the Government of India could not be reached. The increase was in the neighbourhood of 4 lacs of bighas only.

Secondly, proper irrigation facilities could not be provided to the cultivators. It is a pity that Sir William Stampe, the Irrigation Advisor to the Government of India could not be brought down to Assam to investigate its peculiar needs and conditions and draw up an elaborate scheme as regards the irrigation possibilities of the Province. For lack of proper facilities and expert guidance a portion of the normal acreage in the low-lying areas had to remain barren.

The third factor relates to seeds—its supply and distribution. In spite of repeated complaints, the quality of seeds did not improve. The distribution was not made on a planned basis. The price was kept on high level—often above the purchasing power of the cultivator. These contributed to hamper materially the successful prosecution of the campaign.

In this connection I would like to refer to the cultivation of wheat and barley in various parts of the Province. It might be seen from the Budget Estimates, that wheat and barley worth about Rs. 38,000 were distributed for cultivation. These are newcomers and do not generally grow in this part of the country and our agriculturists are fully ignorant of the peculiar method of its cultivation. But still Government did not think it necessary to import an expert instructor from other parts of India for necessary advice.

Large quantities of seeds of European types of vegetables had been imported by the Government of India and distributed amongst the Provinces. We would like to know whether the Government of Assam took advantage of this indent and if so, how they utilised the same.

As regards the irrigation projects—I would like to make a passing reference to the hydro-electric possibilities of Assam. Our Publicity Officer, Mr. Hayley has demonstrated in his beautiful films how the perennial waterfalls of Assam if properly harnessed can revolutionise the whole Province. It will not only supply cheap electricity but also bring under cultivation vast tracts of barren land. This is no figment of imagination. Bombay and the Punjab have successfully experimented in the line. The only thing required is robust thinking. I have great confidence in the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture. I am sure, he will rise equal to the occasion and give us a bold lead in the matter.

Of late, Assam potato has come into very much prominence. War condition has increased its food value. At present it does not grow in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills alone but it is being cultivated on a large scale even in the plain districts. One of the chief difficulties in connection with the cultivation of potato is the supply of healthy seed. When diseased seed is used, diseases spread and multiply and the outturn of the crop goes down from year to year. It is therefore urgently necessary to arrange for the supply of healthy seed to the growers. Past experience has shaken public confidence in the quality of seeds supplied by the Department. In consequence there has been little demand for seed potato in the current year. So it is essentially necessary that a scheme for certification of seed potato should be undertaken as early as possible. Dr. Padwick, the Imperial Mycologist sent a note to the Government of Assam over the question of certification of seed potato. But evidently our Government did not realise the gravity of the subject and did not take any action in the matter.

At the present moment, there is a tremendous demand for linseed which is being used for varnishes and paints. At the Central Farm at Dacca, the Government of Bengal carried out experiments on the subject, and it was found that the Bengal yield compared very favourably with that of the United Provinces. I submit, that soil conditions being almost similar, it can be grown in abundance in the plain districts of Assam. Government's attention should be diverted into the matter.

I would also like to draw the attention of the Government to the extensive damage that is caused to our paddy by insect pests—specially rice-stem borer and rice-hispa. It is really unfortunate that the Government of Assam did not consider it worthwhile to adopt a scheme to study the incidence and damage caused by these insects and the method of controlling the same on economic basis.

I would request the Government to re-examine and re-model the scheme known as the Special Rural Uplift Scheme over which we are spending a very large amount every year—so that it might be of some utility to the villagers.

Finally, I would request the Hon'ble Minister to make more liberal provision for agricultural education.

With these words, I support the Motion.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: At this stage, in view of the shortness of time allotted, I give notice to the Hon'ble Minister to make ready his reply with close reference to almost all the Cut Motions in relation to this Grant, so as to avoid any embarrassment on my part. Henceforward I will allow as little time as possible to the hon. Members to keep within the limitation of time.



