

**Proceedings of the First Session of the Assam Legislative Assembly
assembled under the Sovereign Democratic Republican Constitution
of India.**

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong at 10 A.M., on Wednesday, the 22nd March, 1950.

P R E S E N T

The Hon'ble Mr. Lakshesvar Borooah, Speaker, in the Chair, the seven Hon'ble Ministers and thirty-five Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral Answers were given)

Procurement Department

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI asked :

- *6. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether the Procurement Department is running on profit at present ?
(b) If so, what is the amount of profit up till now ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary) replied :

6. (a)—Yes.
(b)—Amount of profit or loss made on the Procurement Scheme is not susceptible of separate exhibition as separate balance sheets are not prepared for individual schemes. The profit as per the balance sheet for the period ending 31st March, 1948 is Rs 8,76,385 (cumulative effect upto the 31st March 1948 is a loss of Rs.45,95,690). Up-to-date figures of Supply Department cannot be furnished now as the Trading, Profit and Loss Accounts and the balance sheet of the Supply Department as a whole for the year 1948-49 are now being checked by the Comptroller's Audit Staff. The figures for the year 1949-50 will be available after the close of the accounts for the year, in the following year.

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: May I know why Government had to face this loss ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): This is mainly due to the loss incurred by Government on account of their business with the Eastern Bengal and Assam Commercial Syndicate and the Surma Valley Foodgrains Syndicate. From these two Syndicates alone Government sustained a loss of about 70 lakhs of rupees. These agencies were functioning since the year 1943 upto the end of 1944, but actually the accounts were closed at a much later date. Government used to advance money to these agencies. The Eastern Bengal and Assam Commercial Syndicate were given an advance of Rs.1,61,00,000, and the Surma Valley Foodgrains Syndicate Rs.90,00,000, by the previous Government and when the accounts were closed Government could not recover a sum of about 68 lakhs of rupees from these two agencies. Therefore this amount has been treated as a bad debt.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Does the amount of profit include the receipts to Government on account of administrative charge ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary):
Yes, Sir.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: May I know why the amount could not be recovered ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary):
The position is this. Actually the agencies were terminated at the end of the year 1944, but taking over of stock and final adjustment of accounts extended to 1945 and subsequent years as well. It took a very long time to take over the stocks because their godowns were extended almost all over the then Surma Valley.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: Were there no contracts with the companies when advances were made by the Government ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary):
Of course, there were, but these contracts were perhaps of not a very satisfactory nature. So far as the Eastern Bengal and Assam Commercial Syndicate is concerned, the matter is under arbitration, and the Arbitration Tribunal, which was constituted under the Separation Council after the partition of the country, have given an award in favour of the Government of Assam for a sum of Rs.45,41,193. So far as the dues from the Surma Valley Foodgrains Syndicate is concerned, the matter is still under investigation.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: Were the contracts made after consulting the Legal Remembrancer ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary):
I am afraid, Sir, I would require notice to reply to all these details. But the hon. Members may be aware that a Committee known as the Shome Committee, under the Chairmanship of Mr. P. L. Shome, was constituted by the Government of Assam in the year 1945 to go into these matters and that Committee submitted their report which was published in the Gazette. In that report sufficient details with regard to those arrangements are given.

Publicity Department

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI asked :

- * 7. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether there is any definite plan now under their consideration to reorganise the Publicity Department ?
(b) If so, what is that plan ?

Srijut MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Parliamentary Secretary) replied :

7. (a)—Yes.

(b)—There has been some retrenchment in the Department and the question of amalgamating this Department with another and also placing field Publicity work with that of "Audio Visual Education under the Social Education Scheme" is under consideration.

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: Amalgamation with which Department ?

Srijut MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Parliamentary Secretary): It is still under consideration.

Erection of temporary Bamboo gates by Prohibition Officers

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA asked :

*8. (a) Are Government aware that some temporary gates by means of bamboo pole were constructed by the Prohibition Officers on the Public Works Department roads for checking of suspected traffics involved in opium smuggling ?

(b) If so, whether there was any order from Government to pull down such gates ?

(c) Are Government aware that the Executive Engineer of Darrang district forcibly destroyed such a gate at Charali of Tezpur ?

(d) Have Government received complaint from the Secretary, Tezpur Opium Prohibition Committee to that effect ?

(e) If so, what action has been taken by Government ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

8. (a)—Yes.

(b)—None. The Honorary Prohibition Commissioner was, however, informed in reply to his letter that sanction for construction of such gates cannot be accorded as this was considered illegal. In consequence of this, the Executive Engineer, Central Assam Division requested the Local Secretary of the Subdivisional Prohibition Committee to remove such gates already erected.

(c)—The gate was removed from its place by the Public Works Department Muharrir at the request of a Prohibition Officer of the place, and the materials deposited with him. It was neither destroyed nor forcibly removed.

(d)—Yes. The report however states that some Public Works Department Officers damaged and removed such a gate at Charali which is however not in accordance with facts in the possession of Government.

(e)—Does not arise.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: May I refer the Hon'ble Minister to the Assam Highways Act where there is a clear provision that such temporary gates may be allowed by the Executive Engineer or Subdivisional Officer concerned for checking of suspected traffic ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: No, Sir, according to the Highways Act and the advice of the Legal Remembrancer, the Subdivisional Officer can close the road only when it concerns repairs of the road or making of culverts or bridges on the road. No gate can be made to check the traffic ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: For checking of illegal traffic ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS ROY: May I request the hon. Member to repeat the question ?

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: According to the Assam Highways Act, with the permission of the Executive Engineer concerned or the Subdivisional Officer, Public Works Department some temporary check gates may be erected.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: We are legally advised, Sir, that that cannot be done. Any smuggling can be checked by the Police Officer, but no gate can be made to obstruct the traffic.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: That is not a question of obstruction. These gates will remain open all the time. Only when there is previous intimation that a certain passenger or a car is going with illicit opium or any other such things, in that case alone the gates are closed to stop such traffic. Otherwise the gate is never closed.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: The position is as I have stated above. We shall however examine the question. I have got a copy of the rules under the Act and also the opinion of the Legal Remembrancer. But nobody can prevent checking. The Police Officer can stand anywhere and check, but no one can obstruct traffic by making a gate. Even the Subdivisional Officer, Public Works Department cannot make a gate unless it is for the sake of repairing the road.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Will the hon. Member please read the provision of the Act ?

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: The Act is not with me. I can quote it tomorrow.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Is the Act in the file of the Hon'ble Minister ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: It is not in my file, Sir. We shall look into the matter, and see what can be done.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: Some gates were erected throughout the whole State and I want to know from the Hon'ble Minister why the check gates particularly in Tezpur were removed by the Public Works Department Officers. In some other cases the gates are still there.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I have no information regarding the other gates. The information that we have got is in regard to the Tezpur gate only.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: May I request the Hon'ble Minister to look into this matter very carefully and see that the gates are allowed in the interest of the Opium Prohibition Campaign.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: That will be done, Sir.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which Answers were laid on the table)

Number of Tractors in Dhubri Subdivision

Srijut SANTOSH KUMAR BARUA asked :

43. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The number of tractors placed in the Dhubri Subdivision for the purpose of helping mechanisation of cultivation ?
 - How long these tractors are operating ?
 - (i) Acreage cultivated ; and
(ii) Cost of maintenance of these tractors during this period ?

The Hon'ble Srijut OMEO KUMAR DAS replied :

43. (a)—There is one tractor in the Dhubri Subdivision.
(b)—The tractor is operating since December 1949.
(c) (i)—Between December 1949 to 15th January 1950, 26 acres have been ploughed and harrowed ; and a further block of 130 acres was taken up.
(ii)—Details of expenditure for maintaining has not yet been worked out.

Decontrol of Textile Goods and its effect on Co-operative Tradings

Maulavi MD. MAKSED ALI asked :

44. (a) Are Government aware that some Co-operative Tradings have been hard-hit due to the decontrol of Textile Goods ?
(b) Do Government propose to save the Trading Co-operatives from threatened liquidation by giving them permit to sell Kerosene oil both retail and wholesale and other controlled commodities ?
(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether cloth and yarn will again be controlled ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary) replied :

44. (a)—Yes, some Trading Co-operatives are not doing well due to partial decontrol of textiles.
(b)—The Co-operative cannot exist merely with the business of controlled commodities as control will not remain for all time. Although Government is giving this advantage of other controlled commodities to the Trading Co-operatives and will continue to do so their ultimate success will depend upon the capacity of the workers of the Co-operatives in taking to new lines of popular business.
(c)—Textile is still under control but according to the policy of the Government of India some relaxation in the distribution system has been affected and at present there is no indication for any modification to the present system by the Government of India.

Expulsion of undesirable persons from Assam

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA asked :

45. Will Government be pleased to state—
- The plan they have adopted for the expulsion of undesirables from Assam under the relevant Ordinance and the Act ?
 - If any one has so far been expelled under the Ordinance ?
 - If so, what are their names ?

- (d) If any action has up till now been taken to expel any of those who have been trying to include Assam in Pakistan ?
- (e) Whether any such report against anybody has been received from the district of Nowgong ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

45. (a)—The hon. Member is referred to the reply given to Starred Question No.1 (a)—(e) asked by Raja Ajit Narayan Dev of Sidli in this Session.

(b)—Yes. Action against four persons has been taken.

(c)—Maulana Immamuddin Nuri, Abdul Gafur, Hajee Abdul Majid and Nadar Ali Gazi.

(d) & (e)—No such persons have come to notice so far as Government are aware.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : Are Government aware that the Muslim League workers from Pakistan are working in Assam ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI : These general questions require notice. Moreover there is no Muslim League in the State now. That has been liquidated in Assam long ago.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : But there is Muslim League in Pakistan and their workers are to be found in the State of Assam.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI : It is not to the information of the Government at present. All the Deputy Commissioners have been asked to find out and make a list of all such persons who are carrying on anti-State activities in the State.

Corruption in Government Administration

Prof. P. M. SARWAN asked :

46. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) What steps have been taken by them to check corruption in Government Administration ?

(b) How far Government have sought and obtained the co-operation of the public to detect and stamp out corruption from the administration ?

(c) Whether Government are aware of corruption prevailing in the Settlement Department ?

(d) If so, how they propose to deal with corruption in this Department ?

(e) Whether Government propose to direct the Deputy Commissioners and Subdivisional Officers to keep a close eye on the Settlement Department under them and to visit rural areas more frequently ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

46. (a) & (b)—The hon. Member is referred to answer given to Unstarred Question No.35 (a) at the September Session of Assembly, 1949. Public co-operation has always been sought, when necessary, but it does not come in full measure always.

(c)—Without specific instances, it is not possible to answer such a general question.

(d) & (e)—Do not arise.

Landless Ex-Tea Garden Labourers

Prof. P. M. SARWAN asked :

47. (a) Are Government aware of the existence of numerous landless ex-tea garden labourers settled in the Districts of Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Nowgong and Darrang ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state what they have done to provide lands to these landless labourers during the years from 1946-50 ?

(c) Are Government aware that some of the above people have been ejected from lands where according to the old recognised practice they squatted 5 to 15 years ago ?

(d) What the Circle Sub-Deputy Collectors are doing to help the above people ?

(e) Whether any of the above ejected people been given any land where they could settle ?

(f) Whether Government propose to protect adequately the above people who have failed to obtain pattas due to their backwardness ?

48. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether they have lately received representation on behalf of *ex-tea* garden labourers of Lanka and Hojai areas regarding the dealing of the Kanungo of Kampur Circle, Nowgong District in the matter of land settlement ?

(b) Whether the complaint was that the above Kanungo was settling the lands already occupied by some labour settlers with new comers ?

(c) Whether Government had any enquiry made regarding the above complaint ?

(d) If so, who made the enquiry and what was the substance of the report ?

(e) What action Government propose to take to protect the backward *ex-tea* garden labourers in Kampur Circle ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

47. (a)—No census of landless *ex-tea* garden labourers has been separately made and such a census for a particular section of the cultivating population is not desirable.

(b)—Government have settled ample lands with *ex-tea* garden labourers, as will appear from the following figures :—

District	Area		
	1945-46	1946-47	1947-48
	Acres	Acres	Acres
Darrang	5,607	5,782	22,402
Nowgong	286	228	236
Sibsagar	5,038	7,368	5,517
Lakhimpur	7,901	8,039	8,067

and figures for other years are being collected. They are not available at present as no report from District Officers have been received yet.

(c)—No such complaint has been received by Government.

(d)—Circle officers have long been instructed to help in finding lands for landless people and filing application in proper form.

(e)—Without specific instances Government is not in a position to reply such a vague question as no enquiry is possible.

(f)—As in (d) above.

48. (a) (b) (c) (d) & (e)—One application purported to be written by one Biswanbhor Kher and others with a forwarding letter of the hon. Member was received by the Government and sent to Deputy Commissioner, Nowgong for report—which is being awaited. A reminder has already been issued on receipt of these questions.

Prof. P. M. SARWAN: With regard to Question 46 (b) the answer is that 'public co-operation has always been sought, when necessary, but it does not come in full measure always'. Will Government note that co-operation from the tea garden tribes is always available to them?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: What the hon. Member wants to know, I do not know.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Will the hon. Member repeat the question?

Prof. P. M. SARWAN: Will Government note that co-operation of the tea garden tribes is always available to the Government?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: This seems to be a very vague question.

Prof. P. M. SARWAN: Will Government accept that the co-operation comes in full measure when it is asked for?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Our Government always accept any good suggestions given from any quarter whether it is from the tea garden tribes or any other party.

Prof. P. M. SARWAN: With regard to Question 47 (b), will Government note the low figure for the Nowgong District and asked the Deputy Commissioners of Nowgong, Sibsagar and Lakhimpur to give a list of the *ex-tea* garden labourers who have or have not been ejected from land occupied by them?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: This is a very vague question.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: The best thing for the hon. Member is to represent each individual case or groups of persons who have been evicted. Besides there is a provision under which any person aggrieved by order of eviction may move the higher authority upto High Court. Unless specific names of persons or names of groups of persons evicted are supplied, it is not possible to roam about throughout the length and breadth of the country to find out these details.

Appointment of Messrs. Steel Brothers, as Agents for handling Rice and Paddy in Moran Circle

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN asked :

49. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether an application was made on behalf of the Indian Tea Association for the appointment of Messrs. Steel Brothers, Gauhati, as agents for the handling of rice and paddy required by tea gardens in the Moran Circle of the Assam Branch?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that this application was rejected by Government?
- (c) Whether a request was made to Government for reconsideration of this decision, in which it was explained that Messrs. Steel Brothers act in this capacity for many other Circles in the Assam Valley?

- (d) Whether it is a fact that no reply was given to the request for reconsideration ?
- (e) If so, what are the reasons for failure to send a reply ?
- (f) What are the reasons for refusing to appoint Messrs. Steel Brothers as agents for the Moran Circle ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary) replied :

49. (a)—Yes.
 (b)—Yes.
 (c)—Yes.
 (d) & (e)—A reply has since been sent.

(f)—The system as now in force is fully serving the purpose of the Moran Circle and it is considered both unnecessary and detrimental for the general procurement and distribution of foodgrains to bring in Messrs. Steel Brothers as Agent for this circle which is surplus in rice and paddy but adjoins the heavy deficit subdivision of Dibrugarh.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: As regards (d), will Government be pleased to explain the reasons for their failure to send a reply to the letter, dated the 20th November, 1949, before the 3rd of March, 1950 ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): I can only express sincere regret for this great delay in reply to the letter. The letter came to my notice after receipt of this question.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Will Government be pleased to state whether it is a fact that Messrs. Steel Brothers did not apply to be appointed as procurement agent but only as handling and distributing agent ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): The letter which I have before me from Messrs. Steel Brothers, states that they wanted to act as the agent for the tea estates of Moran circle for the year 1950. From this letter, it is not quite clear whether they meant appointment as handling agent or procuring agent.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: May I inform the hon. Parliamentary Secretary that I personally had an interview with the Director of Supply (Procurement) and the Supply Secretary to the Government and informed them very clearly that the Assam Branch proposed to appoint Messrs. Steel Brothers solely for handling and distributing of rice and paddy to Moran in the same way as for all other circles in Assam ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): I did not have any discussion with the Secretary or Director on this subject. Sir, if I may be permitted to state, I may say that after I have examined this subject what I found was this. That the particular agent who has now been appointed for Moran Circle, entered into contract with the Procurement Department for supply of certain quantity of paddy for reserve stock. I think, the intention of the Director and the Supply Department was that this particular agent who was appointed agent for all those tea gardens and when the agent has come forward for supply of paddy need not be disturbed. I think that was the idea based on which they did not accept the proposal of Messrs. Steel Brothers.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: May I enquire whether Government are aware that the Moran Circle tea gardens were dissatisfied with the arrangements made last year and it was made clear in the original communication to the Government that for these reasons they sought to appoint another agent ?