কৃষি মন্ত্রী “নব কুমার” অতি গুনবান,  
 দিব্যরাত্রি চিন্তাকরেন শস্যেরি বাড়ান ।  
 ধন্য ধন্য মন্ত্রী সভা আগামের মান,  
 মিলেজুলে ফন্দী করে তাড়াতে জাপান ।  
 এসেছলী মেঘার আর কাউঙ্গিলী জোয়ান,  
 খাদ্য সমস্যা দূর করি হও প্রিয়বান ।  
 ন্যাশনেল ওয়ার ফ্রন্ট দেশের কল্যাণ,  
 ত্রৈ শোন লেঞ্চেনার্ট ‘লেইছ’ এর আহবান ।  
 মহাগুণী কর্মবীর ইটার দেওয়ান,  
 বুদ্ধ সজ্জ সংগঠনে বড় কীৰ্ত্তিমান ।  
 পোপাগাণ্ডা অফিছার প্রচারে ‘বেজান’  
 সিংকাফনী মৌলনা সাহেব কৃষক কল্যাণ ।  
 পাবলিসিনির “মিঃ হেলী” মিল-মিস্তক প্রাণ,  
 বুদ্ধের কথা সব ভাইকে সাদরে জানান ।

The expressions “ছাদ” and “মতীন” probably relate to Hon’ble Premier and Hon’ble Finance Minister. There has been made mention of Hon’ble Civil Defence Minister, Hon’ble Revenue Minister and the Hon’ble Agriculture Minister. It is a sad omission of Hon’ble Medical Minister.

Sir, this is the sort of propaganda which has been resorted to by the officers of the Grow More Food Campaign. Is it not enough for the House to judge how the huge amount of money is being spent in the name of Grow More Food Scheme ?

Now, I would give the Hon’ble Minister-in-charge certain definite proposals. To me it appears that Government have not taken up any planned programme for making the campaign a success. No definite programme has been undertaken by the Government and the approval of the House has not been obtained. In order to achieve the real object of the Grow More Food Campaign, I would urge upon the Government to form a small committee—even it may be a committee consisting of the Hon’ble Minister-in-charge, the Director of Agriculture and one or two other expert officers—to take up this work in right earnest.

For instance take the case of sugarcane. It is the general complaint from all parts of the Province that Gur has become absolutely scarce in the Province, as we depend to a large extent on the imported Gur from outside, and which, due to transport difficulties, is not readily available now-a-days. I think it is one of the duties of this Department to undertake and encourage production of sugarcane. I can say, Sir, that if the Hon’ble Minister visits my subdivision, in Chunarughat Thana he will see how people are producing sugarcane in abundance. I know of one family which sells Gur worth Rs.25,000 to Rs.30,000 a year. This time I visited the gentleman who told me that he had already got an offer of Rs.20,000 for the entire lot of Gur he had produced, but he was expecting a better price.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: This fact may be reported to the Agricultural Income-tax Officer.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Then, I would urge upon Government to take up one or two more items.....

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Member will please finish.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Very well, Sir, let me name the articles such as oil-seeds, tobacco, vegetables of all kinds, varieties of Dal. All these essential commodities if backed by Government can be grown at a lesser cost in a very big quantity in the Province. By simply song, people won’t take to the production of these articles in a bigger quantity. Government also should give all facilities to the producers for having a better market. For want of better market for potatoes this year the people of my subdivision have become discouraged.