Maulavi ABDUL HALIM: May I know, Sir, who is the present agent ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): I think, the name of the present agent is Messrs. Ladu Ram Beharilal.

Maulavi ABDUL HALIM: Is he a Marwari ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): Yes, Sir.

As regards the question of Mr. Hardman, as a matter of fact, the Director got a telegram from Grain Purchasing Officer presumably, in the month of February approving the appointment of that agent for that Circle.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I draw the attention of the hon. Parliamentary Secretary to my letter of the 31st January, 1950, and with your permission may I read it ?

The letter was addressed to the Secretary, Supply Department, Government of Assam.

"With reference to the correspondence resting with my letter No.2688, dated 15th November, 1949, addressed to you by the Assam Branch Indian Tea Association, I have been informed by the Assam Branch that in view of the necessity of maintaining supplies in the Moran area, it is impossible for the Moran Circle to entertain any longer their proposal to appoint Messrs. Steel Brothers as their agents. The Branch, however, wish to emphasise that this decision has been taken under duress and does not represent the voluntary wish of the Circle.

The Assam Branch desire me to point out to Government that their request for reconsideration of Government's refusal of Messrs. Steel Brothers as the Circle's agents was submitted on the 15th November, 1949, and that in spite of reminders and personal interviews, no final decision has yet been given and at no time has the Indian Tea Association been aware of the nature of objection to the appointment of a firm which is operating over such a wide area in Assam on behalf of the Association and whose experience of handling rice is beyond question."

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It is clearly stated in the reply to (f) that: "The system as now in force is fully serving the purpose of the Moran Circle and it is considered both unnecessary and detrimental for the general procurement and distribution of foodgrains to bring in Messrs. Steel Brothers as Agent for this Circle which is surplus in rice and paddy but adjoins the heavy deficit sub-division of Dibrugarh."

Here the Government has stated the reason in refusing the agency to Messrs. Steel Brothers. I do not think any further clarification is necessary. If Mr. Hardman pleads for a particular person, I am afraid I cannot allow this. I held before that this House is not a forum for appeal of any particular person.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Sir, may I point out that there are two reasons. Firstly it meets the wishes of Government, but it does not meet the wishes of the Moran Circle.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Government considered it unnecessary. May I know who are the persons concerned ?

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Sir, the persons concerned are the tea gardens in the Moran Circle.

Sir, can we have a discussion on this matter ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I cannot allow any discussion.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Sir, may I draw attention to the fact that Government did not consider the reasons.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Mr. Hardman disputes the decision of the Government.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Sir, I dispute the validity of the reasons which Government have adduced, and contend that they acted under a misapprehension.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: What are the reasons for considering this Agency as unnecessary or undesirable ?

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Sir, are Government aware of the wishes of the Moran Circle ? I was explaining the point that the Moran Circle was strongly opposed to the system that Government had forced on them, while the hon. Parliamentary Secretary maintained that Government had acted in this matter in accordance with their wishes. The circumstances were that having been allowed to continue without any Agent in the absence of a reply for four months, the Circle had no other alternative but to accept another agency.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: What were the objections of the Moran Circle of the Indian Tea Association ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): Sir, so far my information goes, it is not actually an objection. At first a request was made to the Government by the Assam Branch Indian Tea Association for appointment of Messrs. Steel Brothers as Agents for the Moran Circle. But the Procurement Department of the Government could not agree to that proposal. They appointed a Dealer who was working previously.

Subsequently another letter was written to the Secretary, Supply Department for reconsideration of the Government's decision with regard to the appointment of agents for that Circle. That letter was also not considered. Subsequently, again, I think, in the month of February a telegram was received from the Grain Purchasing Officer of Moran Circle approving the appointment of Messrs. Laduram Beharilal.

Sir, may I suggest that after the Assembly business is over to-day, Mr. Hardman and I will sit together and will discuss the matter.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Yes, Sir, that will be suitable for me.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: Sir, may I know whether a certain agent will be appointed according to the choice of the Government or according to the choice of the consumers ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): So far as the Indian Tea Association or the Tea Industry is concerned, we have been

trying to adjust according to the convenience of both the Tea Industry and the Government. But so far the question put by my Friend is concerned, it all depends on the administrative convenience of the Government as well as to the convenience of the consumers.

Prof. P. M. SARWAN: Will Government be pleased to look into the convenience of the consumers rather than the convenience of the contractors ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Whether they are actually consumers ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): Actually the Tea Industry is the consumer in this respect.

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA : May I know, Sir, from the Government why Messrs. Steel Brothers has been given agency for handling rice and paddy, in spite of the fact that the Procurement Department is undertaking this kind of work ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): Because the Steel Brothers receive rice and paddy on behalf of the Tea Industry. Messrs. Steel Brothers are the representatives of the Tea Industry, and they inspect the samples and take delivery of the rice and also makes payment. They are actually working on behalf of the Tea Industry as their agent.

Acquisition of Lands used by Tea Gardens and Railways for letting establishment of Sunday Hats, etc.

Srijut DALBIR SINGH LOHAR asked :

50. With reference to Unstarred Question No.4(a) —(d) asked by the Questioner in the last September Session of the Assembly, 1949 (*vide* Assam Legislative Assembly Debates of 13th September 1949 at page 795), will Government be pleased to state what steps have been taken by them to acquire the lands used by Tea gardens and Railways in Dibrugarh Subdivision for letting establishment of Sunday Hats especially at Khowang, Moran, Dikom, Lahowal, Nagaghuli, Dibrugarh Town, Doom Dooma and Margherita ?

Srijut HARESWAR DAS (Parliamentary Secretary) replied :

50.—The hon. Member's attention is drawn to the answer given to Unstarred Question No.4(d) of the last September Session of the Assembly, 1949. Government have not as yet received any specific proposal for such acquisition from the Local Board, Municipality or Town Committee concerned.

Rise in the cost of living in Assam

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY asked :

51. Will Government be pleased to state what has been the rise in the cost of living in Assam after the depreciation of the Indian currency ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

51.—There has been no rise in the cost of living since June, 1949. The cost of living index of the working classes, as a matter of fact, shows a decline from 128 to 124 at Gauhati and from 144 to 132 at Silchar in June, 1949 and December, 1949 respectively. The base has been taken at 100 for 1944.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Sir, with regard to the answer given by the Government regarding the fall in the cost of living in Assam, may we infer that the steady rise in the prices of number of certain commodities on which ample discussion has taken place, and which has been admitted by the Government, there has been a reduction in the cost of living?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Sir, these figures were compared in the year 1949 only.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Since September last there has been an acute shortage of a number of commodities, with the consequent rise in their prices that means the cost of living has been tremendously risen.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: There has been no rise in the cost of living since June 1949. The cost of living index of the working classes, as a matter of fact, shows a decline from 128 to 124 at Gauhati and from 144 to 132 at Silchar in June 1949 and December, 1949 respectively. The base has been taken at 100 for 1944. These figures were collected by the Statistics Department. The figures were collected for these two places and the figures for the rest of the area were not collected by the Statistics Department. So, Government do not like to give vague figures.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Do Government believe, Sir, that the cost of living has not risen?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: It cannot be admitted in absence of scientific data.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Is it not a fact, Sir, that a Central Government cost of living index for the working class is maintained for Tinsukia?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Government has no information, but that may be after June, 1949.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Is it not a fact that these figures are published in the Government Official Gazette?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: They might be published without consulting the Statistics Department, but the figures are not available with me now.

Maulavi Saiyid MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Has the attention of the Hon'ble Minister been drawn to the reply given by the Central Government in the Parliament with regard to the latest cost of living? According to that there is a rise of 4 per cent. over the previous index figure.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Those replies might have been given on the basis of the figures collected after June, 1949. The data collected after June might have indicated that the cost of living has risen.

Selection of site for the Gauhati University

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked :

52. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that the major portion of the land selected for the site of the Gauhati University at Pandu are low lands which shall have to be raised before they can be used for buildings purposes ?
- (b) If so, what will be the probable cost that shall have to be incurred in raising the grounds ?
- (c) How many years are likely to be taken in raising the lands ?
- (d) Whether the necessary funds for raising the lands are likely to be available within a year or two ?
- (e) Whether the educational institutions of the University will be quite close to the Pandu Railway Station ?
- (f) Whether there is any proposal or chance of a Railway line running through the University grounds from Pandu towards the Garo Hills ?

53. With a view to avoid the vicinity of a busy Railway Station and for the sake of economy as well as to avoid delay in constructing the University buildings, do Government propose to abandon the site at Pandu and to shift it to the eastern side of the town of Gauhati somewhere near the Bamuni Maidan ?

54. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) What progress, if any, has been made in the matter of construction of University buildings at Pandu ?
- (b) What amount of money has been spent in constructing the quarters for the Professors of the Gauhati University at Bamuni Maidan ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

52. (a)—No.

(b)—Does not arise. But probable cost for raising the low-lying area is estimated at Rs.7,20,000, which may be reduced in accordance with the Master plan for whole area when adopted.

(c)—This will depend on the speed of executing the buildings plan which is subject to availability of funds and priority of constructions

(d)—The Government hope so.

(e)—Not necessarily. The plan is to keep sufficient space intervening between the Pandu Railway Station and the educational institutions.

(f)—No.

53.—No.

54. (a)—Acquisition of site and its preparation and finalisation of Master plan are in progress.

(b)—Rupees 1,95,000.

Distribution of Corrugated Iron Sheets to Agriculturists in Dhubri Subdivision

Maulavi MD. MAKSED ALI asked :

55. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The total bundle of Corrugated Iron Sheets that was to be distributed to the agriculturists in exchange of paddy through Procurement Department in the Dhubri Subdivision since the Scheme was brought into force ?

(b) Whether the Procurement Scheme was successful by this method ?

(c) If not, why not ?

- (d) Whether it is a fact that only persons belonging to the Marwari Community and other businessmen got Corrugated Iron Sheets showing their land possession receipts ?
- (e) What was the actual balance of Corrugated Iron Sheets left for Dhubri Subdivision after distribution through that Scheme ?
- (f) Whether the remaining quantity of Corrugated Iron Sheets will be distributed this year through the same Scheme ?
- (g) Whether it is a fact that the remaining quantity of Corrugated Iron Sheets has been despatched to Gauhati ?
- (h) If so, why and what is the quantity so despatched up-to-date ?
- (i) Whether it is a fact that the Assam Government Agent for Corrugated Iron Sheets in Calcutta has not been sending Corrugated Iron Sheets to Dhubri Subdivision inspite of reminders from the authority concerned ?
- (j) If so, what action Government has taken on this Agent ?
- (k) Whether Government propose to change this Agent after calling for necessary explanation ?

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary) replied :

55. (a)—1,536 bundles.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Does not arise.

(d)—Government have no such information.

(e)—The actual balance of Corrugated Iron Sheets left for Dhubri Subdivision is nil, but there is a balance of 23 bundles Corrugated Iron Sheets (Procurement) out of the stock kept at the disposal of the Deputy Director of Procurement, Gauhati. Permits for the same have already been issued, but parties have not yet taken delivery of the Corrugated Iron Sheets. Sufficient offers of paddy were not forthcoming from the Dhubri Subdivision within the period fixed and this is why Deputy Director of Procurement, Gauhati, issued some permits on the Dhubri stock in favour of persons of Kamrup district on their supplying the stipulated quantity of paddy and fulfilment of other necessary conditions.

(f)—Does not arise.

(g)—No, the remaining quantity is kept at the disposal of the Deputy Director of Procurement, Gauhati, who has already issued permits for the same but the parties have not yet taken delivery of the same though they had supplied the necessary quantities of paddy.

(h)—Does not arise.

(i)—The Handling Agent could not send Corrugated Iron sheets to Dhubri due to transport difficulties and booking restrictions.

(j)—Does not arise.

(k)—The Handling Agent was appointed for lifting the quota for the year 1949 only. His term of agency will expire as soon as the materials procured by him are despatched in full to the Registered Stockholders of Assam.

Government are finalising arrangements for the appointment of an Association formed by the existing stockholders of Assam to function as Government Agents in respect of the quota for the period I/1950.

404 STATEMENT BY THE HON'BLE MINISTER OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, ASSAM, ON THE CHARGES OF WASTAGE OF PUBLIC FUNDS IN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF SHILLONG-CHURAI-BARI-AGARTALA ROADS MADE BY SHRI K. SANTHANAM, MINISTER OF STATE, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA [22ND MAR.]

Statement by the Hon'ble Minister of Public Works Department, Assam, on the Charges of wastage of Public funds in connection with construction of Shillong-Churaibari-Agartala Roads made by Shri K. Santhanam, Minister of State, Government of India

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister of Public Works Department wants to make a statement.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Sir, I have to make a statement in regard to the Press report concerning the remarks made in Parliament by the Minister of State, Mr. Santhanam that the Assam Government was specialising in wasting public funds without benefit to itself.

On the 16th of this month I saw the statement in the Press and on the 17th, after consultation with my Colleagues I sent a wire to Mr. Santhanam asking him to wire whether it was true that he made the alleged statement reported in the Press without ascertaining facts from the Assam Government. I could not absolutely depend on Newspaper report, for I know of a newspaper which publishes falsehood and lies. In the Assamese paper, namely, the "Natun Assamiya" there was a lie and a falsehood published about the Minister, Public Works Department, that is about me, that 8 miles away from Shillong in some secret place I had a secret meeting with an Engineer and I destroyed some documents. This is a deliberate lie. It is that kind of falsehood in papers that will destroy our country. An Editor who can publish such a lie is bringing ruination someday to himself. That is one of the reasons why I have been waiting for Mr. Santhanam's reply. I received a reply from his Private Secretary by wire on 20th acknowledging receipt of my telegram and saying "letter follows in reply". I have now received that promised letter sending a copy of the debates in Parliament. Mr. Santhanam made the statement reported in the paper. I shall quote it afterwards. I will place facts as they are and it will be seen that the Ministry of the Assam Government is not at fault in any way. Mr. Santhanam's statement speaks of two roads, namely, (1) The Shillong-Jowai-Hafong-Silchar-Churaibari Road, (2) Churaibari-Agartala Road in Tripura State. He said: "Regarding the Churaibari-Agartala Road, the fact was that they were bound to give proper reports to the Road Organisation here. Owing to some arrangement they were getting money direct from the States Ministry and the Defence Ministry. They did not give us any report at all and when the Road Organisation found that the reports were not coming, we deputed an expert whose report I am not in a position to place before the House. I hope that in due course it will be laid before the House. In connection with this, a number of superior Engineers of the Assam Government have already been suspended and we have asked for a searching enquiry into the whole affair. In this case practically the entire money has been spent from Central Funds. When our Engineers were here they did not care to take our Engineer's advice. They would not give us information. We suspected that something was wrong and we had to send our Engineers and his report is under examination. I hope my friend (Mr. Chaliha) will not force me to speak more about this subject. The Assam Government is specialising in wasting public funds without gaining any benefit to itself".

This House may not know that these two roads are dealt with by two different authorities in Assam. The first road, Shillong-Jowai-Haflong-Silchar-Churaibari road comes under the responsibility of the Ministry, and the second road, Churaibari-Agartala Road in Tripura State, is under the Governor of Assam who is directly responsible to the Centre. The Chief Engineer of the Assam Government is responsible to His Excellency the Governor in his work for this road. He works under His Excellency the Governor and does not send files to the Ministry. He sends them to His Excellency the Governor who has his Adviser and Secretariat. The Assam Ministry has nothing to do with the works in the Tripura State. Mr. Santhanam's statement and remarks in connection with the Churaibari-Agartala Road which is inside the Tripura State cannot and does not apply to the Ministry of Assam Government. I, as Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department, have not seen a single file regarding this road. In connection with the road, that is, Churaibari-Agartala road in Tripura State you will notice what Mr. Santhanam said regarding the Assam Engineers. He said, "a number of superior engineers of the Assam Government have already been suspended and we have asked for a searching enquiry".

These engineers were not appointed by the Assam Ministry, but by the Chief Engineer working under the Governor. They are, as far as I know, all refugees and temporary officers. None of our permanent Assam officers was there. The Chief Engineer never consulted the Assam Minister in the Public Works Department for their appointments. They are connected with the Assam Public Works Department under the Chief Engineer who is responsible to the Governor as Agent of the Government of India.

Therefore, whatever might have been the conditions in that Churaibari-Agartala Road, the Assam Ministry is not responsible.

I must also point out that the expert whom the Government of India sent to examine this road did not see the Ministry and he did not report anything to the Minister, Public Works Department, but I heard that he reported to the Adviser of the Governor. Up to date I have not seen the report of that expert. It is with that branch of the Administration which is controlled by the Chief Engineer, the Adviser and His Excellency the Governor.

I must also inform the House that I do not know who the engineers are who have been suspended in connection with that road.

Neither the Hon'ble Minister of Finance nor the Hon'ble Minister of Public Works Department nor even the Hon'ble Chief Minister knows how much money was spent on this road in Tripura State. The Government of India never wrote to anyone of us, but deals directly with the Governor of Assam and his Secretariat. His Excellency the Governor of Assam deals with the case as the Agent of the Ministry of States (Central).

Now, in regard to the Shillong-Jowai-Haflong-Silchar-Churaibari Road, I must say that Mr. Santhanam's remarks are wrong altogether. His remarks are like this—"Regarding the construction of the Shillong-Haflong-Silchar-Churaibari (Tripura border) Road, the Assam Government had without proper engineering survey marked out a road and done a lot of work here and there in patches and finally came to us for help. At last it was found that the road was useless and had to be abandoned". I will read that again, Sir, so that hon. Members of the House might get the words properly—"Regarding the construction of the Shillong-Haflong-Silchar-Churaibari (Tripura border) Road, the Assam Government had without proper engineering survey marked out a road and done a lot of work here and there in patches and finally came to us for help. At last it was found that the road was useless and had to be abandoned". That is all he said about this road which is under the Assam Ministry.

This statement is altogether wrong. The Assam Government have not found the road useless. If we are compelled to abandon it, it will be because India has backed out and will not fulfil their part to complete this transaction. Their own expert who came in March 1949 said that this Road should be completed to 16 ft. width.

As regards his remarks that "the Assam Government without proper engineering survey marked out a road", I regret to say that he does not know the talent of our engineers for surveying hill roads, I think our engineers have talents to survey hill road perhaps better than any engineer who may be sent from anywhere in India. Survey has been made by our engineers. It cannot be said that it is not a proper engineering survey. I am doubtful whether any engineer from outside can beat them. After all, this is a matter of opinion. If he judges the engineers of Assam by the work of the engineers who worked in Tripura, he is altogether wrong for those engineers at Tripura are refugee engineers.

I must refute the remarks of Mr. Santhanam that "the Assam Government marked out a road and done a lot of work here and there in patches and finally came to us for help". This is altogether wrong. From the correspondence which I shall read, the hon. Members will know that the Government of India asked us to mark out a road and to make reconnaissance survey and detailed survey. Now, Sir, I must read out some parts of the History of this road—"After the partition of India and Sylhet was included in Eastern Pakistan our minds were exercised as to how to connect Silchar with the rest of Assam by a road as train communications is very uncertain especially during the rains, and how to connect Assam with the rest of India without going through Pakistan". The late Sir Akbar Hydari who was then the Agent of the States Ministry (Delhi) and responsible to the Government of India for Tripura, was also very much exercised in his mind as to how to connect Tripura with Silchar and this part of Assam. He consulted Military officers and he recommended with the knowledge of and in consultation with the Military Officers that a road should be made from Shillong to Silchar *via* Jowai-Garampani and Haflong. Then he wrote to the Hon'ble Premier like this—

"If my recommendation is accepted the next question is the agency for the construction of, first of all, the Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road. The obvious agency is the Assam Public Works Department, but as the utmost speed is desirable, I think we should obtain the assistance for our Assam Public Works Department in the construction of this road of Indian Military Engineers with such mechanical equipment for road making as the Central Government may be able to provide. As for finance, it seems to me that these three roads with an extension of the one from Patharkandi to the Tripura Frontier apart from their great economic advantages to the Province, will also have considerable strategic importance from the point of view of the defence of India's Eastern Frontiers and as such, the expenditure on them should be shared as between the Governments of India and of Assam.

*

*

*

*

*

The conclusion must be that necessary sanction for survey and collection of necessary staff and equipment should be accorded immediately, thereby we will be helping ourselves and India".

Again, Sir, His Excellency late Sir Akbar Hydari wrote again on 10th September, 1947 to the Hon'ble Premier like this—"I took advantage of the visit of General Ranking, Area Commander, West Bengal and Assam District, of consulting him on the soundness of the suggestions put forward in the detailed note prepared by Captain Yusuf Ali in consultation with the local military authorities. General Ranking is particularly qualified to advise us on this matter because during most of the war when it more directly concerned India's Eastern Frontier he was in command of the lines of communications through Assam to the forces then deployed along the Frontier. As such communications through Assam leading to the Front were very much his concern. General Ranking entirely agrees that the road Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar and thence to the borders of Tripura State should have first priority. But he advises that second priority should be given to the road Roha-Dimapur. Third priority should be given to District road connections Garampani-Lumding and Lumding-Haflong and proposed Haflong-Henima-Kohima road should be given fourth priority and the short-cut Jowai-Sutnga-Badarpur should be put down last. This was drafted in consultation with General Ranking." Sir Akbar Hydari had correspondence with the Hon'ble Sardar Patel who is in charge of the Ministry of State (Central) and Sardar Patel wrote to him a very sympathetic letter. I have not got the letter of Sardar Patel in my possession. I give below an extract from Sardar Patel's letter as quoted by Sir Akbar Hydari in his note on 7th September 1947.

"The proposal which you have suggested seems to me *prima facie* satisfactory, and I hope you will succeed in obtaining the necessary assistance from the local military authorities and also we at this end propose for assistance on the technical side when the progress has been reported from survey point of view".

Then, Sir, we discussed this matter in the Cabinet and the Cabinet accepted the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor and he also stated that the Ministry of States was in full agreement with this.

Then, Sir, we officially wrote to the Government of India on 30th September 1947. We placed all the facts before the Government of India and discussed all the different routes and showed to them the necessity of constructing this Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road. I do not know whether I need read this. (*Voices*—read), alright I will read. Secretary, Public Works Department wrote thus:—

"I am directed to say that the inclusion of the major portion of the district of Sylhet within the boundaries of Pakistan has resulted in the severance of road communication between Assam and the district of Cachar and Lushai Hills, and ultimately Tripura State. The only line of communication to Silchar and Aijal (other than the road and railway traversing Sylhet district, which is within Pakistan and thereby dependent on the good will of the foreign State) is the railway Gauhati-Haflong-Silchar. This is a devious and circuitous road and has never been more than a hill section branch line involving tedious delay in travel and occasional stoppage of running of trains due to land slips during the monsoon".

Of the two possible alignments between Shillong and Silchar, the one from Dawki (50th mile from Shillong) at the foot of hills on the existing Shillong Sylhet Road. Although much shorter in length seems undesirable for the following reasons.—

(a) The Pakistan border extends right up to the foot hills ;

The new road would therefore have to follow the edge or face of a precipitous escarpment fissured by numerous mountains streams ;

(b) even if possible of construction, the road would be a lateral one very near to the frontier of Assam and without any tributary communications to the rear, the hinterland remaining completely unopened. This should be militarily unsound ;

(c) apart from connecting Silchar with Dawki this would open up no new country.

The alternative therefore is the construction of a first class tarred and metalled road from Shillong to Silchar *via* Jowai. The section Shillong-Jowai 33 miles is already under construction as a district road under Post-War Development Programme.

From Jowai onwards there are two alternatives—

(a) a direct road *via* Sutnga to Badarpur. This although a shorter road and from an inspection of the contours probably feasible, has the disadvantage of involving a completely new survey of trackless hill country and the Simleng river crossing. It would be also unrelated to the development of further strategic road net works on the Eastern Frontier ;

(b) the improvement of the existing track *via* Garampani to the railway at Haflong thence connecting with the existing road at Damcherra on following the direct short track to Silchar. The choice between these two minor alternatives may be decided after actual reconnaissance has been carried out by the Technical Experts. Another advantage of the road *via* Haflong is that it might serve as the first section of a direct line of communication *via* Henima to Kohima and also connect with a new highway Raha-Dimapur. * * * * *

“Advantage was taken of the advice of General Ranking, Area Commander, West Bengal and Assam District during his recent visit here. During most of the war period when it more directly concerned India's eastern frontier, he was in command of the line of communications through Assam to the forces then deployed along the frontier. General Ranking entirely agreed that the construction of this road was necessary and that the order of priority should be as follows :—

Phase 1.—Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar, and then to border of Tripura State. (To be upgraded from a district road to a National Highway and constructed with all possible speed) ;

Phase 2.—Roha-Dimapur to be constructed as a National Highway ;

Phase 3.—Garampani-Lumding and Lumding-Haflong (District road) ;

Phase 4.—Haflong-Henima-Kohima.

Phase 5.—Jowai-Sutnga-Badarpur District road.

The Government of Assam considered the above proposals in the Cabinet Meeting and have decided that the survey and construction of the following roads should be immediately taken up in the order below without waiting for settlement in the matter of allocation of costs as between the Government of India and Assam.

1. Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar,

2. Roha-Doboka-Diphu-Dimapur.

It is considered that the survey of the alignment should be entrusted to the Military Engineering Department while actual execution which must be done with all speed, the target date being before the expiry of the stand-still agreement should be carried out by the Public Works Department.

The Government of Assam would suggest that the first of the two roads namely, Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar be financed by the Government of India as a national highway and that for the second project Roha-Doboka-Diphu-Dimapur money may be arranged as far as possible from the Petrol Tax Fund or some other such source."

Then we got a reply from the Government of India, dated 30th October 1947; subject—Road Communications in Assam consequent on the separation of Sylhet. This came to us from the Ministry of Transport, to which Mr. Santhanam belongs. The letter is like this:

"Reference your letter, dated the 30th September 1947.

The following decisions have been taken by the Government of India on the proposals made by the Government of Assam:—

(a) *Shillong-Dawki-Silchar Road*.—This road is of no strategic importance as it is too close to the Pakistan border. This road may be useful if troops have to be employed in aid of the Civil power in Southern Assam; otherwise it is militarily useless. The Assam Government should consider the construction of this road out of Provincial revenues.

(b) *Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road*.—This road is of strategic importance. The proposed alignment is accepted for the purpose of reconnaissance and survey. It will take time to build and constructional difficulties are likely particularly beyond Garampani. Responsibility for reconnaissance and survey will be that of the Provincial Public Works Department, but the Engineer-in-Chief, General Headquarters (India) will render whatever assistance is possible from military resources. Contact between the Provincial Public Works Department and General Headquarters (India) will be through the Ministry of Transport (Roads Organisation). General Headquarters (India) will furnish to the Roads Organisation the specifications required by the military authorities particularly in respect of the ruling gradient, load capacities and the width of the road. The question of the incidence of the cost of the development of this road will be discussed later."

Then they discussed the Roha-Lumding-Dimapur Road, and said, "Dimapur is already connected with Roha and Shillong by a road traversing the Assam Valley. The road from Roha *via* Lumding will make a circle with the existing road. This will be useful in opening up the country but is of no strategic value. This road should be constructed as a Provincial Road."

"Link Roads: Garampani-Lumding and Haflong-Lumding.

These roads are not considered necessary from a military point of view. They should form part of the Provincial Government's plans for opening up the country.

Haflong-Henima-Kohima Road.—This road is of no strategic importance if the military situation arising out of the partition of India is considered. This position as an integral part of the overall plans for the defence of India as a whole remains to be considered."

Then they discussed about Jowai-Sutnga-Badarpur Road. They said, "this road again would be a Provincial measure as it is not important on strategic considerations".

It will be therefore seen, Sir, that they discussed all these roads and decided that they were of no strategic importance except the Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road, which they said was of strategic importance, and we were asked to carry out the survey.

Then, Sir, His Excellency the Governor of Assam, as Agent of the States Ministry, gave very strong orders through the Chief Secretary on 14th October, 1947 as follows:—

“His Excellency also wanted the Chief Engineer to initiate immediate action on the two road schemes already approved by the Cabinet namely: —

- (i) The Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road.
- (ii) The Daboka-Dimapur Road.

His Excellency thought that a special Division should be created for the purpose and that no time should be lost in completing the survey, deciding upon the exact alignment and starting work. If the Assam Public Works Department is unable to find requisite technical staff, and the Ministry agrees, His Excellency is prepared to get Italian Engineers to take up the work, if possible. His Excellency wants that the starting of the work should not be delayed for allocation of expenditure between the Centre and Province. He would like to have rough estimates for these projects well before he leaves for Delhi on 2nd week of November”.

Sir, rough estimates for 2½ crores were given to him and he carried them with him to Delhi and had consultations there with different Ministries. There was a Conference held at Delhi, called by the Ministry of States, to consider the various points raised by the Governor of Assam. The decision of the Conference was as follows: (I am reading from the extract from the minutes sent by the States Ministry). “The point of view of the Ministry of Defence was that the question of the construction of Tripura Access Road had not been considered by them although they had considered the question of the construction of Garampani-Haflong Silchar Road, in which case no decision had been reached as to who should bear the cost and who should construct the road. A decision had however been reached, and was confirmed at this meeting that the construction of this road is essential and must be given a very high priority. The project should include the extension beyond Silchar *via* Kurti to Agartala. The whole length should be treated as one project. It should be held to be of strategic importance and its construction should be accorded the highest priority. The Ministry of Defence undertook to examine very urgently the question of agency for the construction of this road and who should bear the cost and to have the decision, say, within two weeks. Meanwhile, survey of the Assam road will not be stayed and action will be taken to include in that survey the road from Kurti to Agartala. In so far as the road passing through Tripura State is concerned, the Ministry of State will also examine the case and get the order of Government on the question of liability for the construction of the road”.

After that the Government of Assam wrote to the Ministry of Transport and asked them to bear the whole cost and to ask the Military to give the specification. We wrote thus:—

“Meanwhile the Government of Assam would be glad to know the view of the General Headquarters (India), as mentioned in their letter, about the specifications required by the Military authorities particularly in respect of the ruling gradient, load capacities and width of the road”. We further stated that “It is the view of the Government of Assam that if this road is going to be a strategic road and the specifications are to be laid down by the Military authorities, the entire expenditure on Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road including cost of survey should be borne by the Central Government”. That letter was sent on the 10th December 1947. The Government of India sent their reply dated 10th January 1948 in which they stated thus:—“With reference to your letter dated 10th December 1947, I am directed to communicate the following decision of the Government of India in respect of specifications

required for the Shillong-Jowai-Garampani-Haflong-Silchar Road and Tripura Access Road :—

“The Road may be designed to the ordinary provincial specifications which are being adopted for the section from Shillong to Jowai under the Provincial Development Plan. No special specifications are prescribed for this road by the Military authorities. A further communication will be made to the Government of Assam in the matter of financing these two road projects. In the meantime, an abstract estimate of the cost of the survey of these roads in Assam may be supplied to this Ministry as soon as possible.”

Then afterwards the tenor was changed, and by their letter of the 8th March, 1948 the Government of India (Ministry of Defence) replied to our letter dated the 16th February 1948. The subject is two roads—Shillong-Jowai-Haflong-Silchar Road and the Silchar-Dwarbund-Hailakandi-Patharkandi-Chandkhira-Kurti Road. *Ref rence* :—Transport Ministry's letter dated 10th January 1948 and Assam's letter dated 16th February 1948. The letter is as follows :—

“ The Government of India having examined all aspects of this case consider that the main justification for constructing the two roads mentioned arises out of their civil, economic and administrative value to the province of Assam. They accept the position that these roads as indeed other main roads in the Province and acceding States, have potential utility for maintaining internal security, or meeting external aggression, but they would not normally have contemplated any financial liability on such considerations alone, more especially when no specifications beyond those which are found to be justified for Provincial needs are called for. However, in the special circumstances of Assam arising out of the consequences of partition, the Government of India are prepared to offer in this particular case financial aid as can be extended in view of the pressing obligations which the Government of India are required to meet in other directions.