Babu NIRENDRA NATH DEB: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am afraid, I must have to use some unpleasant language so far as this Grow More Food Campaign is concerned. Sir, at the very outset, I will tell the House that a very wrong impression has been tried to be created in the minds of the hon. Members and the members of the public by putting in the Budget a sum under the Grow More Food Campaign at Rs.18,96,000. I submit, Sir, in fact, at least Rs.17,64,100 of that amount ought to have been shown as capital expenditure. Under the head "D.—Experimental Schemes for Research and distribution of Seeds and Manures". We find, Sir, for—

	Rs.
Paddy ... ..	6,43,500
Pulses ... ..	2,93,700
Wheat & Barley ...	89,500
Oil-seeds ... ..	43,200
Potatoes ... ..	4,00,000
Manures ... ..	2,94,200

This totals Rs.17,64,100. Whereas under the Agricultural receipts the amount that will be received in the financial year by selling all these quantities to the cultivators is Rs.13 lakhs. By selling these quantities of pulses, paddy, wheat, barley, oilseeds, potatoes and manures the Government will realise Rs.13 lakhs from the cultivators. That is at best a sum of Rs.4,64,100 is going to the benefit of the cultivators by way of concession. So if the Government is spending anything on this head, they are really spending only Rs.4,64,100, whereas an attempt has been made to show that they are spending Rs.18,96,000. I submit Sir, all this is nothing but a shopping business. The Government is purchasing all these huge quantities worth about 18 lakhs of rupees in the open market, paddy and other things—all rotten—most of them do not germinate at all, and they are selling those to the cultivators at a concession rate. It is nothing but a shopping business and, Sir, what is more regrettable is that people have grave doubts about what the cultivators are actually getting out of this. This Rs.4,64,100 is also not going fully to the benefit of the cultivating people.

People have grave doubt, Sir—I am constrained to make this remark Sir, I have insistent reports both from officers and cultivators—that everything is not above suspicion so far as these purchases are concerned. I will request the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Agriculture to have a special enquiry into the matter and also to see if really the seeds are being given to the cultivators at concession rates and whether the margin is not being devoured by intermediary agencies. This Grow More Food Campaign, as I said and every hon. Member of this House has said, is nothing but a farce and I tried to impress upon the House in my last speech during the last Session that instead of trying to extend our cultivation in this way we should have laid more stress on intensive cultivation by supplying better quality of seeds and manure to the cultivators but it seems Government is not thinking in that way.

Then, Sir, the Military Department has got a vegetable cultivation in this Province and the services of one of our expert officers have been lent to the Military, but in spite of that, Sir, we, the civil population are suffering to a great extent because of the military purchase of all vegetables that are meant for the civil population. In spite of the military vegetable farm we find that the price of vegetable meant for civil population is rising day after day. So far as my information goes the Military Vegetable Department is purchasing from open market and supplying the needs of the Military. When this is the case, Sir, as in Bombay and other Provinces, the Military should give subsidy to the cultivators for growing more vegetables. Instead of spending so much money over their vegetable farm, the Military can give subsidy to our cultivators to grow more vegetable so that the civilian population may not suffer. These are the two points, Sir, I want to urge. I will not take up any more time of the House.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister may reply now.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: On a point of order, Sir, the majority of speeches made was from the Government Benches. The Opposition has been given very little chance to speak.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, order. The Hon'ble Minister may reply.

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, before I deal with the various points raised in this debate by several hon. Members, I request the hon. Members to remember the strain which the Agriculture Department is undergoing in order to meet the changed economic conditions which prevail in the Province to-day. "Food for the people and that within the country" has become the most vital problem on account of war and this Department has not lagged behind in bringing to bear on the problem all the resources at its disposal.

Sir, the Grow More Food Campaign on which Government has embarked in order to secure agricultural prosperity within a short period has evoked certain amount of criticism; but, Sir, judged from the results I have, no hesitation in saying that this campaign has been a success in this Province.....

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: If it has been a success, Sir, why this has not reached the Garo Hills?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is most regrettable that the hon. Members should interrupt when the Hon'ble Minister is making his speech.

The Hon'ble Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Sir, so far as the rice position is concerned, the Hon'ble Prime Minister has explained the whole situation several times both in and outside this House and it will be sufficient for me to say that this year we had a bumper crop which was almost unprecedented. Perhaps, Sir, nature was kind enough to us but her sympathy arose when we undertook this campaign.