The Government of India accordingly propose that the cost of constructing the two roads should be apportioned as follows :—

(1) Central contribution to be limited to 27·00 per cent. which is estimated to amount to Rs.40 lakhs.

(2) Provincial Liability—

(a) From the Provincial allocations from the Central Road Fund—13·00 per cent.

(b) From Provincial Development Fund which are aided by Central Block Grants for Development—60·00 per cent”.

The discussion now is not regarding alignment, whether from Jowai through Garampani and Haflong to Silchar and Tripura State border or whether from Jowai by another shorter and straight route to Badarpur and Tripura State border, but it is about the cost.

By their letter dated the 29th September, 1948, Assistant Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Transport conveyed the approval of the Governor General to Rs.41,210 for the purpose of reconnaissance survey and also by their letter dated the 12th of May, 1948 conveyed the approval of the detail survey estimate of the Government of India amounting to Rs.58,086.

Now, after this the only question remained to be decided was the question of finance about expenditure as to how much would be Assam's share and how much is to be the share of the Government of India.

Now in regard to this question of showing the cost Mr. Bardoloi and myself had a discussion with the Minister of Transport, Government of India,

the Hon'ble Mr. Gopalswamy Ayyangar after which Mr. Bardoloi wrote the following note:—

“The contribution from the Government of India for the strategic road Shillong-Haflong-Silchar-Kurti referred to in—

- (a) Transport Ministry's Express letter dated 10th January, 1948.
- (b) Government of Assam's letter dated 16th February, 1948.
- (c) Ministry of Defence's letter dated the 8th March, 1948, was discussed.

“The Chief Engineer of India (The consulting Engineer to the Government of India) told us that while the Ministry of Defence did not consider it a strategic road it admitted that it was one of strategic importance. He said that on that ground the Government of India would bear 27 per cent. of the expenditure and 13 per cent. would be taken from the Central Road Fund, the remaining 60 per cent. from the Post-War Development fund allotted to Assam. It was agreed by us that the Government of Assam could not afford to forego even a *caurie* from the Post-War Development Fund in view of the fact that many of the areas awaited development for a long time and roads up to border areas had to be constructed in order to carry supplies to those places. It was further agreed that it was not only a strategic road but it should be considered a full National Highway as the road traverses through Cooch Behar, Assam, Shillong, Haflong, Silchar and Tripura. No road could have a better claim for consideration as a National Highway. It was therefore essential that the Government of India should bear the entire cost of the road excepting that portion of the road between Shillong and Jowai which the Government of Assam undertook to build before partition of India. The project itself was undertaken with fullest sanction and approval of the Hon'ble Sardar Patel, subject to the allocation of expenditure to be borne by the Province and the Centre; he wanted the Provincial Government to go ahead with the project. The work has been started in different sectors and is likely to be complete before 31st March, 1949. The Hon'ble Mr. Ayyangar ultimately said that the matter should be again referred to the Defence Ministry and be reconsidered in the Road Board. The Chief Engineer of India thought that if special consideration was given to Assam other provinces might object”.

After much discussion between the Government of India and the Government of Assam regarding the matter, the Hon'ble Mr. Bardoloi, personally spoke again about this matter to the authorities in New Delhi. Finally the apportionment of the share of the Government of India and the Government of Assam for this road was settled. Then Mr. Bardoloi sent a telegram dated the 22nd February 1949, from Delhi to the Chief Engineer, which is as follows:—

“In spite of opposition from experts, Transport Ministry agreed bear two-thirds expenditure Shillong-Tripura Road. India road expert visiting Shillong for inspection road”.

This fact was officially intimated by the Government of India by their letter dated the 27th January 1949.

The Planning Officer, Mr. Aiyar came to Shillong in March 1949 and went over some portions of the road between 12th and 20th March 1949. From his inspection note, it is clear that he went only upto Mahur. At that time the road was not as it is at present. In his report he only described the different portions of the road over which he himself had gone, *i.e.*, from Shillong to Mahur and he has also described some other portions by enquiry from the engineers. He did not go to Haflong. After giving the history of the work he made some remarks regarding the progress of work and the necessity

for the development of the Khasi Hills and Cachar Hills. However, the following quotations are interesting:—

His remarks are these:—“The first section from Shillong-Jowai is said to have been commenced in 1947 but the rest of the road is said to have been started only after June 1948. After passing a few miles from Jowai, the road runs for the most part in jungles with little human habitation. Labour has to be imported..... and ration supplied. This has to be carried in head loads often 20 to 30 miles. The supervising officers had to reach the places of work only on foot, and wild animals such as bears are often met with. Labour rates are very high. Unskilled labour get about Rs.2-8-0 per day and skilled labour like carpenters and masons about Rs.4-8-0 per day. In spite of all these difficulties, remarkable progress has been shown. This progress has been rendered possible by taking up the work departmentally and engaging a number of piece workers. A workable schedule of rates has been prepared and approved by the Superintending Engineer and within these limits piece workers are offered work. The whole responsibility for alignment and execution devolves on the Executive Engineers and their assistants and they have shown their full mettle in this work”.

Then he went on describing the features of the country. After that he said again thus:—

“For the development of the hill area a road is the first requisite. This road running through the middle of Khasi and Cachar Hills is considered necessary for the development of the area and it is with this object was the alignment fixed”.

“In view of what has been described above, there is little prospect of large development of traffic on the new road in the near future and for at least a decade the average number of vehicles using the road may in my opinion not exceed single digits. Hence there seems to be no need except between Shillong and Jowai for costly surfacing or widening of the road at present. It would be sufficient if the road be completed for the 16 feet width and maintained as a gravelled road. The soil in general is moorum or red earth mixed with stones and this will stand the traffic likely to develop in the near future. Only in places where it is clayey or black soil need a coat of moorum or good soil be given over the surface and then gravelled. This will reduce both capital and maintenance cost. The first objective should be to complete the whole road for the 16 feet width, provide temporary wooden bridges wherever needed and improved drainage. The last is most important as its neglect will cause the destruction of the road. The two rivers Kopili and Diyung may be provided with suitable ferries. After these are completed the road can be maintained as a gravelled road for some years to facilitate development of the country and after traffic develops the road can be metalled.”

Now, Sir, as the work on the road was going on, the Government of India called for the progress reports of the work and we submitted the progress reports, and that shows very clearly that the Government of India approved the alignment and did not say that they had not approved the alignment. The alignment straight from Jowai *via* Badarpur to Tripura State had been rejected by the Government of India. In the letter dated 30th October 1947 they said that it was not of any Military importance. This is the alignment recently they have asked us to survey though it is a little different from the one rejected before.

It will be seen from the correspondence we have had, that at the beginning the Government of India considered that this road is of strategic importance and that survey work should be accorded the first priority.

Sir Akbar Hydari took the initiative after consulting General Ranking and the local Military authorities here in Assam and the Cabinet decided that this road should be taken up.

At first the Government of India thought that the Military would give their suggestions about the standard of the road to suit their purposes but afterwards the Government of India decided that the road should be made only 16 ft. wide and according to the Provincial standard.

Now, Sir, the Government of India has told us that they are not going to give us any grant from the 1st of October. That is our grievance.

I now turn to the remarks of Mr. Santhanam.

Mr. Santhanam, it seems, did not study all the correspondence between the Government of Assam and the Government of India regarding this road.

The Government of Assam have not found the road to be useless as he has said. It will be very useful, if we could finish it and make it jeepable and motorable. As we are in a bad state of finance we are unable to bear all the expenditure.

The road from Haflong to Silchar is only 60 miles. I have travelled over the whole road twice. I was very much surprised that the road was better than I expected.

If the Government of India stops the work now as they have done, they will be the party who will be responsible for the wasting of public money without properly investigating the road we have made. Their own expert said that the road should be completed to 16 ft. width. The Government of India will have to take more responsibility than they do now otherwise they will be open to the charge of wasting public funds. We started this road with the understanding that it is a road of strategic importance that requires the highest priority in the construction. We pressed the Government of India to make it a National Highway and to bear all the expenditure. At last we agreed that the Government of India should bear two-thirds, and the Government of Assam one-third. The Government of India, the strong partner in this work, before completion have backed out and left the weak partner Assam to her fate with her finance depleted.

I am sorry if the Government of India would not follow even the advice of their own expert who said that the road should be completed to 16 ft. width, and bridges and drains to be made. They have to follow only the advice that will suit them and not that which will suit us.

I say that the Government of India would be committing the sin of perfidy— if they would leave their weaker partner helpless half way when they promised at the beginning that the road should be made, of course completed, and the expenditure shared.

Let a Tribunal of Justice be set up to judge who will be responsible for the wastage of public funds if this road is not completed according to the advice of the Government of India's own expert.

I say that the Government of India would be committing the sin of perfidy if they do not fulfil their duty. How can poor helpless Assam being deprived of several crores of rupees and being given only doles which are not enough to carry on with her development plans, bear the whole responsibility of this road? It is time for the Government of India to reconsider this present attitude. I ask the Government of India to come to their duty and fulfil their part of transaction and we will do ours.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister will kindly state facts.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Now I turn to the statement of Mr. Santhanam that "the Government of Assam is specialising in wasting public funds without benefit to itself". It is very unfortunate that such a statement has been made by such a responsible Minister of State. Only bad person can specialise in wasting public funds. I believe Mr. Santhanam does not mean to say what he did.

Sir, I think, I have stated enough.

I must tell the hon. Members that I have received a wire from Mr. K. Chaliha one of our Assam M. P. as follows:—

"Met Honourable Santhanam Saturday with four Assam Members he will make suitable amends shortly." Sir, we shall be glad if he does.

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): How that will help ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: But Mr. Santhanam must realise that great mischief has been done to our people in Assam. Those who are Anti Congress and Anti-Government are using this as a handle to down the Congress Government.

Speaking for myself I shall forget all that he has said but I must strongly impress this fact that to make amends which will be of any good is to do his duty, to get the Government of India to complete this road and be faithful to their partner to save themselves from the charge that they are not carrying out their duties and thus cause waste of public funds.

Sir, I myself have done all that is possible for me to do with a clear conscience. I think it will be foolish on the part of the Government not to carry on the responsibility and share the expenditure and to complete this road. Any body who has gone over the road will be surprised to see it. I have gone over many roads in the world. I have seen roads in America, Australia, Africa, England and other big countries, I think this is the most scenic road in Assam which I have seen and from many points of view it will be very useful. I wish all the hon. Members of the House had gone over this road. This road can be completed to make it jeepable with a little amount of expenditure. I could pass over this road easily with a jeep and from Haflong to Shillong I actually went with a jeep and trailer. So anybody can go over this part of the road even with first class car during the winter season—only the approaches at the Kopili river will have to be made with easy gradients and then the road will be a through road to Silchar. I shall be sorry if this road is abandoned.

The Chief Engineer will soon give his inspection report on this road.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. A few days ago Mr. Santhanam made a statement in the Parliament casting serious aspersion on the administration of the Government of Assam. Soon after, this statement of Mr. Santhanam appeared in the Press, there was considerable commotion in the public mind and also in local Press. The other day Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma, Chief Whip of Congress Assembly Party, naturally wanted to know the position of the Government of Assam in the light of Mr. Santhanam's statement on this matter. Owing to the consternation which fell in this province I considered it necessary

to ask for a statement from the Government of Assam on this matter. Now a statement has been made for the information of the hon. Members of this House by the Government of Assam. The whole matter is under seisin of the Parliament. So I do not think it will be proper on my part to allow any discussion or debate on this matter now.

Srijut DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: মই এটা কথা কব পাৰোনে যে statement ৰ উত্তৰটো যাতে Parliament ৰ পুতোক শব্দসকলৈ দিয়া হয় just to clear the mind of the members of the Parliament.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: সেইটো আৱশ্যক হলে কেন্দ্ৰীয় গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে কৰিব।

Maulavi Saiyid MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I may make a suggestion, Sir, that a copy of the statement made by the Hon'ble Minister of Public Works Department be sent to Mr. Santhanam as well as to the senior Minister of Transport in the Central Government, Mr. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar, and that may help matters.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I shall have a copy sent formally to Mr. Santhanam and to the Senior Member of the Transport Ministry, Sir.

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: In this respect, Sir, I have already written to Shri Gopaldaswami Ayyangar. I have considered this matter and from my point of view and from the point of view of the Assam Government the matter might well be discussed officially. But my personal view is that Shri Santhanam was very wrong for the manner in which he made the statement. Whatever opinion he might have formed in this regard, he might have sent it to us confidentially by correspondence. There might be difference of opinion and this difference of opinion started when the Government of India probably considered that this road was not of strategic value or importance. The opinion which was formed in the meanwhile was that the road was of strategic importance and not a strategic road. The difference of opinion was the subject matter of discussion of a Conference which has been mentioned by the Hon'ble Minister, Public Works Department just now. Ultimately it was agreed that the Ministry of Defence should pay a portion of the cost apparently because of the fact that the road was of some strategic importance. To us, as also to the then Military authorities placed here, it is a strategic road and as probably they thought otherwise they were not prepared to pay the entire cost. Possibly the Government of India thought that while this road can be utilised for military purposes, it may not be absolutely necessary from the point of view of strategy. A second alternative road has now been presented to the Government of Assam by the same Ministry, I mean the Ministry of Transport, a road which would go up to Jowai and then would go across to the border and then go as far as Badarpur. Perhaps the Government of India might consider such a road to be a shorter national high-way as also a strategic road. But it has, I suppose, been demonstrated that this present view was taken by the Government of India after they gave sanction to the construction of the Shillong-Haflong and Silchar Road. It is only after the Road was partially completed that they expressed their inability to maintain the road or even for its full completion. Now the Government of India think, on the advice of their expert Engineer, Mackaline,

that they would like that this road should be considered as an entirely provincial road, no responsibility should lie with the Government of India beyond payment of $\frac{1}{3}$ rd of the cost of construction upto October 1949. In pursuance of that agreement out of the total expenditure that has been incurred on the Road, forty lakhs will be given this year and the balance is proposed to be given next year. In view of all this it is most unfortunate that Mr. Santhanam should have made such a statement in the Parliament and it is still more unfortunate that opportunities should have been given by this statement to some interested parties to carry on a propaganda which is probably unfair and untrue.

The Assam Finance Bill, 1950

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Finance Bill, 1950 be taken into consideration.

As there is no amendment, I think, with your permission, I can move the next motion, that is item (b).

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister may kindly move the next Motion.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: I beg to move, Sir, that the Assam Finance Bill, 1950, be taken into consideration clause by clause.

As there is no amendment I can move the next Motion, *i.e.*, item (c).

I beg to move, Sir, that the Assam Finance Bill, 1950 be passed.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Assam Finance Bill, 1950, be passed."

The question was adopted.

The Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill, 1950

The Hon'ble Maulavi ABDUL MATLIB MAZUMDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill, 1950, be passed.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill, 1950, be passed".

(After a pause)

As there is no hon. Member taking part, I will put the question.

The question is:

"That the Assam Local Board Elections (Emergency Provisions) Bill, 1950, be passed."

The question was adopted.

The Assam Amusements and Betting Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Amusements and Betting Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be passed.

There is no Amendment to this Bill.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Assam Amusements and Betting Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be passed".

(After a pause)

As there is no hon. Member taking part, I will put the question.

The Question is :

“That the Assam Amusements and Betting Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be passed”.

The question was adopted.

The Assam Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be taken into consideration clause by clause.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Motion moved :

“That the Assam Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be taken into consideration clause by clause”.

There is one Amendment standing in the names of Mr. J. S. Hardman and Mr. C. W. Morley. Who is going to move it ?

Mr. C. W. MORLEY : Mr. Hardman will move it, Sir.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI : I want to raise a point of order, Sir, against this amendment of my hon. Friend.

The only amendment that is before the House is the clause 4 for amending sub-section 1(i) (b) of section 15 of the principal Act by which the words “in the State” is sought to be inserted after the word “sale” ; whereas the amendment proposed by my hon. Friend is with regard to clause 4 of section 15 of the Original Act which is not before the House. I consider his amendment is beyond the scope of my Amending Bill and as such I think the amendment is outside the scope of the Bill and cannot be moved.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : What has Mr. Hardman got to say to that ?