Sir, much was said in the past with regard to the reliability of the agricultural statistics. I am glad to inform the House that we have prepared a scheme for the improvement of agricultural statistics in the permanently-settled districts of Sylhet and Goalpara, which we have sent to the Government of India for approval and financial help. I may come up before the House during this Session with a Motion in this connection for necessary funds.

From the basis of present information, Sir, about the rice position in this Province, it is estimated that the production in 1942-43 increased by 6.6 per cent. over that of 1939-40. The forecast for 1943-44 for the different classes of rice has not been prepared as yet, but increase of 26.1 per cent. over 1939-40 is tentatively estimated. In 1941-42 the acreage of rice cultivation actually decreased by 4 lakhs of acres, as pointed out by my Friend Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury. In 1942-43 this area was not only restored but increased by 2.7 per cent. over that of 1939-40.

Sir, the value of the Grow More Food Campaign is not to be judged merely by an increased production secured but by its success in checking the strong tendency towards decrease in production. On account of the various war projects the demand for labour and rate of wages have gone up by leaps and bounds. There is a general tendency with the agriculturists to leave their agricultural pursuits. They want to know why they should produce more when Government has fixed the prices of rice. In these circumstances, it is not a mean achievement that we succeeded in averting a famine—a like of which ravaged our sister Province of Bengal. Sir, this could only be done by taking up vigorous and not a half-hearted measure.

Distribution of seeds and manures and irrigation works are some of the features of the programme of the Grow More Food Campaign. During 1943-44 only 22 thousand maunds of seed paddy were purchased till the end of November. There have been further purchases since then. So far as irrigation is concerned, I may say that 101 small projects were undertaken in 1942-43. During the current year



153 were sanctioned till 31st January 1944. Moreover the Department is working 15 power pumps which, it is known, are so important in the cultivation of Boro paddy. It is estimated that in 1942-43, nearly 253 miles were benefited by the 101 small projects and the result was an increase in production by  $4\frac{1}{2}$  maunds per acre. The Department through its temporary publicity officers tried to kindle public interest and to enlist public support for the great cause. We have a similar planned programme for 1944-45 which will be pushed through with great vigour. It will not be too much to say that Assam has been playing and will play its part in the great movement for revival of agriculture which the war has brought forth.

My hon. Friend Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury wants to know what we have done with regard to linseed research. Linseed is a very minor crop in Assam, and moreover it is not a food crop. At present all our resources should be utilised in the development of food crop alone, and research schemes in connection with minor crops must be postponed till better times.

My hon. Friend Maulavi Abdur Rahman wanted informations about the rural uplift centres. Some hon. Members of the House have demanded more rural uplift centres from time to time and that itself is an evidence of the utility of these centres. As all the figures of the work done in 1942-43 have not yet been compiled, a perusal of the works done in 1941-42 will convince the hon. Members of the variety of the works done. A nursery in each centre to serve as a model, distribution of various seeds, cattle breeding operations, issue of he-goats and some improved varieties of fowls, issue of cotton spinning wheels and both hand and fly shuttles, maintenance of fodder gardens, construction of modern dwelling houses, model cattle sheds, fitting of doors and windows in old houses, cleaning of tanks and wells, clearing of jungles and drains, digging of bore-hole latrines construction of roads and bridges, are some of the works done in 1941-42. In addition, each centre was supplied with a box of medicine for the treatment of minor ailments. The Veterinary Department vaccinated and inoculated a good deal of cattle at these centres. In the year under review, 3 Middle English, 1 Middle Vernacular and 37 Lower Primary and 103 night schools were maintained and 7 exhibitions and 300 meetings were held. Some enthusiastic organisers organised grain societies and agricultural associations. Now, Sir, this should give an idea of the activities of the centres and the immense possibilities of developing them. There are 50 such centres now. I admit that our work is being handicapped due to the abnormal situation, but no body will like that the scheme should be nipped in the bud.

Mr. Abdul Bari Chaudhury raised the question of certification of seed potatoes. It is not possible to say from mere inspection that a particular sample of seed potato is free from disease. Hence works are going on at the Central station in Simla as well as in the Provinces under the co-ordinated scheme for the whole of India, for evolving disease resistant types of seed potatoes. Assam is also taking part in the operation by carrying on work in this respect at the Upper Shillong Farm. Time to think of certificates will arrive only when results of this operation are achieved.

My hon. Friend Mr. Mookerjee has asked us why we have provided so much money for the Agricultural Marketing Scheme. I shall come before this House with a Motion for the extension of the Scheme for another year when I shall explain the whole situation before the House.

Sir, Mr. Mookerjee has suggested that the office of the Live-Stock should be transferred to Gauhati from Shillong. This matter is under the consideration of the Government, but at present no house is available at Gauhati and consequently this question cannot be taken up immediately. He has also mentioned about the office of the Economic Botanist. Sir, the office of the Economic Botanist had to be shifted to Shillong very recently on account of the fact that most of our buildings—two buildings out of three—at Jorhat had been requisitioned by the Military. We have been negotiating with the Military to return those buildings and as soon as we get them back, the question of re-shifting this office to Jorhat will be taken up.

My Friend Mr. Palmer wanted to know what this Government had been doing with regard to pyrethrum cultivation. I can tell him that we have at present 30 acres in the Shillong Fruit Garden and about 50 acres in the Upper Shillong Farm under

pyrethrum cultivation, and we are going to increase the area up-to 100 acres within twelve months. Sir, on account of the scarcity of seeds and high wages of labour, it is not possible to cover 500 acres immediately. Some private parties have approached this Government for lands in order to start pyrethrum cultivation in the Khasi Hills and that matter is under the consideration of the Government.

My hon. Friend, Babu Nirendra Nath Deb asked us why the expenditure under the Grow More Food Scheme had been shown under different heads. Sir, this is being done according to Audit Rules.

He has also asked us to see that cultivators get seeds at concession rates. I can assure him that whenever I go out on tour I make personal enquiries and I am satisfied that the cultivators are getting seeds at such rates.

With regard to the Military Vegetables Scheme, I may say that had not this scheme been taken up by the Military authorities there would have been more scarcity of vegetables and the civilians would have suffered immensely as a result. All the vegetables would have gone to meet the requirements of the Army.

In conclusion, I add that the policy adopted by this Department is one of vigorous development and it should be recognised that this Department has no control over all the factors making for prosperous agriculture. With the limited resources at our hands this Department is trying to face boldly all the problems which have brought changes in the rural life in the country. I think I have dealt with all the points raised by different hon. Members and I also take note of the suggestions made by them.

With these words, Sir, I request the hon. Members to withdraw their Motions.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Does Mr. Mookerjee press his Motion?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: No, Sir, I do not like to press it.

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

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.26,65,400 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending the 31st March 1945, for the administration of the head '40.—Agriculture'."

The question was adopted.

#### Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 11 A.M., of the clock on Tuesday, the 21st March, 1944.

Shillong

The 5th May 1944.

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam.

A. G. P. (L.A.) No. 247—122+2—9-5-1944.

substituted :

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: There is dearth of kerosene also.

††Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister whether he can move the Railway authority so that lighting can be arranged?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Last time only a few days back the Agent of the Bengal and Assam Railway was here and I had a talk with him. He pointed out that there was a shortage of electric bulb and that is why the lighting arrangement has not been very satisfactory. He promised me to look into the matter.

††Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I point out to the Hon'ble Minister that in other Railways there is sufficient arrangement of lights as before?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Anyway, the Agent has already promised to look into this matter.

† Starred Question No.81 was put by Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri on authorisation,

††Speech not corrected.