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, when Government introduces an Amending Bill in the House, they bring the Parent Act also before the consideration of the House. It has been abundantly established by the decisions of the Indian Parliament that when an Amending Bill is brought before the House, hon. Members have the right to introduce amendments relating to the original Act though not directly included in the Government Amending Bill. There has never been any acceptance of the proposition that we are merely to consider the proposals brought up by the Government without consideration of the legislation as a whole. It is the responsibility of the House to consider whether the Sales Tax Act requires improving. Government are entitled to put forward their measures and Opposition Members on the other hand are entitled to put forward their views in regard to any issue which will be decided by the deliberations of the House. I am somewhat surprised that the Hon'ble Finance Minister should object to our amendment.

I maintain, Sir, that our amendment is entirely within the scope of the main Act. There is no principle involved in acceptance of the amendment which seeks merely to correct a minor mistake which has occurred in the main Act and which nobody noticed during the last amendment of this Act. As I said, Sir, it is a simple matter and no point of principle is involved. It is a question of improving the piece of legislation which is now before the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I shall reserve my ruling till after lunch.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 1 P.M., for lunch.

After lunch

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: May I say a word, Sir, in reply to Mr. Hardman ?

In order to appreciate my objection it is necessary to read section 15, which states: "The net turnover shall be determined by deducting from a dealer's gross turnover during any given period...goods specified in the purchasing dealer's certificate of registration as being intended by him for...use in the manufacture or production of any goods for sale". That is the only item, *viz.*, (b), which I wanted to amend in order to limit the exemption to manufacture or production of any goods for sale within the State, so that no one can take advantage of deduction on account of manufacture or production of any goods for sale outside the State. Now, Mr. Hardman wants to amend sub-section (4) of section 15 of the Principal Act by substituting the words "six and one-quarter" for the words "four and eleven-sixteenths". This is altogether a different item. That is my objection, Sir.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: On a point of explanation, Sir.

Section 15 deals entirely with deductions from turnover and this is clearly a detail in regard to such deductions. I would refer you, Sir, to page 285 of Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice where it is stated that an amendment to a question need not be akin to that question. So long as it is connected with it, it is sufficient.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Just before we adjourned for lunch a point of order was raised by the Hon'ble Finance Minister about the admissibility of the amendment tabled by hon. Mr. Hardman. I reserved my Ruling till after lunch. This amending Bill seeks to effect a change in the provision of section 15(1)(i)(b) of the Assam Sales Tax Act, 1947. The amendment of Mr. Hardman, in order to be admissible, should be within the scope of the amending Bill. Now, the scope of an amending Bill, or part of an amending Bill, or an Original Bill is determined by reference to the Statement of Objects and Reasons in the sponsored Bill. It is stated in the Objects and Reasons of this sponsored Bill that the object of amending section 15(1)(i)(b) is to "avoid multi-point taxation," and the amendment of Mr. Hardman would have been within the scope of the Bill had it suggested any other alternative method of avoiding multi-point taxation. But he seeks, by his amendment, to effect an amendment of the original Act. Therefore, in my view this is beyond the scope of the present amending Bill. In order to effect such a change as contemplated by the amendment of Mr. Hardman, the best way is to amend the original Act. I therefore hold that the amendment of Mr. Hardman is beyond the scope of the amending Bill and as such out of order.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: There is no other amendment. So the Hon'ble Minister may move his Motion.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be passed.

In making this Motion I would like to say a few words. Most probably I would not have raised even this technical objection if Mr. Hardman's formula

would not have given scope for evasion of taxation. I have calculated the figures and I have found that his amendment wants to give more reduction than what is due. That is why I could not accept the amendment. But if and when any occasion arises we may think of submitting an appropriate amendment in this matter.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: Do I understand that the Hon'ble Minister is agreeable to introducing an amendment on this line ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: I do not propose to give any undertaking, but I say that the matter will be considered. The formula that has been given by Mr. Hardman cannot be accepted because it takes away more than what is due.

Mr. J. S. HARDMAN: May I enquire that if according to my calculations 9 pies in the rupee is equivalent to four and eleven-sixteenths, what is the equivalent of 1 anna ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: If hon. Mr. Hardman wants to be satisfied, I can explain the matter. I will just give a concrete example.

For luxury goods worth Rs.100, sales tax to the extent of Rs.6-4-0 is realized making a gross turnover of Rs.106-4-0, i.e., for gross turnover of Rs.106-4-0, net turnover is Rs.100. If Mr. Hardman's amendment is accepted, $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. on Rs.106-4-0 is to be deducted to determine the net turnover. $6\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. of Rs.106-4-0 comes to Rs.6-10-3 and net turnover comes to Rs.99-9-9. So I want the entire turnover of Rs.100. I do not want to give any reduction. Mr. Hardman's formula is not correct. He wants to give more benefit to the tax evader. That is why I could not agree to this formula.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved :

"That the Assam Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950, be passed".

Maulavi Saiyid MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I oppose the passing of this Bill. I take this stand in order to point out to the Hon'ble Minister that it is high time that he reviews the Assam Sales Tax Act and sees to its modification. On matter of procedure only, he will find that under the rules framed under the Assam Sales Tax Act—probably Rule No.27—an appeal has been provided to the Commissioner of Sales Tax from an original or appellate judgment of the Assistant Commissioner of Sales Tax. There is no such provision in the main Act itself. But curiously enough, the rule does not provide any period of limitation for preferring an appeal. This is an obvious omission which should be remedied. Moreover, when there is provision in the main Act about "revision" to the Commissioner of Sales Tax by an aggrieved party and when a period of limitation of 60 days is provided in the main Act itself, it is for consideration of the Hon'ble Minister in charge whether a provision of appeal to the Commissioner should not appear in the Act itself. These two points have recently come to my notice and I place them for the consideration of the Hon'ble Minister.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this fact was not brought to my notice earlier, otherwise I could have taken this point into consideration. But the word 'revision' is already there in the main Act and probably at the time of framing any rule thereunder the word 'appeal' was used in place of 'revision', the defect of any rule is no ground for opposing this amending Bill. This fact had not been brought to my notice earlier, and the Bill is under

consideration. As a matter of fact these rules were published and objections were invited, but no objection was raised by any one from any quarters. As the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition has raised this objection, I propose to consider this matter.

Maulavi Saiyid MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The word "revision" in the Act is entirely different from the word 'appeal' that is provided in the rule. The Commissioner in the case of "revision" has got to state a case to the High Court for orders whereas in the case of an appeal the Commissioner himself can pass a judgment. So there is vast difference between "revision" mentioned in the Act and the appeal to the Commissioner provided by Rules. This is an analogy that I want to point out.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: That matter will be considered. As I said, had the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition drawn my attention to this matter earlier, we could have considered the desirability of change of the relevant rule.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Assam Sales Tax (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed".
The question was adopted.

The Assam Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1950

Srijut HARESWAR DAS (Parliamentary Secretary): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no amendment. So I move that the Assam Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Assam Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed".
No hon. Member is taking part.

I put the question.

The question is:

"That the Assam Stamp (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed".
The question was adopted.

The Assam Court-Fees (Amendment) Bill, 1950

Srijut HARESWAR DAS (Parliamentary Secretary): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is no amendment. So I move that the Assam Court-Fees (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed.

I may point out that there were certain mistakes in the Bill first published. Those mistakes were detected and corrected by another Gazette publication. The Bill which will be passed will be the corrected Bill.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Assam Court-Fees (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed".

(After a pause)

No hon. Member is taking part.

I put the question.

The question is:

"That the Assam Court-Fees (Amendment) Bill, 1950 be passed".
The question was adopted.

The Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 1950

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: We shall now take up the Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 1950. There is an amendment standing in the name of Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Sir, I beg to move that in Article IVB (v) of Part B of the First Schedule going to be substituted by clause 2 of the Bill for the figures "30" and "9" occurring in columns second and third the figures "25" and "7" be respectively substituted.

Sir, I beg to request you, at the same time, that I want to delete a portion of my amendment and the new amendment should be as follows:—

That in Article IVB (v) of Part B of the First Schedule of the Bill for the figure "30" occurring in column second the figure "25" be substituted.

The other portion of my original amendment should be deleted.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That in Article IVB (v) of Part B of the First Schedule of the Bill for the figure '30' occurring in column second the figure '25' be substituted."

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: I have no objection to accept the amendment as it is worded now.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I put the question—the question is:

"That in Article IVB (v) of Part B of the First Schedule of the Bill for the figure '30' occurring in column second the figure '25' be substituted".

The question was adopted.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The question is that the title and preamble of the Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 1950, do stand part of the Bill.

The question was adopted.

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 1950, as amended, be passed.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 1950, as amended, be passed".

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I put the question—the question is:

"That the Assam Motor Vehicles Taxation (Amendment) Bill, 1950, as amended, be passed".

The question was adopted.

Resolution re : sending of a Good-Will Mission to Pakistan—contd.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: We shall now continue discussion of Dr. Emran Husain Chaudhury's Resolution* regarding sending of a Good-Will Mission to Pakistan.

Maulavi Saiyid MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Yesterday, I was on my legs and addressing the House when for want of time the debate had to be cut short. I wanted to place before the House the fact that I received a telegram on the evening of the 20th, which could not be delivered to me according to the telegraphist for want of a messenger, and telephoning me, he however, read out the gist of the telegram. Next morning I received the telegram and I found from the telegram that copy of the same had been sent to the Hon'ble Chief Minister and the telegram was received from Maulavi Jahanuddin Ahmed, an *ex-M. L. A.* The telegram was to the effect that the situation at Chapar, which place, the Hon'ble Chief Minister visited on the 19th has deteriorated since his visit. As soon as I found the Hon'ble the Chief Minister here in his seat, I went to him and talked about this telegram. He told me that only 48 hours ago he passed that area, and then it was quite normal. I requested him to make an enquiry from the Deputy Commissioner about this telegram received from an *ex-M. L. A.*

Sir, we are really passing through very troublous times, and it should be the bounden duty of every one to restore normal conditions in both countries by means of conciliation and policy of give and take. Unless it is done, one cannot expect justice in these days, for there are hot heads in both the countries. Even the Prime Minister of India was criticised for his statement on the floor of the House of Parliament when he showed that there was migration from West Bengal to East Bengal as there had been migration from the East Bengal to West Bengal. He made his statement after his personal enquiry in Calcutta. Even then there were critics in the House of Parliament itself who raised their voices against the Prime Minister. I find from the Press that a few days later the point was taken up by the Hon'ble Shri Gopalaswami Ayyanger and he stated on the floor of the House of Parliament that after careful and due enquiry from the Railway administration he placed the figures in the Parliament of India that whereas the tickets purchased, from East Bengal to West Bengal, by passengers, during that period was 86,000, and the number of tickets that was purchased by passengers from West Bengal going to Pakistan was in the neighbourhood of 80,000. This clearly showed, Sir, that there was panic amongst the minority community in both the countries, and therefore, this large exodus from one country to the other. This also belies the assertion in certain quarters that whereas on one side everyone is a paragon of virtue, everyone on the otherside is a devil of the deepest dye. Our own Prime Minister will probably be able to tell the House, I have received information from private source only that exodus of Muslims from Assam—specially—from Barpeta Subdivision and Goalparal district is not far short of the number of Muslims who have migrated from West Bengal to East Bengal. My information is that the number was over 80,000. Yesterday, on the authority of a Hindu gentleman who visited the locality only three days ago, I was told that the number had increased heavily and the number moving out of Assam is over a lakh. Sir, it clearly shows that something is wrong amongst our people, and that people had been driven out (not under Government's order) but by mob violence. In spite of Government order to persuade the Muslim immigrants, long established in Assam to remain in

*That in view of the occasional communal outbursts in the country and in order to avert a recurrence of a riot or the threat of it, this Assembly is of opinion that proper authorities be moved so that a Good-Will Mission may be sent to Pakistan with a view to bringing about a better, friendlier and happier relationship between the peoples of Assam and East Bengal.

Assam, the local people have taken the law into their own hands, and committed arson, loot and other sorts of violence. The whole country strayed far away from the best ideals laid before the Nation by one whose portrait adorn this House. I refer to Mahatma Gandhi, and it is sad to think that his teachings have gone in vain. It appears that the country is going berserk and people turning mad not only here but also in Pakistan. The Government seems to be helpless, and, because I am not afraid, I call 'spade a spade' and speak on the floor of this House what I think to be the best in the interest of Assam. Often I am receiving letters often threatening my life and the wiping off of my amily. The other day I handed over one letter to the Hon'ble Finance Minister which threatened not only my life but also threatening to wipe out the entire family for whatever action he might like to take. This morning I received another such letter, and this time in Assamese, and again, I will adopt the same procedure and handover either to the Prime Minister or to the Finance Minister, the letter. Whatever steps the Government will adopt, I must say that the country is going away from the "non-violence" creed of the Congress. I will place the letter before the House and it is as follows:—

“মহম্মদ শ্বাদুল্লা, মন্ত্ৰী, শ্বিলং ,

তুমি যিবিলাক পন্থৰ দ্বাৰা অসমখন পাকিস্থান কৰিম বুলি ভাবিছা আৰু সেই এচেহলীত যিবিলাক কথা পাকিস্থানৰ বিষয়ে কৈছা, চাউলৰ দাম ইমান, চেনীৰ দাম ইমান, এই বিলাক কৈ তই কিয় অস-নীয়াৰ বাওভৰিত কামুৰিব ধৰিছ। সেইটো নকৰিবি। তোৰ ভবিষ্যত বৰ বেয়া। কিয়নো তোৰ জিন্মা ভিহিনে যি কৰিছে কৰিছে ; তই আৰু নকৰিবি। তোৰ বুকুত বহি তেজ হলাহল বাহিৰ কৰিম। এতিয়াও তই ইয়াৰ পৰা পাকিস্থানলৈ যা, নহলে গাৰধান, যিবিলাক ভগনীয়া আহি অসমত বিয়পি পৰিছে সেইবিলাকে দেখিছে। সেই বিলাকৰ বিলাই-বিপত্তি দেখিলে চকুপানী ওলায়। যিয়ে হওক সবভোগত হোৱা ঘটনাত যিজন Md. S. D. O. এ সবভোগত হিন্দুক মাৰে সেইসময়ত সি পুলিচক হুকুম নিদিয়। চালা সি কি তিবোতাৰ মেখেলাৰ তলৰ মানুহ। তাক এতিয়াই টুকুৰা টুকুৰ কৰি গঙ্গা নদীত ভহাই দিয়া ভাল। বেচি লিখি তোক বেজাৰ নিদিও। হে শ্বাদুল্লা ভাই, তই অনতি পলমে পাকিস্থানত ষাই বাজত্ব কৰগৈ। নহলে অসমীয়াই তোক হত্যা কৰিম। তই ভাবিছ হিন্দু কি ? কি, কাৰ্য্যক্ষেত্ৰতহে দেখিবি। তহঁতে তিবিৰ মেখেলা তলৰপৰা ওলাবই নোৱাৰিবি। ইতি

অসম, পূৰ্ববঙ্গ, পশ্চিমবঙ্গ,
ভাৰতবৰ্ষ।”

These are the effusions which is pointed to the trend of pepole's mind, and I believe, Sir, that these are not the doings of ordinary illiterate people, but there are some brains behind it, and it should be the bounden duty of the Government to trace those people and bring them to book.

The subject matter of the Resolution as pointed out by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam should be dealt on a higher Ministerial level of Pakistan and India and I am constrained to agree with him. Now if this House passes this Resolution and sends this up to the proper authorities, that is, the Government of India, they could very well turn round and say, "What makes you pass this Resolution which indirectly says that we have done nothing whereas we have made advance after advance to the Pakistan Government but it is they who are not in a mood to talk of any reconciliation". That is one point. Supposing the Government of India takes a very charitable view and says that it is a laudable suggestion but what is the guarantee that Pakistan will accept it? And if Pakistan refuses as before, in that case we will be stultified. In view of this, I request my Friend, the Mover of this Resolution, to withdraw this Resolution the intention of which has already been fulfilled.

In the House everyone excepting one hon. Member is for reconciliation. This solitary Member rose in his anger and talked of "Police action". He does

not know what is "Police action." A police action against Pakistan is unthinkable, as Hon'ble Pandit Nehru said for Pakistan is not like a State within India as Hyderabad is. Pakistan is an independent sovereign country and Pakistan and India are both Members of the United Nations Organisation. One Member without informing or getting the permission of the United Nations Organisation cannot declare war against or march into the other Member's territory with military strength. This is only by the way, as hon. Members here agreed with the hon. Mover of the Resolution, that it is high time that in the name of humanity, if nothing else, this sort of happenings prevailing both in Pakistan and India should stop.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, before I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution I beg to clarify my position and to remove the doubts that are still present in the minds of some hon. Members of this House.

More than 2½ years have passed we since achieved independence. All this time we have lived in peace. Yet some hon. Members appear to doubt our loyalty. We have taken the oath of fealty to the State at least three times. We mean to abide by the Constitution and do what little we can by way of contributing to the peace and progress of the country. During this time we have shown by our acts that we are good citizens. Why should then some Members venture to express doubts as to our allegiance to the State? We are as good citizens as any body in the country.

Sir, this kind of occasional communal riots in the two countries has been severely condemned by all sane people. Even Mr. Nurul Amin, the Chief Minister of East Pakistan, said in a statement published in the Press that what had happened in East Pakistan was a disgrace to Islam which religion I am proud to profess and practise. No sane man can ever applaud acts or activities of 'Goondas'. These outburst are nothing but acts of 'Goondas' who are to be condemned by everybody worth the name and I here stand to lend my support to the strong condemnation that such acts deserve, either in Pakistan or in India. Anybody found involved in such kinds of activities ought to be brought to the notice of the Government that adequate action might immediately be taken so that there might be no recurrence of such things.

I said in the course of my statement yesterday that the Government of Assam are making strenuous efforts to bring the situation to normalcy. But unfortunately we are pained to hear the statement made by the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition both yesterday and to-day that after the Hon'ble Chief Minister's return from some parts of Assam where there were troubles, the situation appears to have taken a worse turn. I am sorry to find in the Press that section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code has been enforced in Berpeta. There is insecurity throughout the country. The minority community is constantly afraid that the worst may happen any moment. Any way, Sir, I know it is only for a very short period that section 144 has been enforced. As the hon. Members are fully aware, we assume a great responsibility by virtue of our Membership of this House and whatever we say we must say, especially in these times of communal riots and outbursts, with the greatest possible caution.

Sir, quite a number of prominent Muslims have expressed a desire to proceed in a goodwill mission to East Pakistan, the Inter-national Red Cross Society is to study the situation in both the countries. The India-Pakistan Friendship Association also proposes to send a goodwill mission to East Pakistan. So what has been brought out in my Resolution is quite appropriate and timely; but on account of the difficulties that have been pointed out both by the Hon'ble Leader of the House as well as the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition that this problem can only be tackled at a much higher level, at Governmental level, I would naturally ask the House to grant me leave to withdraw

my Resolution. But I would like to make one point clear, Sir. By "proper authorities" as mentioned in my Resolution I mean the U. N. O. who alone could be moved to take action on the lines as suggested in my Resolution. Sir I am glad that my hon. Friend, Professor Sarwan, has endorsed the sentiments expressed in my Resolution and also I am glad that the Hon'ble Leader of the House has every sympathy with the sentiments that I have expressed through my Resolution. I am also glad to mention that the other day when I had a talk with the Hon'ble Finance Minister about this matter, he also showed sympathy with my intention as embodied in my Resolution. I confess that some flaw or lacuna may have been left in the Resolution and that gives offence to Mr. Talukdar for whom I have great regard. That could be no reason to suspect my honest intentions. Nothing is further from my mind than that I have some bad motives. The Resolution is enough to contradict that I never meant.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR : Sir, on a point of personal explanation, I would like to correct the misunderstanding of my Friend. I said at the very beginning that I have full sympathy with the intention with which he moved the Resolution, but what I could not agree with him was the wording of the Resolution. He has referred to outbursts and disturbances that occurred in his opinion in India but he did not care to say anything in the Resolution about the disturbances that are occurring in Pakistan that is what I objected to.

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY : The Resolution was amply elaborated in my speech yesterday and also to-day. I am glad that he also has full sympathy with the object of my Resolution.

Now, Sir, in view of the assurance given by the Hon'ble Chief Minister that he has been doing every thing in his power to restore law and order in the Province and confidence in the minds of the Muslims and in view of the difficulties of taking out a goodwill mission to East Bengal as pointed out by the Hon'ble Leader of the House, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

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

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, before you allow my hon. Friend to withdraw his Resolution I would like to clarify some points which I think the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition has referred in his speech for certain information.

I suppose he wanted to know the situation in Chapor. I was no less anxious of the situation myself. As a matter of fact I had passed that area twice during the course of my tour on the 19th instant. I had no indication of what was the gist of the telegram the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition received from his friend, namely that the situation has worsened after my departure. I am naturally surprised to hear that the situation was deteriorating. I could not, of course, assess the value of that information, but as soon as I got the information from him, I mean the Leader of the Opposition, I immediately contacted the Sadar Subdivisional Officer of Dhubri as both the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police were absent. The information that I received from him was that there had been no untoward happenings although the tension was still there. Even after I had received this information I sent one of my Friends from here who is known to be a great peacemaker between the Muslims and the Hindus—I refer to Srijut Sarat Chandra Sinha—I asked him to exercise his influence there and I am glad to inform the House that nothing untoward has happened I suppose during the last 96 hours. I am expecting to believe that panic has greatly diminished and that the Muslims would prefer to stay there.

Mention of exodus of the Muslims makes me consider it necessary to inform the House that so far as this Government is concerned, the District Officers as also some Hon'ble Ministers have already visited those places and gave every possible assurance to people with holdings not to go away. We have asked them to remain

in some place of safety where Government could look after them (*applause from Opposition Members*) so that after the atmosphere of tension is removed they might be sent back to their old holdings and carry on with their cultivation. But it must be a great tragedy that even assurance from persons like me could not induce the people to go back. I am sure many have decided to stay back but many also are going away. It is difficult for me just now to give the exact number of people who have gone away, but we have called for this information from our District Officers so that this information could be sent to the Government of India.

I feel very much for those people who have gone away and are to-day displaced from their homes. But in any circumstances all steps possible are being taken by this Government to help them and to give them courage if possible to stay back. Assurances have also been given that they would be put back in their old homes if only they will stay at least for sometime till the Government could stabilise their position. I know some of the people have agreed to stay back, but a large number of them have also gone away in the meantime.

I can also give for the information of the House that we have received message from the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in which he asked this Government to do all that is possible to offer relief to the distressed people both Hindus and Muslims without discrimination. I hope the hon. Members of the House know that the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India has specially mentioned the cases of the displaced Muslims and desired that they should be given all possible relief and he has given assurance that the Government of India will stand for the necessary finance to do this (*applause from Opposition Members.*)

So, Sir, I can assure the House that we are doing and are prepared to do anything for the purpose of removing this calamitous situation, I call it calamitous because while man can reason, man can show ways of good living, in spite of this men cannot take away the passion and unreason which are in men. This real is the cause of all troubles in human Society and for that I may not try to defend any particular community. May be that the causes for distrust were old, may be that these are due to acts of certain political parties, but if it is thought by any one present in the House that I am accusing any body in face of this grave calamity to us all I am going to remove any misimpression. The cause of suffering of humanity and to remove their sufferings must be the guiding principle of any thoughtful human being. I am speaking this not as a Chief Minister, but as an ordinary human being. In accepting such a principle as a conduct of one's life, alone lies actually the peace of mankind. On account of our complete failure to understand one another, we have brought this calamity on us. It is time that all men with sympathy, it is time for all men who wish to bring about peace, to strive to understand the problems of one another and try to solve them with common co-operation. It looks as if I am speaking from a pulpit or from a philosophical platform, but to me it seems that this is the only possible solution of this present-day evils. The panic that prevails in the affected area is due to a complete misunderstanding between men and men and between community and community. Is it not a fact that you are not afraid of a person whom you understand? You are not afraid of him because he is also one of your own. Unless this feeling comes, I am afraid misunderstanding is bound to continue for long. But I do hope that with the return of better reason in us, we will be able to solve this problem to which humanity has been subjected to-day (*Applause.*)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Do I understand that Dr. Emran Husain Choudhury has sought leave of the House to withdraw his resolution?
(*After a pause*)

Has he the leave of the House to withdraw his Resolution ?
The Resolution was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Maulavi ABDUL HALIM: Sir, I am not moving this Resolution *No.20 for the present.

Resolution re: Establishment of one charitable Dispensary in each Mauza of Assam.

Maulavi ABDUL HALIM: Mr. Speaker Sir, the Resolution which stands in my name, and which I now beg to move runs as follows:—

This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do take immediate steps to establish one charitable dispensary in each and every Mauza of the districts and sub-divisions of the State of Assam.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in moving this Resolution I do not desire to take the time of this House but will rest content with making just a few observations. The need for improving the health of the people must be admitted on all hands. It is urgent and must receive prior consideration in these days because of mal-nutrition or inadequate nutrition for the obvious reason of scarcity of food in the Province. General health of the people is definitely on the decline. The sanitary condition of the villages is anything but good. The water which the dwellers of villages drink is, as every visitor to village has seen, unwholesome in the extreme. Death-roll from malaria and other epidemics has shown no downward tendency. Large areas with thick population go either without medical assistance or fall victims to village quacks, who help more in bringing disease and death than saving the people. There are no doubt Local Board dispensaries, but they are few and far between, and the supply of medicines and medical equipments is far short of public demand. In such circumstances, Sir, is it not the primary duty of a civilised Government to have every sub-division dotted with dispensaries, with adequate supplies of medicines and medical equipment ?

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Government will adduce the time-honoured plea of want of adequate funds, for maintaining a top-heavy administration with highly-paid staff. Certainly there is no want of funds to pay off huge salary and traveling allowance bills of the Hon'ble Ministers and their Parliamentary Secretaries, and no body cares to remember the limit of Rs.500 set by the Father of the Nation for the most responsible of our States Officers. Funds are available for well-furnished palatial buildings and for luxurious cars of the latest model. If funds are not available, it is to improve the general health of the masses of the people and to provide in increasing numbers of hospitals and dispensaries. And yet we do not hesitate to swear, in season and out of season, by the name of the common man, by the name of the bare-backed tiller of the soil, the common dweller of the village, the pivot round which the entire Government revolves.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with these words I commend this Resolution to the acceptance of the House.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Resolution moved :

"That this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do take immediate steps to establish one charitable dispensary in each and every Mauza of the Districts and Sub-divisions of the State of Assam."

*This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do take necessary steps to establish a Minority Board in every District and Subdivision of the State of Assam for the protection of minority rights and claims.

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot accept this Resolution on principle. The Resolution recommends to the Government to establish one dispensary in each and every Mauza of the districts and subdivisions of the State of Assam. Sir, there are 308 Mauzas, excepting the districts of Goalpara and Cachar in the plains districts of Assam, the population in each Mauza is not equal, in certain Mauzas the number of population is greater and in certain Mauzas it is smaller and in certain Mauzas the area is bigger and in certain Mauzas smaller. If we accept the proposal of my hon. Friend, Mr. Halim, that we should start one dispensary for each Mauza, in that case the people will not get equitable benefit from the dispensary that will be situated in the Mauza. From the practical side also, Sir, this cannot be achieved. We have got about 386 dispensaries, some are run by Local Boards, some are subsidised by us and some are run by Government. These dispensaries are situated in certain places. If we accept the recommendation of my Friend, Mr. Halim, then these dispensaries will have to be shifted in some cases. Therefore, Sir, the principle suggested by him is neither practicable nor equitable. Although we have not got any direct responsibility about the starting of dispensaries in the villages yet we give subsidies to the people to start them in their localities. The responsibility rest upon the Local Boards. Even if the Local Boards accept my Friend's recommendations the intention for which he has tabled this Resolution will not be served. As the principle enunciated by him is neither practicable nor equitable so for the Local Boards also I should not accept this Resolution. With these few words I oppose this Resolution.

A Voice: Request him to withdraw.

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: If my hon. Friend wants me to request the hon. Mover to withdraw, I have no objection.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Apart from the question of principle or practicability, is it possible for Government to provide as many doctors as will be required if dispensaries were established for every Mauza?

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: As I have already said, Sir, there are 308 Mauzas now excepting the districts of Goalpara and Cachar. If we take another 100 Mauzas for these districts, the total number of Mauzas in the Province will be about 400. We have at present got about 366 dispensaries. So, it may be possible, but the principle is not a practicable and suitable one.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Sir, have we got qualified doctors in all the subsidised dispensaries?

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: The hon. mover suggested starting of dispensareis, not that the dispensaries should be staffed by registered practitioners.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Even for the subsidised dispensaries we have not been able to provide qualified doctors. If more dispensaries are to be established it will be impossible to get as many qualified doctors as necessary.

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS: We have allowed the subsidised dispensaries to run with unregistered practitioners temporarily. The points taken by me in my objections also cover the points raised. As I have also said that the principle recommended is not a practicable one.

Maulavi ABDUL HELIM : In the face of what has fallen from the lips of the Hon'ble Minister, I reluctantly beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution for the present.

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

Resolution Re: Control and Regulation of polishing of rice grains in Mills

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that in view of the fact that most of the rice mills in the State over polish rice and thereby reduce its food value to a great extent, this Assamby is of opinion that the Government of Assam do take suitable measures to control and regulate the degree of polishing rice grains so as to preserve its food value as far as possible.

মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, এই প্ৰস্তাবেৰে মই আমাৰ প্ৰদেশৰ চাউলৰ কলবিলাকত বৰ বেচিকৈ চাক কৰি চাউলৰ খাদ্য-প্ৰাণ অৰ্থাৎ সাৰ বস্তুটো যাতে নষ্ট কৰিবলৈ দিয়া নহয়—তাৰে ব্যৱস্থা কৰিবলৈ গভণ মেনেটক অনুৰোধ কৰিব খুজিছোঁ। আমাৰ প্ৰদেশৰ মানুহৰ প্ৰধান খাদ্য হৈছে চাউল। আটা ময়দা আদি বেছৰ পৰা উৎপন্ন হোৱা খাদ্যবস্তুত যি পৰিমাণে সাৰ পদাৰ্থ থাকে চাউলত সেই পৰিমাণে নাথাকে। তাতে আকৌ সেই চাউলত যিখিনি সামান্য সাৰ পদাৰ্থ আছে তাকো আমি চাক কৰিবলৈ গৈ নিতৌ নষ্ট কৰোঁ। আমি যাইকৈ নগৰীয়া সকলে যি চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিছো—সেই চাউল কলত চটা (polished) চাউল আৰু ইয়াৰ অধিকাংশ সাৰপদাৰ্থ কলত চাটোতে নষ্ট হৈ যায়। যি সামান্য অংশ তাত থাকে তাকো আমি বহুতে ভাত বান্ধোতে পানী কাঢ়ি মাৰ স্বৰূপে পেলাই দিওঁ। গতিকে আজি আমাৰ পক্ষে দকৈ চিন্তা কৰিব লগীয়া বিষয় হৈছে, যি দৰে আজি আমি কলত অতিকৈ চটা (overpolished) চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিব লাগিছে—সেইটো আমাৰ জনস্বাস্থ্যৰ পক্ষে বাঞ্ছনীয় হৈছেনে নাই? এই প্ৰশ্নটোলৈ মাননীয় সদস্য সকলৰ আৰু চৰকাৰৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰো যে মোৰ এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বাই উদ্দেশ্য।

মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আমি যি চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰো, সেই চাউলৰ, ছালৰ (cuticle) তলতেই চাউলৰ খাদ্য প্ৰাণ অৰ্থাৎ আচল সাৰ পদাৰ্থ খিনি থাকে। যদি ঢেঁকীত ধান বানি চাউল উলিওৱা হয়, তেন্তে সেই সাৰ পদাৰ্থটো সিমান নষ্ট নহয়। কিন্তু, আজি কালি, কেৱল নগৰৰ মানুহেই নহয় গাঁৱৰো বহু মানুহে ঢেঁকীত বনা চাউলৰ পৰিবৰ্তে কলত বনা পৰিষ্কাৰ চাউল হে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিবলৈ ধৰিছে। ই অতিশয় দুখৰ কথা। ইয়াৰ প্ৰধান কাৰণ হৈছে—ঢেঁকীত বনা চাউলৰ অভাৱ আৰু দুৰ্নীলতা। অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আমাৰ ইয়াত যিবিলাক “মিল” চলি আছে—সেই “মিল” বিলাকত একোটাকৈ বন্ধ আছে যাক “কোনিং মেছিন” বোলে। এই “কোনিং মেছিন”ৰ দ্বাৰা চাউল চফা কৰি ইয়াৰ আচল সাৰ পদাৰ্থ খিনি নষ্ট কৰা হয়। এই “কোনিং মেছিন”ৰ দ্বাৰা কাটি মোটা চাউল মিহি কৰিব পাৰি। ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা মলিন আছ ধানৰ চাউলৰ বাকলি বেচিকৈ কাটি বগা কৰি শালি ধানৰ চাউলৰ লগত মিহলাই—শালি চাউল বুলি উচচ দামত বেচি মানুহক ঠগাবলৈ মিল-মালিক সকলে সুবিধা পাইছে। এই “কোনিং মেছিন”ৰ সহায়েৰেই আকৌ মোটা চাউলক সৰু আকাৰলৈ আনি লাহী চাউল আৰু জহা কৰি বেচিবলৈ, মিলৱালা বিলাকে সুবিধা পাইছে। ইয়াৰ ফলত দেশবাসীৰ স্বাস্থ্যৰ বোৰ হানী ঘটিব লাগিছে আৰু দুৰ্নীতি পৰায়ন ব্যৱসায়ী সকলৰ প্ৰবঞ্চনাৰ সন্মুখীন হব লগীয়াত পৰিছে। সেই কাৰণে, দেশৰ জনস্বাস্থ্য আৰু অৰ্থনৈতিক পৰিস্থিতিৰ লগত নিবিড় ভাবে জড়িত এই সমস্যাটোৰ প্ৰতিবিধানৰ কাৰণে, আমাৰ গণমেনেট উপযুক্ত ব্যৱস্থা হাতত লোৱা নিতান্ত আৱশ্যক হৈ পৰিছে।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, কলত অতিপাতকৈ চাউল চাটিলে অৰ্থাৎ বৰ বেচিকৈ চাক কৰিবলৈ গলে যে চাউলৰ সাৰ পদাৰ্থ খিনি ওলাই যায় আৰু Vitamin B নামৰ খাদ্য প্ৰাণ খিনি নষ্ট হৈ যায়—তাক বৈজ্ঞানিক সকলে সাব্যস্ত কৰিছে। আৰু আমাৰ য়ায়ু মণ্ডলীৰ শক্তি-দায়ক এই খাদ্য প্ৰাণ বিহীন চাউল বেচিদিন ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিব লগীয়া হলে যে আমাৰ স্নায়ু মণ্ডলী দুৰ্বল হৈ পৰে আৰু ‘বেৰি বেৰি’ আদি কৰি নানা ৰোগে আমাক আক্ৰমণ কৰিবলৈ সুবিধা পায়—তাকো সাব্যস্ত কৰিছে। এই কথাৰ লক্ষ্য কৰিয়ে—জাতিৰ পিতা মহাত্মা গান্ধীয়ে ঢেঁকীত বনা চাউল খাবলৈ আমাক উপদেশ দি গৈছে আৰু কলত অতিপাতকৈ চাক কৰা চাউল নাখাবলৈ দেশবাসীক সতৰ্ক

কৰি থৈ গৈছে। তেখেতৰ প্ৰতিষ্ঠিত আশ্ৰম সৰ্বসমিতি আৰু সেৱাগ্ৰামত কলত বনা চাউলৰ সলনি ঢেঁকীত বনা চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিবলৈ তেখেতে সদায় উপদেশ দিছিল। দুঃখৰ বিষয় আজি বহুতে তেখেতৰ উপদেশ মানি চলিবলৈ সমূলি মন কৰা নাই।

(A Voice—আপুনি কি চাউল খায় ?)

মই কি চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰোঁ। তাৰ কথা সুধিছে ? বন্ধু সকলক জনাব খোজে। যে মই পাৰ্ব্যমানে ঢেঁকীত বনা চাউল খাবলৈ যত্ন কৰি আহিছোঁ। কিন্তু সদায় ঢেঁকীৰ চাউল খোৱাৰ সৌভাগ্য মোৰ ভাগ্যত ঘটা নাই ; অধিক সময়ত কলৰ চটা বেছনত পোৱা চাউল খাই জীৱন ধাৰণ কৰিব লগীয়া হৈছে। মাননীয় পালিয়ামেণ্টৰী চেক্ৰেটৰী আৰু আন কেইজন মান ভাগ্যৱান সদস্যৰ পক্ষে ঢেঁকীত বনা মিহি চাউল খোৱাৰ সৌভাগ্য ঘটিব পাৰে। কিন্তু সকলোৰে তেনে সৌভাগ্য ঘটি উঠা টান।

(A Voice—শুনক, শুনক।)

সেই কাৰণেই—অৰ্থাৎ ঢেঁকীত বনা চাউল সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ দুপ্ৰাপ্য আৰু দুৰ্মূল্য হৈ পৰাৰ কাৰণে আৰু নগৰীয়া আৰু বহু গাঁৱলীয়া লোকে কলত অতিপাতকৈ চটা চাউল খাবলৈ বাধ্য হোৱাৰ হেতুকে—তাৰ প্ৰতিকাৰৰ বাবে মই এই প্ৰস্তাৱ উপস্থিত কৰিব লগীয়া হৈছোঁ।

মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, এই পৰিঘটত এক শ্ৰেণীৰ সদস্য আছে—যি সকলে নিজকে ভাগ্যবান বুলি ভাবি সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ স্বাৰ্থৰ পিনে পিঠি দি এনে এটা গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ আলোচনা উপলুঙা কৰি আৰু তুচ্চ-ভাটিচল্য কৰি উৰাই দিবলৈ কুণ্ঠিত নহয়। তেখেত সকলৰ এনে আচৰণত মই বৰ আচৰিত আৰু দুঃখীত হৈছোঁ।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: কথা কওঁতে আপুনি অলপ ইফালে সিফালে চাব। যদি আলোচিত বিষয় প্ৰসঙ্গত কোনোবাই কব খোজে, আপুনি বাঁহ দিব।

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মই মাননীয় বন্ধু সকলক অনুৰোধ কৰোঁ। তেখেত সকলে সদস্যসকলক হুঁৱৰাই আনন্দ দিবলৈ যত্ন নকৰি যেন তেখেত সকলে এই গুৰু বিষয়টো দকৈ বিবেচনা কৰি চায়। আমাৰ দেশত আজি, দিনক দিনে Rice Mill ৰ সংখ্যা বাঢ়িব লাগিছে। অহিন কি গাৱে-ভুঁইয়েও বহুত Rice Mill বহিব লাগিছে। আজি দেখিছোঁ কেৱল নগৰবাসী সকলেই যে কলত বনা পৰিষ্কাৰ চাউল খাবলৈ লৈছে এনে নহয়—গাঁৱৰ বহু মানুহে—এই 'মিল' বিলাকত ধান দি চাউল উলিয়াই ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছে। ঢেঁকীৰে ধান বনা প্ৰথা 'মিল' বিলাক হোৱাৰ লগে লগে, গাঁৱতো উঠি যোৱাৰ উপক্ৰম হৈছে। ধান নিকিনি তাৰ সলনি কলৰ চাউল কিনি গাৱে-ভুঁইয়েও ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা হৈছে। দৰাচলতে ই অতি অবাঞ্ছনীয় কথা আৰু ই দেশৰ পক্ষে মঙ্গল জনক নহয় বুলি মোৰ ধাৰণা।

(A voice: ঠিক কৈছে।)

মই জানিব পাৰিছোঁ যে, আমাৰ বন্ধুসকলৰ ভিতৰতে বহুতে মোটা চাউল খাবলৈ টান পায় আৰু এনে স্থলত চাউল কলত চাটি (polished) অতি মিহিকৈ দিয়া ব্যৱস্থা ৰহিত হলে তেখেতসকলে মোটা চাউলৰ ভাত খোৱাত কষ্ট পাব নিশ্চয়। কিন্তু সেই বুলি জনস্বাস্থ্য হানিকৰ, দেশবাসীৰ ঘোৰ অনিষ্টকাৰী কলত অতিপাতকৈ চাফ (over polished) কৰা ব্যৱস্থাটো সমৰ্থন কৰা তেখেতসকলৰ পক্ষে উচিত হবনে ? এই কথা দকৈ ভাবি চাবলৈ বন্ধুসকলক অনুৰোধ কৰোঁ। মোৰ বিশ্বাস কিছুদিন মোটা চাউলৰ ভাত খাবলৈ ললে—পিছত একো অসুবিধা বোধ নকৰা হৈ পৰিব। খন্দৰ কাপোৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰোঁতেও পোনতে এনে অসুবিধা পোৱা গৈছিল।

আন এটা আপত্তি শুনা যায় যে বেচিকৈ চাফ নকৰা মোটা চাউল বেচদিনলৈ ৰাখিব নোৱাৰি কাৰণ তাত যিটো সাৰ পদাৰ্থ থকা অংশ সেইটো কেইদিন মানৰ ভিতৰতে নষ্ট হৈ যাব খোজে

আৰু তাত পোকে ধৰে। অৱশ্যে মোটা বা কমকৈ চাফ কৰা চাউল বেচদিন বাখিব নোৱাৰি সঁচা; কিন্তু মোটা চাউল বহুদিন ব্যৱহাৰ নকৰাকৈ ৰখাৰতো কোনো কাৰণ দেখা নাযায়। বিদেশৰ পৰা আমদানী কৰিব লগীয়া হলেহে তেনে প্ৰশ্ন উঠে।

মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মোটা চাউল অৰ্থাৎ কমকৈ চাফ কৰা চাউল খাবলৈ ললে আমাৰ আন এটা উপকাৰ হব। সেইটো হৈছে, চাউলৰ আয়।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই যদি কিবা কবলৈ ইচ্ছা কৰে কব পাৰে।

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মই সন্তোষ পাইছো যে অন্ততঃ মোৰ এজন বন্ধুয়ে মোৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটো সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপে সমৰ্থন কৰিছে। তাৰ কাৰণে শ্ৰীহলধৰ ভূঞা ডাঙৰীয়াৰ শলাগ লৈছো। মই শ্ৰীযুত দণ্ডেশ্বৰ হাজৰীকা ডাঙৰীয়াৰ যুক্তিটো সমৰ্থন কৰিব নোৱাৰিলো। এনেকুৱা কথা তেখেতৰ সুখৰ পৰা ওলাব বুলি ভবা নাছিলো। তেখেত গোলাঘাটৰ লোক, বোধ কৰোঁ চহৰতে থাকে। তেখেতে গাঁৱৰ পৰা চাউল অনাই খায় নে আন কিবা ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে মই নাজানো বা তেখেতে ঢেঁকীৰ চাউল খায় নে কলৰ চাউল খায় তাকো মই নাজানো। কিন্তু এইটো জানিছো যে বন্ধুৰ মোটা চাউল খাবলৈ নাৰাজ। আনকি মোটা চাউলক তেখেতে পশুৰ খাদ্য (animal food) বুলিবলৈ কুণ্ঠিত হোৱা নাই।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, কিছুদিন আগতে আমাৰ প্ৰদেশত কিছুমান তথাকথিত শিক্ষিত লোক আছিল যিসকলে ঢেঁকীয়া বা লাইশাক খোৱা নাইবা খাবৰ আঞ্জা খোৱাটো অভদ্ৰতা বুলি ভাবিছিল। সুখৰ বিষয় তেনেকুৱা ভদ্ৰলোক বা তথাকথিত শিক্ষিত লোকৰ সংখ্যা কমি আহিছে। গতিকে আজিও যিসকলে মোটা বা কমকৈ চাফ কৰা চাউলক গৰু-ম'হৰ খাদ্য বা cattle food বুলি কব খোজে সেই সকলক মই প্ৰশংসা কৰিবলৈ টান পাওঁ। তেনেদৰে আজিৰ দিনতো কিছুমান শিক্ষিত লোক আছে যিসকলে গুৰু খোৱাও অভদ্ৰতা বুলি ভাবে আৰু চেনি—সিও আকৌ সেই সেই নহয়, একেবাৰে পৰিষ্কাৰ চেনিহে খাবলৈ বিচাৰি হাবাখু'বি খায় সেই সকলকো মই প্ৰশংসা কৰিব নোৱাৰো। (*A voice*—গুৰুৰ কথা ইয়াত কেনেকৈ উঠে?)

Srijut MAHENDRAMOHAN CHAUDHURY (Parliamentary Secretary): On a point of information, Sir.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member does not yield.

The hon. Member should see that other hon. Members are asking for information.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: চাউল বেচটিক কাঢ়িলে যেনেকৈ তাৰ সাৰ ভাগ নষ্ট হয় গুবো বেচটিকৈ চাফ কৰি চেনি তৈয়াৰ কৰিব লাগিলে তাৰ সাৰ ভাগ নষ্ট হয়। সেই দেখিহে মহাত্মা গান্ধীয়ে চেনিৰ সলনি গুৰু খাবলৈ আমাক উপদেশ দি গৈছে। কিন্তু আজি কালি মহাত্মাৰ কথা শুনিবলৈ, তেখেতৰ পৰামৰ্শ আৰু উপদেশ পালন কৰিবলৈ কেইজনে মন কৰে? আমাৰ বন্ধুবৰে কৈছে যে মিলবিলাক তুলি দিয়াই ভাল।

(*A voice* : কোন বন্ধুয়ে কৈছে?)

মোৰ বিশ্বাস চাফ চাউল খোৱাত যাব ইমান প্ৰবল প্ৰবৃত্তি সেই জন বন্ধুৱে যে চাউলৰ কল উঠাই দিবলৈ কব তাক বিশ্বাস কৰা টান। বৰং তেখেতে নিজৰ ঠাইত আৰু দুই চাৰিটা মান মিল বহুৱাই লবলৈহে তেখেতে যত্ন কৰিব বুলি মোৰ সন্দেহ হয়। তেখেতে কলত মিহিকৈ চাফ কৰা চাউলৰ যোৰ পক্ষপাতী হব পাৰে। কিন্তু আমি তেখেতৰ মত সমৰ্থন কৰিবলৈ টান পাইছো। গুৱাহাটীত আমি ৰেফৰেন্সত যিবিলাক কলত অতিকৈ চাফ কৰা চাউল পাওঁ, পৰিষ্কাৰ হলেও সেইবোৰ তেনেই তহ-ধান আদিৰে ভৰা আৰু সেই চাউলৰ

শতকৰা ৫ ভাগেই খুদি। মোৰ বিশ্বাস কমকৈ চাটিলে আমি এই খুদিবোৰ খোৱাৰ পৰা বন্ধা পৰিম।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: আপোনাৰ আৰু কবলৈ আছে নেকি ?

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: এই প্ৰস্তাৱটোৰ এটা ভাল উত্তৰ মই মাননীয় পালিয়ামেণ্টেৰী চেফ্ৰেট্যাৰীৰ পৰা শুনিবলৈ আশা কৰিছোঁ আৰু মোৰো কেইটা মান কথা কবলৈ বাকী আছে। এতিয়া সময় নাই। পিছত অলপ সময় দিলে সন্তোষ পাম। মিহি চাউলৰ পৰিবৰ্ত্তে আমি যদি কমকৈ চাফকৰা মোটা চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰো, তেন্তে মোৰ বিশ্বাস চাউলৰ খৰচ কিছু পৰিমাণে কমিব; তেতিয়া কম চাউলৰ ভাত খালেই চলিব। বিশেষতঃ মানুহে মিহি চাউলৰ ভাত বেচি পৰিমাণে খাব পাৰে মোটা চাউলৰ ভাত সেই পৰিমাণে খাব নোৱাৰে। এতেকে ইয়াৰ পৰা কিছু চাউল যে বাহিৰ হব তাত কোনো সন্দেহ নাই। এতেকে মিলবিলাকক মিহি নকৰিবলৈ নিৰ্দেশ দিয়া উচিত আৰু চাউল বেচিকৈ মিহি বা over polished কৰিবলৈ যি Coning Machine মিল বিলাকত ব্যৱহাৰ হয় তাৰ ব্যৱহাৰ বন্ধ কৰি দিয়া উচিত। আমি শুনাত ১৯৪৩-১৯৪৪ চনত সংগ্ৰহ বিভাগে (Procurement Department) চাউল over polished কৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থাটো বন্ধ কৰিবলৈ মিল বিলাকক Coning machine ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিবলৈ নিষেধ কৰিছিল। আজিও গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে মিল বিলাকত এই Coning Machine ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা কলবোৰ বন্ধ কৰি দিব লাগে। ইয়াকে কৈ মই মোৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটো গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ মাননীয় বন্ধুসকলক অনুৰোধ কৰিলোঁ।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Resolution moved: "That in view of the fact that most of the rice-mills in the State over polish rice and thereby reduce its food value to a great extent, this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do take suitable measures to control and regulate the degree of polishing rice grains so as to preserve its food value as far as possible".

Srijut BIMALA PROSAD CHALIHA (Parliamentary Secretary): মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, শ্ৰদ্ধেয় শ্ৰীযুত তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই যিটো প্ৰস্তাৱ ডাঙি ধৰিছে সেই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ প্ৰতি তেখেতে যিমান গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰিছে চৰকাৰেও ঠিক সিমানেই গুৰুত্ব আৰোপ কৰে। সেই বিষয়ে ইতিমধ্যে ভাৰত চৰকাৰ আৰু প্ৰাদেশিক চৰকাৰ উভয় তৰফৰ পৰা কি কি ব্যৱস্থা লোৱা হৈছে আৰু তাত কি কি অসুবিধা পোৱা হৈছে সেই বিলাক বিষয়ে এই বিধান সভাত প্ৰকাশ কৰিবলৈ ইচ্ছা কৰো। কিন্তু সদস্য সকলৰ কোনোৱে কিবা বেলেগ বা নতুন প্ৰশ্ন তুলিলে তাৰ উত্তৰ দিয়াত অসুবিধা হব পাৰে। সেই কাৰণে আপুনি অনুমতি দিলে মই এই সকলো বিলাক কথা পিচত একেলগে কব পাৰো।

Srijut DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, এই প্ৰস্তাৱত যে আন্তৰিকতা আছে তাত কোনো সন্দেহ নাই। তেখেত যে আমাতকৈ বিজ্ঞ, বিশিষ্ট আৰু তেখেতে যে আমাক উপদেশও দিব পাৰে তাক আমি সকলোৱে স্বীকাৰ কৰো। কিন্তু এটা কথাতহে বেজাৰ পাইছো যে তেখেতে আমাক উপলুঙা কৰা বুলি কৈছে। আমি ইতিকিং কৰিতো হঁহা নাছিলো। তেখেতৰ প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বিষয়ে ভালকৈ জানিবলৈহে আমি প্ৰশ্ন কৰিছিলো। সেই কাৰণে আমাক দোষ দিয়াত সচাকৈ দুঃখ পাইছো।

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: মই কোনো সদস্যৰ নাম ধৰি একো কথা কোৱা নাই। এনেস্থলত কোনো সদস্যই যদি 'গোসাই ঘৰত কোন' বুলি সোধাত 'মই কল খোৱা নাই বুলি' উত্তৰ দিয়ে তাত মোৰ কবলগীয়া একো নাই। (হাঁহি).....

Srijut DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: আমি তিনিজন সদস্যই হাঁহিছিলোহে কথাতো একো কোৱা নাই। তেখেতে দেশৰ কল্যাণৰ হকে যি পুস্তক আনিছে সি গোটেই দেশৰ কাৰণে অনা হৈছে, কিন্তু ভাবি চাব লাগিব যে ঢেকীত খুন্দা চাউল কেইজনে খায় আৰু কলৰ চাউল কেইজনে খায়। তেখেত নগৰত থাকে গতিকে গাঁৱলীয়া মানুহে যে কলৰ চাউল খাবলৈ নিবিচাৰে বা নেখায় সেইটো তেখেতে হয়তো নেজানে। অসমৰ লোকসংখ্যাৰ শতকৰা চাৰিজন মাত্ৰ নগৰত থাকে আৰু এই চাৰি জনৰ জীৱন বক্ষা কৰিবলৈ ঢেকীত খুন্দা চাউল পোৱা টান বুলি কলে বিশ্বাস কৰিব নোৱাৰি। অকল নগৰৰ কাৰণে তেখেতে গভৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ ওচৰত বেলেগ পুস্তক দাঙি ধৰিলে ভাল আছিল। যেনে চহৰ বাসী ভদ্ৰমহিলা সকলে ঢেকী দিবই লাগিব ইত্যাদি।

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: তেখেতে গাঁৱলীয়া মানুহেও কলৰ চাউল খাই বুলি কৈছে।

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: মহাশয়, মই জনাত নেখায়। যদি নাগৰিক সকলে বাচৰ খৰচ আৰু মটৰৰ খৰচ দিব পাৰে গাওঁৰ পৰা বেচি দামী চাউল কিয় খাব নোৱাৰে মই কব নোৱাৰো। কাজেই দেখা গৈছে যে চহৰত থকা লোক সকলক ভালকাম কৰিবলৈ বা তেওঁলোকক দীৰ্ঘজীবি কৰিবলৈহে এই পুস্তক আনিছে, কাৰণ তেওঁলোকৰ ছোৱালী আৰু মহিলা সকলে টান কাম কৰিব নোৱাৰে বা ঢেকী দিব নোৱাৰে।

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: নাগৰিক বোলাত আমি বৰ বেয়া পাইছো আৰু তাৰ বাবে গৰিহণা দিছো।

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: চহৰতে যিবিলাক থাকে তেওঁ-বিলাকৰ কথাহে কৈছে। গতিকে টাউনৰ ছোৱালীবোৰ আৰু তিবোতা সকল বুলি কৈছে; নোবোলেনে কি ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: নাগৰিক শব্দৰ অর্থ অলপ বেলেগ।

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: On a point of information, Sir, will the hon. Srijut Basumatari tell us whether he has got a 'Dheki' at his house at Gauhati ?

(No reply)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Any other hon. Member likes to take part in this discussion ? (No reply)

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: মই এই পুস্তক অতি সাদৰেৰে সমৰ্থন কৰিছো। কিন্তু স্মৃত্যৰী ডাঙৰীয়াই কোৱা কথা খিনি হলে কেতিয়াও গৃহণ কৰিব নোৱাৰো তেখেতে ব্যৱহাৰ কৰা মাইকী শব্দটো বৰ বেয়া। তেখেতে কৈছে নগৰৰ মাইকীবোৰ(A voice মহিলা)

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: আমি গাঁৱৰ মানুহ। নগৰীয়া সকলে কি বুলি কয় কব নোৱাৰো। পিচে চহৰত থকা লোক কেইজনৰ হৈ—গাঁৱলীয়া মানুহ বোৰক সাঙ্গুৰি অনাৰ বাবেহে কবলৈ ওলাইছে।

Dr. EMRAN HUSAIN CHAUDHURY: মই শ্ৰীযুত তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ কথাখিনি সমৰ্থন কৰো, কাৰণ ভাল চাউল নেপালে যে স্বাস্থ্য হানি হয় এই কথা সকলোৱে জানে। কিন্তু শ্ৰীযুত বসুমতাৰী ডাঙৰীয়াই কৈছে যে গাঁৱৰ শতকৰা চাৰি জনেহে কলৰ চাউল খায়, এই

কথা কেতিয়াও সমর্থন কৰিব নোৱাৰো। অতি কম পক্ষেও শতকৰা ৩০ কি ৪০ জনেই কলৰ চাউল খায়। গতিকে চৰকাৰে যাতে ভাল চাউল পোৱাত সহায় কৰিব পাৰে ইত্যাদি ইত্যাদি।

Srijut DANDESWAR HAZARIKA: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ ডাঙৰীয়া, তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই আজি যিটো প্ৰস্তাৱ দাঙি ধৰিছে, অৱশ্যে সেইটোত যুক্তি আছে। কিন্তু মই এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰো কাৰণ (*A voice* যুক্তি আছে যদি কিয় বিৰোধিতা কৰে) তাৰ কাৰণ হৈছে যে চৰকাৰৰ তৰফৰ পৰা বোধ কৰো কল বিলাকক নিৰ্দেশ দিছিল যে চাউল বিলাক পলিচ নকৰিব অৰ্থাৎ তুঁহ গুচাই সেই চাউল বেচনত দিয়া হব। তাৰ ফলত বেচনৰ চাউল বিলাক ধান তুঁহেৰে ভৰা কাৰণে বহুত মানুহে নিনিয়ে আৰু কয় যে চৰকাৰে আমাক গৰু দানাহে খাবলৈ দিছে। সেই কাৰণে যদি তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই ধান কল বোবক বন্ধ কৰিবলৈ কলেহেতেন তেতিয়া আমি বৰ ভাল পালোহেতেন। যাই হওক এই প্ৰস্তাৱটোৰ দ্বাৰা চৰকাৰে কিবা কৰিব লাগে বুলি নকৈ তেখেতে মানুহক বুজাই বা জনমত গৃহীত কৰি এইটো চাউল বেয়া, এইটো ভাল, ইয়াৰ বাকলি গুচায় খাব লাগে। মিলৰ চাউল খোৱা বেয়া ইত্যাদি কথা ভাল বকমে বুজাবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিলেহেতেন তেনেহলে ভাল হলেহেতেন। Polish কৰা চাউল খোৱা উচিত নহয়, খালে অপকাৰ আছে। Polish নকৰা বাকলি গুচুৱা অৰ্থাৎ তুহ গুচুৱা চাউলত food value বেচি আছেই, পেটলৈ আৰু শৰীৰৰ পক্ষে ভাল এইটো তেখেতে কব পাৰে, কিন্তু তুঁহ গুচুৱা polish নকৰা চাউল কোনেও নাখায়, সেই চাউল কিছুদিন সেই বকমে খকাৰ পিছত বেয়া হৈ যাব। কিছুদিনৰ পাছত ডাক্তৰে সেই চাউলত food value নাই আৰু unfit for human consumption বুলি কব।

সেই কাৰণে তেখেতে এই বিষয়ে চৰকাৰৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰাতকৈ তেখেতে নিজে যদি মানুহক বুজাব পাৰে তেনেহলে বোধ কৰো বেচি ভাল হয়।

Srijut HALADHAR BHUYAN: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মই এই প্ৰস্তাৱত অংশ গ্ৰহণ নকৰো বুলিয়েই ভাবিছিলো, কিন্তু মোৰ বন্ধু মাননীয় শ্ৰীযুত দণ্ডেশ্বৰ হাজৰীকা ডাঙৰীয়াই, এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰাৰ নিমিত্তে মই দু-আঘাৰ মান কবলৈ আগবাঢ়িলো।

এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো আমাৰ তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই উত্থাপন কৰাৰ বাবে মই তেখেতৰ শলাগ লৈছো।

জাতিৰ পিতা মহাত্মা গান্ধী, বাবু বাৰ্জেন্দ্ৰ প্ৰসাদৰ দৰে যি সকলে দেশবাসীৰ নিমিত্তে ভাল চিন্তা কৰে সেই সকলেও ঢেঁকীৰ চাউল খাবলৈ কয়। কলৰ চাউল খালে মানুহৰ 'বেৰি বেৰি' বেগ হয়। কলিকতা আদি ডাঙৰ নগৰবিলাকত 'বেৰি বেৰি'ৰ প্ৰাদূৰ্ভাব বেচি, আৰু আমাৰ গাঁওবিলাকত 'বেৰি বেৰি'য়ে দেখা নিদিয়াৰ কাৰণ গাঁৱৰ মানুহে ঢেঁকীৰ চাউল ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে।—আগেয়ে বান্ধাৰ পৰা যিবিলাক চাউল আহিছিল, সেইবিলাক বৰ বেচিকৈ কাটি দিছিল। ইয়াৰ এটা কাৰণ আছে। মই এখন কিতাপত পঢ়িছিলো, যে বেচিকৈ নকটা চাউল বেচি দিন ৰখা নাযায়। চাউলত যিটো মল থাকে অৰ্থাৎ cuticle অংশ; সেইটো ৰাখিলে চাউল সোনকালে নষ্ট হয়। সেই কাৰণে কলৰ চাউলবোৰ বৰ বেচিকৈ কাটি মল নাইকিয়া কৰে।

যোৱা ১৯৪৩-৪৪ চনত গৰণ মেন্চে Procurement বিভাগক নিৰ্দেশ দিছিল যে চাউলত certain percentage of ধান ৰাখিব লাগিব কাৰণ একেবাৰে ধান নোহোৱা কৰিবলৈ হলে চাউলবোৰ বৰ বেচিকৈ ছাটিব লগা হয়, সেইকাৰণে কিছু নিৰ্দিষ্ট পৰিমাণৰ ধান ৰাখিবলৈ নিৰ্দেশ দিয়া হৈছিল। আৰু যিটো cuticle, তাৰ গোটেইখিনি গুচাবলৈ মানা আছিল। নগাঁৱত মিলবিলাকৰ এটা মিলত বৰ বেচিকৈ চাউলৰ অৰ্ভাৰ দিয়া হৈছিল। সেই কাৰণে কেবাটাও আন আন মিলৰ পৰা আপত্তি কৰিছিল কাৰণ সেই মিলত বোলে কোনি বোলা এটা মেশিন আছিল। সেই মেশিনৰে বেচিকৈ কোনি কৰি পৰিকাৰ কৰি দিয়াৰ কাৰণেই বোলে সেই মিলে বেচি order পাইছিল। অৰ্থাৎ গৰণ মেন্চে তেতিয়া নিৰ্দেশ দিছিল, অন্ততঃ

৫% ধান চাউলত থাকিব লাগিব। এই কাৰণে আনবিলাক মিলে সেই মিলটোৰ ওপৰত আপত্তি জনাইছিল। সেই কাৰণে তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই অনা প্ৰস্তাৱটোৰ এটা কাৰ্য্যকৰী ব্যৱস্থা কৰাৰ বোধ কৰো জৰুৰী হৈছে। ১৯৪৩-৪৪-৪৫ চনত গভৰ্নমেণ্টে দিয়া নিৰ্দেশ এতিয়া বলবৎ কৰিবৰ নিমিত্তে চেষ্টা কৰা উচিত। মই আশাকৰো Procurement department আৰু Supply departmentক এইটো বলবৎ ৰাখিবলৈ গভৰ্নমেণ্টে নিৰ্দেশ দিয়ে। চাউল বেচিকৈ polish কৰিলে আহ আৰু শালী চাউল মিহলি কৰি আমাক ঠগ কৰিব পাৰে। কাৰণ বেচিকৈ polish কৰিলে আহ আৰু শালী চাউলৰ প্ৰাৰ্থক্য চিনিব নোৱাৰা হয়। আহ চাউলক সৰু কৰি শালীৰ লগত মিহলাই দিলে, এই মিহলি চাউলে আৰু বেচিকৈহে স্বাস্থ্য হানি কৰে। মোৰ মনত পৰিছে এবাৰ মই তেতিয়াৰ চাপ্লাই বিভাগৰ মাননীয় মন্ত্রী শ্ৰীযুত অমিয় কুমাৰ দাসৰ লগত কামপুৰৰ এটা মিল পৰিদৰ্শন কৰিবলৈ যাওঁতে তেখেতে Cone-machine (নিকা-কৰা যন্ত্ৰ) আছেনে নাই সুধিছিল আৰু থাকিলে বন্ধ কৰিব লাগে বুলি কৈছিল। আহ ধানৰ আৰৈ চাউল শৰীৰৰ নিমিত্তে বিশেষ অনিষ্টকাৰী। ডাক পুৰুষেও কৈছে:—

“আছৰ আৰৈ শাকৰ পুৰৈ
মাছৰ গাগল, পছৰ ছাগল,
ইয়াকে খালে হয়, ব্যাধি পাগল।”

আহ আৰু শালী মিহলাই ক'ন-যন্ত্ৰত বেচিকৈ কাঢ়িলে চিনিব নোৱাৰা হয় আৰু দ্বিতীয়তে বি-ভাইটামিন বোলা বস্তুটো গুচি যায় গতিকে স্বাস্থ্যৰ অনিষ্ট কৰে। গতিকে এতিয়া যি বিলাক মিলত কোনিং মেচিন আছে সেই বিলাক মিলৰ পৰা কোনিং মেচিন গুচাই দিব লাগে। সেই কাৰণে তালুকদাৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই যিটো কথা কৈছে তাক আমি সৰ্ব্বতো ভাবে বিবেচনা কৰা উচিত। এই কেআৰৰ কথা কৈ মই প্ৰস্তাৱটো সম্বন্ধন কৰিছো।

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned to 10 A. M. on Thursday, the 23rd March 1950.

SHILLONG :

The 27th May, 1950.

R. N. BARUA,

Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly.