

**Proceedings of the Tenth Session of the Assam Legislative Assembly assembled after the first General Election under the Sovereign Democratic Republican Constitution of India**

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong at 10 A.M. on Saturday, the 1st September, 1956.

**PRESENT**

Shri Kuladhar Chaliha, B.L., Speaker, in the Chair the eight Ministers, the four Deputy Ministers and sixty-five Members.

**Misrepresentation of statement made by Sriman Prafulla Goswami in connection with Hartal**

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to draw your attention to the fact that my speech delivered on the floor of this House on the 30th August in connection with the discussion on the statement of the Chief Minister on Hartal has been misrepresented in some newspapers published on the 31st August. Sir, here in the *Santi-Doot* it is said that Sriman Prafulla Goswami said—গোস্বামীয়ে হৰতালকীৰ-নকলক গুণ্ডা বুলি অভিহিত কৰে।

Sir, that is not correct. I did never call the people who observed the Hartal 'goondas' nor it is my intention to do so. What I said was that I condemned some of those people who removed railway lines, attacked thanas and assaulted policemen. But, Sir, I never said that—মই যদি পুলিচ চুপাৰিন্টেণ্ডেণ্ট হলোহেতেন উদ্ধত জনতাৰ ওপৰত গুলী চলালো হেতেন।

It is also not very correct to say that I want to take the law in my own hands. Only in connection with the raid and arson that took place in Nowgong Thana I said that under those circumstances if I had been the Officer-in-charge of Nowgong Thana or the Superintendent of Police of Nowgong, I would have been probably compelled to fire for self defence but the police showed great restraint in spite of self provocation.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Your point is that you did not say 'Goondas' ?

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI :** Yes, Sir, that is my point. I did never say anybody as 'Goonda'.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** All right, the Paper concerned will take note of this. If it has published the wrong information there is no way but to amend the statement accordingly.

**Shri RADHIKARAM DAS:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I also want to bring to your notice that this same paper the *Santi-Doot* has also misrepresented me. It says that I have condemned the parties that took part in this Hartal. That is not correct. I did not condemn the parties nor the people who took part in the Hartal, but I condemned the acts of violence perpetrated there. I did not condemn the parties nor the organisers of the Hartal.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Paper concerned should take note of this also.

### Resumed debate on the statement on Flood Situation

**Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) :** Year after year we have suffered the ravages of floods. This has been so from time immemorial. The flood problems have been getting more and more acute as time has passed, not because there have been bigger and bigger floods but because there has been more pressure on riverine tracts owing to growth of population. The problem of floods in this State has greater significance and importance than in any other State owing to the fact that this State has a very large number of rivers and the area of the plains traversed by these rivers is only a small fraction of the area of the State. The State has a gross area of 54.5 million acres. Of this, 27 per cent is in the plains. The cultivated area is only about 10 per cent, and practically all the cultivation is confined to the narrow Brahmaputra Valley and the Barak Valley. During floods, nearly half of the cultivated area gets flooded. That shows the magnitude of our problem.

## METHOD OF CONTROLLING FLOODS

Basically there are only a few ways in which flood protection may be accomplished. The excess water may be confined between embankments or it may be stored in reservoirs to be released at a non-damaging rate at a later time. Whatever the method adopted, it is very rarely that complete protection is obtained against floods. Also the measures that are taken result in certain unfavourable conditions. Therefore in evolving scheme for flood control the advantages are weighed against any resulting disadvantages. For instance, one important benefit of floods is the maintenance of fertility of soil in the flood plains. Though crops get destroyed in the flood plain, when they do survive, the yield is good. Elimination of floods, reduces natural fertility and artificial aids become necessary.

## SURVEYS AND INVESTIGATIONS

For preparing any comprehensive flood control scheme, it is necessary to have adequate hydrometeorological data and suitable topographical maps. As the House is aware there has been complete lack of data and surveys in the State, and this has been a serious obstacle in the way of speedy planning and execution of works, apart from the limitations of resources in technical man power and materials. When after the Earthquake of 1950, the flood problems in the State got aggravated, the absence of data was acutely felt and a very systematic and comprehensive programme of investigations and surveys was taken up. Owing to shortage of technical staff in the State, this work was entrusted to Central Water and Power Commission, Government of India—a part of the work being undertaken by the State Public Works Department. I am glad to report to the House that good progress has been made in these investigations and surveys. Aerial photography of more than 17,000 square miles, covering practically the entire plain area of the State has been completed. Several thousand miles of levelling has been done and these are being plotted on the aerial photo-mosaics for use in planning flood control works. It will, however, take another couple of working seasons before levelling of the entire area is completed and the spot heights are plotted on photo-mosaics. Discharges are being observed on practically all the important rivers in the State. Fifty-one such discharge sites have been established and silt observation is being made at 33 sites. Numerous rain gauges have recently been set up to provide more comprehensive rainfall data.

## EMBANKMENTS

As I stated earlier, there are two main methods of controlling floods, namely, the confining of flood waters between embankments and storage of flood flows in reservoirs. The construction of dams for creating storage is expensive and requires a great deal of investigation, as also specialised construction equipment and materials in short supply such as cement and steel. Dykes on the other hand are comparatively simpler of construction and can be taken up in several places at the same time. We have accordingly concentrated on the construction of embankments during the last few years in order to alleviate suffering from floods as quickly as possible, and over as large an area as feasible. In this, I feel the House would agree, that considerable progress has been made during the last two or three years. Before the First Five-Year Plan period we had in the State a total of 146 miles of embankments, mostly in Sibsagar and Lakhimpur Districts. During the First Five-Year Plan period we added 1,140 miles of embankments spread over practically all the plains districts of the State. Of these, 250 miles were constructed during last year alone. These embankments have given protection to more than 5 lakh acres of land which prior to their construction had been suffering from annual flood ravages.

Several of the embankments constructed in the First Five Year Plan period were built with inadequate data. Seeing the suffering of the people we did not wish to lose time in affording them whatever protection was possible, and even at the risk of making a few mistakes, the work was pushed on. These embankments have created problems here and there and these are being looked into and remedial measures are being thought out. It is not unlikely that some of the adverse features that have arisen may not be quite remediable and may have to be faced for the greater benefits accruing from the dykes.

### EMBANKMENTS IN SECOND FIVE-YEAR PLAN

During the current Five Year Plan period, fairly ambitious flood control programme is in view. It is proposed to construct 364 miles of dykes on the Brahmaputra, 456 miles on its tributaries and 133 miles on the Barak and its tributaries. The existing embankments will be raised and strengthened where necessary. The incomplete embankments will be completed in preference to new ones.

## ANTI-EROSION WORKS

During the First Plan period anti-erosion measures were successfully taken at a number of towns, notably Dibrugarh, Sualkuchi, Goalpara, Bilasipara, Dhubri, Jamuguri, etc. During the present Plan period it is proposed to afford protection to a number of other important towns that are being attacked by the various rivers.

## DRAINAGE SCHEMES

While embankments are being constructed to prevent flood waters inundating areas, a number of drainage schemes are being worked out to carry away accumulation of water which interferes with raising of crops. Government of India has been approached for giving half a crore of rupees for such Schemes under Flood Control.

## RIVER VALLEY PROJECTS

While it was possible to proceed with the construction of embankments, it has not been possible to undertake the construction of any river valley project in the State so far. This has been due to want of necessary data and lack of investigations. Investigations of large river valley projects necessarily take considerable time, as apart from the collection of hydrometeorological data, detailed surveys have to be carried out, and geological investigations and explorations have to be done. Investigations of a number of river valley projects were taken up during the First Five Year Plan period and these are continuing. The work is being carried out by the Central Water and Power Commission. After a study of the preliminary reports on the various river valley projects, Government made comparative benefit studies and finally selected the Kopili, the Barak, the Subansiri and the Noa-Dehing for detailed investigations. At the same time preliminary investigations and geological reconnaissance have been in hand for a number of other rivers, such as the Lohit, the Dihang, the Jia Bholeli, the Tirap, the Namphuk and the Namchik. The surveys in connection with the Manas in Bhutan territory could not so far make much headway owing to political reasons. Hydro-meteorological investigations on that river have however been in progress. A sum of Rs.37.5 lakhs has been provided in the Second Five Year Plan for these investigations. These projects will have a substantial element of flood control, but

by themselves, without additional measures, such as embankments, drainage and other works, they will not achieve full flood control. The investigations of river valley projects are making good progress and on it being found technically and financially feasible attempts will be made to start construction of one project during the current Five Year Plan period itself.

## REORGANISATION OF FLOOD CONTROL DEPARTMENT

Government have attached great importance to the flood problems of the State and in order to satisfactorily deal with them they have re-organised and strengthened the department. Nearly two years ago when the Dibrugarh problem faced the State, a Chief Engineer in charge of flood control works was appointed by taking on loan the services of an officer from Government of India. The Public Works Department has since been re-organised and a separate Wing for flood control and irrigation works has been created. The Flood Control Department has been expanded and has now one Chief Engineer, one additional Chief Engineer, four Superintending Engineers and thirteen Divisions. A Research Station for dealing with the flood problems in the State is being set up near Burnihat. Plans have already been drawn up and estimates have been sanctioned. This Station should start functioning in a few months' time. A Designs Division has been opened up in the Chief Engineer's office for designing hydraulic structures. Planning and designing of flood control works has been systematised. These are steps which should go a long way in satisfactorily dealing with the flood problems in the State.

## FLOOD WARNING SYSTEM

Even with the best of efforts it will take a long time for the State to adequately solve its flood problems. Till then floods will have to be faced here and there. Timely information of any approaching big flood is invaluable in facing it and in preventing preventible loss of property and life. For this purpose a comprehensive flood warning system has been set up in the State. As most of the rivers causing floods have their sources beyond the State border, arrangements have been made to obtain information regarding rainfall, flood gauges and discharges from the neighbouring territories. The Government of China have been sending us, over the wireless, information

from three of their hydrometeorological stations regarding flood discharges in the Tsangpo, which the Brahmaputra is called in Tibet. Similarly, from Bhutan information regarding rainfall and river gauges is received over the wireless. Similar information is radioed from a number of Stations in North-East Frontier Agency. On receipt of information it is correlated and interpreted and in the event of there being any danger of high flood, timely warning is sent to the district authorities concerned for taking appropriate measures.

There has been severe flooding in the Hailakandi area of Cachar valley early during the flood season this year. It has been mentioned that there has been some loss of life also. In order to obtain timely information of any likely heavy rainfall in this area it has since been arranged with the Pakistan Government that they would send us heavy rainfall warning signals from Sylhet and Habiganj, as soon as there is heavy cloud burst in those areas. This would help in taking some timely action to prevent avoidable loss in the future.

The Government of India has been requested to make a sum of Rs.8.57 crores available for expenditure on flood control works during the Second Five Year Plan. Rupees 8 crores have already been promised and the estimates for the remaining half a crore pertaining to major drainage schemes for reducing flooding and water-logging, are being examined by the Government of India. It is expected that this sum will also be made available. The break up of this proposed plan expenditure is like this:—

	Rs.
1. Construction of dykes along the Brahmaputra.	347 lakhs.
2. Construction of dykes along the tributaries	234 „
3. Construction of dykes on the Barak and its tributaries.	71 „
4. Balance of Dibrugarh protection works ..	40 „
5. Town protection schemes .. ..	70 „
6. A central workshop for Flood Control Department.	20 „
7. Other flood control works .. ..	20 „
8. Construction of major drainage works ..	55 „
Total	857 „

Of course, the sum of Rs.37.5 lakhs for investigation of river valley projects is in addition to the above sum.

During the coming working season, stress will be laid on completing the continuing schemes and on carrying out adequate surveys for the proper planning of further schemes. These works alone will lead to an expenditure of Rs.2 crores during the current financial year. Government of India have already indicated that owing to paucity of funds, loans on this will be restricted, and therefore an expenditure of large amount on flood control works might not be feasible. The Government of India have, however, been urged to make more funds available to enable us to take up a few urgent new schemes also.

### OTHER POINTS

The desirability of dredging the Barak in order to lower the flood level in the river near Badarpur has been mentioned. My experts advise that this will not be feasible and other measures will need to be taken. Deepening of the river bed by dredging in this reach will not improve matters as the slope of the river there is very flat. The bed of the Barak is already below sea level.

The construction of embankments in few localities of the Brahmaputra valley has interfered with the raising of paddy crop and the retting of jute and has adversely affected the source of fish supply. These are problems which are now engaging the attention of the department and remedial measures will be taken as soon as possible.

It has also been pointed out that there have been a number of breaches in certain embankments. In several cases these are due to insufficient height of the embankments. Those will be raised and strengthened. All breaches will be repaired and some have already been repaired.

As regards the proposal of utilising silt for filling up low-lying areas, this is already engaging our attention and as soon as survey is completed, schemes will be prepared.

Now, as regards the charge brought against me by my esteemed Friend, Shri Nilmani Phukon, he blamed me for not replying to a telegram said to have been sent to me by him. Sir, I did not receive any telegram from the hon. Member. I only received from him a representation which is dated the 27th June and this representation was received by me on 9th July, 1956. In this representation the hon. Member suggested



that the Ferry leave at Neamati should be cancelled and a steamer should be purchased from the Steamer Company and placed there. These are the two suggestions made by him. Sir, I received this representation on the 9th July, I left Shillong on 28th July 1956 for Mussorie to attend a conference of the Co-operative Ministers held there and arrived back here on the 8th August last and on the 9th I passed necessary orders on the petition. The Chief Engineer then called for detailed report from the Executive Engineer, Jorhat and wrote also to the Joint Steamer Agents, R. S. N. and I. G. N. Company, Gauhati. The hon. Member suggested to me to inquire whether they have any suitable steamer for sale, etc., cancel the lease of the existing ferry as this was not giving good service before expiry of the lease. This requires examination as it involves the question of payment of compensation, etc., to the lessee.

I had a talk with the Steamer Agent at Neamatihat who told me that two steamers which used to carry mails and passengers between Gauhati and Neamati were now lying idle—one at Gauhati and the other at Calcutta. The Chief Engineer accordingly enquired from the Steamer Company by a letter, and the reply received from them was in the negative. Here is the reply, "We regret to advise that we have no suitable steamer available for sale." On receipt of this negative reply from the Steamer Company, a reply was sent to the hon'ble Member on the 24th August, 1956 which reads like this:

"To

Shri N. Phookan, M.L.A., Jorhat, Assam.

SUBJECT—Kokilamukh-Kamalabari Steamer Ferry.

Ref.—Your letter, dated 27th June 1956 to the address of the Public Works Department, Minister.

Sir,

I am directed to forward herewith a copy of letter No.G/504, dated 3rd August 1956 from the Joint Agent, R. S. N. & Company, Limited for your information."

Sir, I hold the hon. Member in great respect. Assuring even if the hon. Member did not receive any reply, he could have very well enquired from me when he arrived at Shillong instead of blaming me on the floor of the House for not sending a reply to his alleged telegram. I therefore leave the matter for consideration of the House who is to be blamed.

Sir, with these words I resume my seat,

**Resolution regarding additional zone in Assam with headquarters at Pandu for the Eastern part of the North-Eastern Rail-way particularly Assam.**

**\*SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move the Government of India to constitute an additional Railway Zone in Assam with headquarters at Pandu for the Eastern part of the North-Eastern Railway particularly Assam and its adjoining areas.

Sir, before 1947 there was Bengal-Assam Railway with the headquarters in Calcutta, but after Partition the main route from Calcutta to Assam fell within Pakistan and the Assam Railway connection with the rest of India was served except for a link line which was completed in 1950 and after Partition a separate Assam Railway with its headquarters at Pandu was established. The mileage of this railway was about 1,795 miles. In 1950 the Ministry of Railways envisaged a new policy for grouping all the railways in six zones. Following are the principles for forming these six major zones: (1) every railway administration should, as far as possible, serve a compact region, (2) it should be large enough to provide the headquarters organisation with personnel of highest calibre, (3) in regrouping the railways, it should be seen that there is no dislocation of the existing arrangements, (4) the internal administration of these groupings of a Divisional or district system should be determined according to the circumstances prevailing in its grouping.

After formulating these policies the India Government decided to start the six zones of railways and this part of the railway was renamed as North-Eastern Railway. Of course, this proposal was vehemently protested by our State Government as well as by the people of Assam. However, ultimately the Government of India decided in 1952 to set up a zone of the North-Eastern Railway comprising Assam, some part of Bihar, some part of Bengal and some part of Utter Pradesh with headquarters at Gorakhpur. At first it was decided to start the headquarters at Calcutta, but later it was decided to start it at Gorakhpur. The present North-Eastern Railway has a total mileage of about 4,800 miles. The length of this railway from Saikhowa to Achmera is 1,576 $\frac{1}{4}$  miles. The distance from Gorakhpur to Saikhowa is 1,080 miles and Gorakhpur

to Gauhati is 703 miles but four years of past experience led the Government to regroup it again in 1955 and *vide* that re-organisation a 7th zone was formed thus two new zones named Eastern Railway and South-Eastern Railway were formed on 1st August 1955.

After this revision of this policy and after the formation of this 7th zone, there were again demands about a railway zone with Pandu as headquarters with the adjoining part of Assam, part of Bengal and part of Bihar. What are the reasons for this demand? Sir, first of all the strategic consideration also demanded that special attention be given to the Assam portion of the railway line. The fact that the United States Army had to set up an Administration of their own for this portion during the war time, which was mentioned by the State Government to the Railway Board, was a pointer to the peculiar importance of this area. Sir, Assam is surrounded by foreign countries like Pakistan, Burma, China, Tibet and it is very likely that this strategic importance may assume even more significance in future.

It was therefore necessary that this area be given special consideration which its mileage alone may not justify.

Moreover, the shifting of the headquarters from Pandu to Gorakhpur has already brought about some of the effects, feared by the people and the Government of this State, in that the distance of the administrative headquarters from the State has resulted in transport problems of this State and these problems are immense which are not receiving proper consideration from Gorkhpur.

It is a sad experience that the new set up, even after 4 years of the setting up of the North-Eastern Railway, no visible progress in the matter of providing adequate workshop facilities, adequate rolling stock and locomotive, construction of new line, remodelling of yards and station buildings and provision of passenger amenities has been made on this region. While other areas in the country have made remarkable progress in these matters, the same cannot unfortunately be said of the present Pandu region of the North-Eastern Railway.

Of course, the creation of the post of Regional Superintendent at Pandu in overall day to day charge of all the Departments and shifting of the claims work pertaining to this region to Pandu has, to a certain extent, mitigated this inconvenience, the need for an entirely separate zone with headquarters at Pandu remains.

A large scale construction programme like stabilisation of the Link, construction of the Garo Hills lines and construction of the rail-cum-road bridge over Brahmaputra, which have been promised during the Second and Third Year Plans, also strengthen the demand for a separate headquarters at Pandu which would be able to pay elaborate attention to this major construction scheme and also to devise ways and means for solving the peculiar and difficult transport problems of this area. As an example of the Government of India's realisation that there are limits to the advantages of a large zone and that there is likelihood of such zones becoming too unwieldy can be quoted in separation of East and South-East Railways in 1955.

As I have already said the new zone with headquarters at Pandu should also cover the Kathihar-Baruni Section and ancillary branch lines so that after completion of the Ganga bridge at Mokama and concentration of the main transshipment work at Baruni the whole Metre Gauge route from Baruni to Assam would form part of one Administration and would thus be in accordance with the Government of India's policy of having one compact zone for each area.

We have heard that Railway Administration is going to abolish Region and formed several divisions in the North-Eastern Railway. I have heard that they are going to create 7 Divisions like Pandu, Katihar, Alipur Duar, Gorakhpur, Lucknow, Mazarfarapur, and Pandu. In the case of having a new zone that may also be three Divisions, one at Pandu-Alipur Duar and Baruni or Katihar.

So, Sir, this is a very important Resolution and this demand has been made consistently by our people as well as by our Government. I now want to emphasise the same demand through this Resolution and I hope this Resolution will be carried unanimously.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Motion moved is that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move the Government of India to constitute an additional Railway Zone in Assam with headquarters at Pandu for the eastern part of the North-Eastern Railway, particularly Assam and its adjoining areas.

**Shri LILA KANTA BORAH:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, Assam has been neglected in various ways by the Central Government. The just and legitimate demands of the people of Assam have long been ignored. This is another instance that the demand of the people of Assam has been neglected by removing the headquarters of the Eastern Zone of the Railway from Pandu. This is an insult to the injury. Assam has been deprived of any major industry. The youths of Assam expected, when the Railway headquarters of the Eastern Zone was established at Pandu that they would get employment and the people expected that the movement of goods would be facilitated. But when the headquarters station was removed from Pandu to Gorakhpur that expectation of our people has been belied.

Further, inconveniences are felt by our people in respect of railway travelling, communication and other railway amenities. Grievances in regard to these matters are also not properly heard by the authority when the headquarters has been situated at a far distant place from Assam, and the consequence is that the people of Assam feel very much aggrieved and their minds are agitated.

The Resolution which has been moved by Sriman Prafulla Goswami really a very important and also a necessary one. So I lend my full support to this Resolution.

Thank you, Sir.

**\*Shri BIMALA KANTA BORAH:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Resolution which has been moved by Sriman Prafulla Goswami is very important inasmuch as this Railway is the life line for the people of Assam. I feel that there is no finality in the matter of opening railway zones. Some years back 5 zones were created and subsequently the Government of India found it necessary to increase that number to 7. This shows that there is no finality in the matter of constitution of railway zones. Our claim therefore for starting a zone with headquarters at Pandu cannot be ruled out summararily. It has been rightly said that the case of Assam has been neglected in many other matters. When the headquarters at Pandu for the Eastern zone was removed to Gorakhpur there was a terrible agitation in Assam and the people demanded the location of the zone at Pandu. But for various reasons, of course beyond the control of the Assam Government, this zone was removed to Gorakhpur. What disadvantages are being experienced for not having a zone at Pandu can be easily understood when I discuss the following points.

Sir, we have many grievances against the Railway Administration—some times against the management, sometimes for want of proper control and sometimes for other reasons. Gorakhpur is a far away place from Assam and our demands and grievances do not reach Gorakhpur very easily. We wait and wait till a reply is received from Gorakhpur after months. There is terrible delay in running trains. There are terrible disturbances in the running of the railway trains on the border of the Naga Hills. Sometimes delay of hours occurs because every train is to be led by a pilot engine. So, Sir, we have many grievances on account of such delay. But, who will hear our grievances? Similarly, Sir, very little amenities are offered to us by the railway. Every train is congested. It is even now very difficult to get accommodation in the train in any place in Assam. Recently I know of an incident where a man had to go back for want of accommodation in the train even though he had a second class ticket. From Chaparmukh he wanted to go to some place in Upper Assam and when he came to a second class compartment he could not enter it. Then he went to a third class compartment to find a seat there, but failed because all the third class compartments were full of passengers from Bihar and Utter Pradesh side. So, eventually he had to go back after returning the ticket to try his chance on the following day. Such is the trouble of passengers even in Independent India. As regards other amenities less said the better, because who will hear all these grievances of ours? We have to tolerate all these things meekly.

**[Shri HARINARAYAN BARUA :** অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয় মই ইয়াৰ লগতে কব খোজো যে বেলগুৱে কৰ্মচাৰীয়ে বিনা টিকেটে 1st Class ত অহাবোৱা কৰে অথচ টিকেট লোৱা মানুহেও যাত্ৰাৰ সুবিধা নাপায়।

**Shri BIMALA KANTA BORAH :** There are innumerable people who travel in trains without ticket and thus lakhs and lakhs of rupees are lost to the Government exchequer. It is because there is no check now-a-days, in Assam. Being situated far away from the headquarters who will look into all these things? In Bihar students and others have organised a campaign against ticketless traveling I am glad that a sense of real citizenship has developed in our people. I have seen in the courts every day not less than 30 to 40 people being produced before the Magistrate for travel without ticket. These people are convicted and sent to prison where they are fed and sheltered at Government costs. As the period of imprisonment is very short in such cases, no work can be realised and after expiry of the period of imprisonment they are allowed to reach their home at Government cost.

These are the daily happenings before our eyes. It is reported that number of such convicts in Assam Jails will not be less than 500. This is a serious problem which cannot be brushed aside. For want of proper facilities our people are afraid to move about in the trains.

We have none near us to whom we can refer these matters. We, therefore, submit like helpless boys.

Then, another thing, Sir. Very often we find there are no lights in railway compartments. We are the citizens of an Independent country and lots of promises have been made to us by Government that we will have a great deal of amenities in railways. But what do we find? In some trains, we find no light, we find leaky roofs and dirty latrines! This is the lot of the people of Assam! Why? because we have no place where we can go and lodge complaints. We cannot go to Gorakhpur for this purpose. If the headquarters were at Pandu, any man could go there and lodge complaints about mismanagement of railways. Hundreds of cases are filed in Assam Courts against Railway for loss of articles on transit claiming heavy compensation. Nobody cares to enquire where these goods go, but nevertheless cases are decreed against the Central Government involving huge sums of money. There must be some kind of enquiry about this. Sometimes we find that a Railway Inspector comes, makes some sort of enquiry and then goes back but we do not know the results of such enquiries. These things would not have been possible if the headquarters were at Pandu ; these matters would have then received immediate attention. These are some of the inconveniences which we suffer from. These could have been mitigated to a great extent if the headquarters were at Pandu. About technical matters, I do not like to go into details. But these are sufficient to justify the establishment of the zonal headquarters at Pandu. The Government of India spent a lot of money at Pandu for building houses for railway officers. Pandu has become a vast railway colony, almost as big as Gauhati town. I do not see why after spending so much money the headquarters were shifted from Pandu. There might have been financial reasons for doing this, but the convenience of the people who are lying in the easternmost corner of India cannot be neglected. Then, Sir, there was a railway workshop at Dibrugarh, some portions of which were proposed to be removed elsewhere . There was a terrible protest against this move and even our Leader of the House, the Chief Minister, lodged a strong protest. It was then said that Dibrugarh workshop will

not be disturbed. But it is reported that bit by bit the workshop is being removed and who knows that after a few years it will cease to exist? Then, Sir, we have been crying hoarse for the Brahmaputra bridge in season and out of season both inside and outside this House. But we get the stereotyped reply that the matter is being investigated, that survey is being done, and so on and so forth. If things go on like this, how can the people of Assam, who are suffering a lot due to the transport bottleneck, tolerate this state of affairs? We, therefore, hope that the Central Government will be very sympathetic towards the legitimate demands of the Assamese people. Our difficulties are many but our public opinion is not as strong as in Calcutta and other places. In view of all these, it is incumbent on the Government of India to give the most sympathetic consideration to our demands.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Resolution moved by my hon. Friend, Sriman Goswami.

**Shri DALBIR SINGH LOHAR :** মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, নোৰ বন্ধু শ্ৰীমান প্ৰফুল্ল গোস্বামীয়ে আজি যিটো বেলগুৱেৰ বিষয় প্ৰস্তাব দাঙি ধৰিছে সেইটো বৰ দৰ্কাৰী আৰু সমৰোপযোগী প্ৰস্তাব বুলি মই ভাবো। তাৰ পিচত আমাৰ শ্ৰীলীলা বৰা আৰু শ্ৰীবিমলা বৰা ডাঙৰীয়াই সেই প্ৰস্তাৱ সমৰ্থন কৰি যে পাণ্ডুত আৰু এটা Railway Zone পৃথককৈ কৰিব লাগে বুলি কৈছে তাক মই স্বৰ্বস্বংকৰণেৰে সমৰ্থন কৰো। এইটো নোহোৱা কাৰণেই যে অসমৰ বেল চলাচলৰ আছকাল হৈছে তাক সনগ্ৰ অসমে হাড়ে মগজুৱে উপলব্ধি কৰিছে।

অসমবাসীয়ে এই আশা অন্তৰেৰে সৈতে পোষণ কৰে যে ইয়াতে পাণ্ডুত হৈ থকা এটা Railway Head quarters বুলি নি গোবখপুৰত কৰাটো অসমবাসীৰ প্ৰতি যোৰ অনায়াস কৰা হৈছে আৰু আমি তথা আমাৰ চৰকাৰে আমাৰ ৰাইজৰ অসুবিধাবিলাক ফহিয়াই কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক চাপ দিলেই পুনৰ সেই সুবিধা আমি পাম। বৰ্তমান ৰাইজে ভাবে যে আমি ইয়াত চৰকাৰৰ ওচৰত এইবিষয়ে একো উল্লেখই কৰা নাই।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, কংগ্ৰেছৰ বিৰুদ্ধে অপপ্ৰচাৰ বহুতেই কৰি আছে আনকি এই সদনটো তেনে মনোভাৱ বহুতে প্ৰকাশ কৰে। সেই কাৰণে সময় থাকোতেই এই বিষটোত বিশেষ জোৰ দিব লাগে। নোৰ বোধেৰে পাণ্ডুত যদি এটা স্বকীয়া Zone নহয় তেন্তে অসমৰ বেলপথৰ কোনো উন্নতি নহয় আৰু অসমে কোনোফালে আগুৱাব নোৱাৰে। কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰেও এই কথা জানে; কিন্তু আজিলৈকে এই গুৰুত্ব বিষয়টোতলৈ যে কিয় চকু দিয়া নাই আমি বুজিবলৈ টান পাইছো। এতিয়াও আমাৰ চৰকাৰে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক টানি ধৰিব লাগে।

মহোদয়, অসমৰ বেললাইন উন্নত হলে অকল যে অসমৰ মানুহ কেইটাৰে সুবিধা হব এনে নহয় উত্তৰ-পূব সীমান্তৰ লোকসকল আৰু কৰ্মচাৰী সকলৰো সুবিধা হব। কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ অবিদিত নহয় যে সীমান্তত কাম কৰা লোকসকলৰ যাতায়াত, বস্ত্ৰবাহানি



আদানপ্রদানত কিমান অসুবিধা ভোগ কৰিবই লাগিছে। গীমাত্ত ৰাজ্য হিচাবেও ইয়াৰ বেললাইন উন্নত কৰাটো নিতান্ত দৰ্কাৰ। দেশ বন্ধাৰ কালৰ পৰাও ই এটা অপৰিহাৰ্য্য বিষয়। গোৰখপুৰৰ নিচিনা দুৰবলী ঠাইৰ পৰা এই উন্নতি অসম্ভৱ। ইয়াৰ একমাত্ৰ উপায় হৈছে ইয়াত এটা স্ককীয়া Zone কৰি পাণ্ডুত headquarters স্থাপন কৰা। আমাৰ অসুবিধা আসোৱাহ আদি উচ্চ কৰ্তৃপক্ষক জনোৱাৰ অসুবিধাৰ অভূত লৈ ইয়াৰ কৰ্মচাৰী সকলে আমাৰ সুবিধালৈ আওকান কৰে। উদাহৰণ স্বৰূপে কও যে এবাৰ শ্ৰীগিৰিণ গংগৈ আৰু মই দুটা প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীৰ বাৰ্থ ৰিজার্ভেগুনৰ State Transport ত প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীৰ টিকেট কিনি শ্বিলঙৰ পৰা ডিব্ৰুগড়লৈ লগে লগে শ্বিলঙৰ পৰা গৌহাটীলৈ ষ্টেচন মাষ্টাৰক Transport ৰ পৰা Wire কৰি দিয়া হ'ল। কিন্তু গৌহাটীত গৈ যেতিয়া খবৰ কৰা হ'ল জানিব পাৰিলো যে আমাৰ কাৰণে প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীত ঠাই নাই। উপায় নাপাই মোৰ বন্ধু গংগৈ ডাঙৰীয়া আৰু মই তৎক্ষণাত এখন টেক্সি লৈ পাণ্ডুৰ মালিগাওঁ অফিচত গৈ দেখা কৰিলো। তাৰ কৰ্মচাৰীজনে পাণ্ডু ষ্টেচনত ফোন কৰি দেখিলে যে এজন বেলঙৰে কৰ্মচাৰীয়ে এটা প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীৰ পাচ লৈ দুটা দাব্বা দখল কৰি আছে। তাতোকৈ আচৰিত দেখা গ'ল যে, যাত্ৰীৰ ভিতৰত পাণ্ডুৰ পৰা লামডিঙলৈ এটা দাব্বা ৰিজাৰ্ড আৰু চাপৰমুখৰ পৰা মৰিয়ানীলৈ এটা দাব্বা ৰিজাৰ্ড। তাৰ উপৰি তৃতীয় শ্ৰেণীৰ পাচ লৈ বেলঙৰে কৰ্মচাৰীবিলাক দ্বিতীয় আৰু প্ৰথম শ্ৰেণীত যাত্ৰাত কৰা কাৰো অবিদিত নহয়।

শেষত সেই ৫ খন পাচ থকা কৰ্মচাৰীজনক এটা দাব্বা দি ইটো দাব্বা গংগৈ ডাঙৰীয়া আৰু মোক দিয়ে। এনে ধৰণৰ অন্যায় আৰু বেমেজালি প্ৰায় বেইলঙৰেত হৈয়ে আছে। ইয়াৰ প্ৰতিকাৰ কৰে কোনে? পাণ্ডুত কোনো উচ্চ কৰ্মচাৰীৰ অফিচ থকা হলে বাইজৰ আৰু চৰকাৰৰ টকা এইদৰে অপব্যয় কেতিয়াও নহ'ল হয়।

**Mr. SPEAKER :** আপোনালোকে নকলে কয় যে বেইলঙৰে কৰ্মচাৰীতকৈ আন যাত্ৰীকহে আগতীয়া সুবিধা দিব লাগে?

**Shri DALBIR SINGH LOHAR :** সেইবিলাক কোৱা হৈছে। সেই কথা তেওঁলোকেই জনা উচিত।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, ডিব্ৰুগড় বেলৰ কাৰখানাটো ইয়াৰ পৰা তুলি নিয়াৰ কথা উঠিল। সমগ্ৰ অসমবাসী তথা চৰকাৰে ইয়াৰ পৰা তুলি নিনিবলৈ বৰকৈ হেচা দিয়াত আৰু কৰ্মী ইউনিয়নৰ পৰা বহুত আপত্তি কৰি বেল কৰ্তৃপক্ষক জনোৱাত তুলি নিনিয়ে বুলি আশ্বাস দিলে হয়, কিন্তু কেইটামান মেচিন আকৌ কিছুদিনৰ পিচত ইয়াৰ পৰা আঁতৰাই নিলে। এদিন হঠাতে ক'ব যে মেচিন নাই কাৰণে তাত কাৰখানা থাকিব নোৱাৰে। ডিব্ৰুগড় বেলৱে স্কুলৰো সেই একে অৱস্থা, ক'না হাঁহক পতান ধান দিয়াৰ দৰে দি থৈছে।

**Mr. SPEAKER :** অলপ লাহে লাহে কলে ভাল হয়।

**Shri DALBIR SINGH LOHAR :** তাৰ পিচত যেতিয়া কেন্দ্ৰীয় বেল মন্ত্ৰী শ্ৰীশাস্ত্ৰীজী অসমলৈ আহিছিল, তেতিয়া মই এনে ধৰণৰ এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ তেখেতৰ আগত ডাঙি ধৰি কৈছিলো যে, লিডুৰ পৰা লেখাপানীলৈ যাত্ৰীবাহী গাড়ীৰ দৰকাৰ। সেই সময়কে মই এই সদনত প্ৰস্তাৱ এটাও ডাঙি ধৰিছিলো আৰু চৰকাৰে মোৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটো সমৰ্থন কৰি কৈছিল যে, ইয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব। কিন্তু আজি পৰিমিত কোনো খবৰেই নাই। শ্ৰীযুত শাস্ত্ৰীক এই কথা কোৱাত তেখেতে মোক আশ্বাস দি কলে যে, শ্ৰীআৰবা চাহাৰ ইয়াতে আছে, মই কৈ দিছো তেখেতে দৈনিক এখনকৈ যাত্ৰীবাহী গাড়ী দিব। তেখেত যোৱাৰ লগে লগে সকলো শেষ হ'ল। আজি পৰিমিত কোনো ফল নিদিলে। মই আশা কৰো চৰকাৰে আকৌ এই বিষয়ে চিন্তা কৰিব। সদনত প্ৰস্তাৱ ডাঙি ধৰিলে যদি কাৰ্য্যকৰী নহয় তেন্তে তাতোকৈ পৰিতাপৰ কথা কি হ'ব পাৰে?

মহোদয়, আজি আমাৰ এই দেশৰ নিবনুৱা ডেকা লৰাৰ সংখ্যা দিনে দিনে বাঢ়ি আহিব ধৰিছে। পাণ্ডুত সদৰ কাৰ্যালয় থাকোঁতে আমাৰ ডেকালৰা কিছুমানে বেলেৰ চাকৰী পাইছিল। আজি দেখিছো স্কুদৰ বদে, মাদ্ৰাজ, বিহাৰ, উত্তৰ প্ৰদেশ আৰু বঙ্গ-দেশৰপৰা লোকসকল আহি ইয়াত বেলেত কাম কৰে। আজি বহু দিনৰ পৰা আমাৰ ডেকাসকলে বেলেত সুবিধা পোৱা নাই। আমাৰ ডেকালৰাবোৰ দিনক দিনে হতাশ হৈ গৈছে আৰু ফলত নিবনুৱা সমস্যা বৃদ্ধি হৈ গৈছে। এই সকলোবোৰ অসুবিধালৈ চাই পাণ্ডুত এটা জ'ন (Zone) হোৱাটো নিতান্ত প্ৰয়োজন বুলি অসমবাসী বাহিজে ভাবে। ইয়াকে কৈ আমাৰ শ্ৰীগোস্বামী ডাঙৰীয়াই যি প্ৰস্তাৱ ডাঙি ধৰিছে তাক মই সদৰেৰে সমৰ্থন কৰিছো। আশা কৰো আমাৰ চৰকাৰে স্কুদৰ ভাবে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ ওচৰত আমাৰ দাবী দাঙি ধৰিব।

**Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I whole-heartedly support the Resolution moved by my Friend, Sriman Prafulla Goswami.

Sir, we have not been able to develop our country, mainly due to the transport bottleneck. There are no transport facilities, no railway convenience and these difficulties must be removed if we want our State to be quickly industrialised. When the six Railway zones were created, the reasons were the length of the railways, compactness, strategy and the facilities for transport of things.

If all these criteria have been properly examined and gone through in case of other Zones, it must be said that in the case of Assam these criteria were not honoured. Length of railways of course might be there but where is the compactness of the North-Eastern Railway and where is the consideration of the strategic State and where is the consideration for easy facilities for transport of things? The result being that we are suffering economically and suffering bodily because of the fact that we have to travel in congested compartments and we are suffering from want of hundreds of other amenities of travel which are sadly lacking. There were 6 Zones and when another Zone could be added to this, what is the difficulty in having the eighth Zone? The 7th Zone has been created, although in the existing 6 Zones there was no addition of length in railways. So, it is the fact that it must be for other reasons possibly for facilities, compactness and difficulties, which have been experienced during the last two or three years. When the 7th Zone could be created, for the same reasons the 8th Zone can be created for Assam and the Central Government know very well that Assam is suffering economically for transport difficulties. Therefore, I suggest with all the emphasis at my command and the experiences that I have gathered as President of the Railway Union for sometime and as a Member of

the Railway Advisory Board, I can safely say that the railway in Assam is suffering from gross mismanagement and the administration is running as a family affair of the railway and hardly there is any amenities of railways which are worth the name. There is no sympathy of the administration towards the demands of the people of Assam. The administrative machinery is here only to earn money and eke out a living by running the railway and making all sorts of wastage of public money. I can say without fear of contradiction that at least every year 50 per cent of the money is wasted in this part of the railways. Money is not properly utilised and the administration cannot say conscientiously that they have spent the money economically.

**Mr. SPEAKER** Is that your grievance that you want the Railway Zone in Assam?

**Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN**: This is one of the major grievances. To develop an economically backward State all these things must be taken into consideration. The Railway administration here is unsympathetic and it has no heart for the development of the State.

**Mr. SPEAKER**: You should say how your economy is disturbed.

**Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN**: There is the ticketless travel in which not a small amount of money is lost. This is because of mismanagement. Railway tariff was the highest in this part 20 years ago and the same rate of tariff is still there. For the reasons of having not a good system of railway and the Link is being always mislinked with the result that we have to bring our things by air at an exorbitant rate and we have to bring things by other transports.....

**Mr. SPEAKER**: What is the freight per maund by air?

(Voice—Rs.23 per maund).

**Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN**: We have to bring things at prohibitive freight and consequently most elementary necessities of life have to be purchased at prohibitive price by our people. This is mainly due to the mismanagement of the railway system in Assam and in this the Central Government is criminally negligent. At present every other State is autonomous in every respect but Assam is not having that autonomy

in any department and that means Assam has no head but a tail to wag at the petting of the master. For these things, we want another Railway Zone which will be able to rectify all these difficulties and it may not be paying immediately but in near future it will pay handsomely and it will help to develop this backward State and its people will derive various amenities. Unless this is done, it means criminal negligence on the part of the Central Government. We are crying hoarse for this and other amenities for the State. The Central Railway Minister came the other day. He was sympathetic and promised to do this and that. Only giving statements, assurances and hope of examining things will not satisfy us. For example, we want a bridge over the Brahmaputra, the other day there was a statement that instead of a bridge the question of constructing a tunnel is being considered. This is nothing but a delaying tactics. This shows how we are neglected!

Considering all these things, I hope, the Members of the House will unanimously adopt this Resolution and we hope the Government of the Nation, the Government of Pandit Jawharlal Nehru, the figure of international repute, will give sympathetic attention and consideration to remove the difficulties of this State by establishing another Zone with headquarters at Pandu, which will be a compact administration, although its railway system is not so lengthy. But the area cannot be the only consideration and I can say that Assam will be a corridor between India and China in the very near future and our railway communication will extend upto China. This importance of the corridor State cannot be kept neglected. This Zone is necessary from the strategic point of view, development point of view, easy transshipment of things and other amenities of travel. For all these points of views, I hope the Central Government will this time be sensible enough to create another Zone for Assam with Pandu as its headquarters.

(The Speaker called out the Transport Minister to speak.)

**Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS:** Sir, I want to speak for five minutes.

**Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am glad that the matter has been brought before this House for consideration of having a separate Railway zone with headquarters at Pandu for the entire eastern part of North-Eastern Railway particularly Assam and its adjoining areas. I shall place before the House what the State Government actually did in this respect.

Prior to 1947 the Bengal-Assam Railway with its headquarters at Calcutta comprised of the present Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railway, the entire Eastern-Bengal Railway, and the present Pandu region of the North-Eastern Railway. Before Partition Assam's main import and export connections were with Calcutta and the distance from Calcutta was also not very great. It is only 483 miles. Thus the then Bengal-Assam Railway served a compact zone.

After Partition, the main route from Calcutta to Assam fell within Pakistan and Assam's rail connection with the rest of India was severed except for a link line which was completed in 1950.

After Partition, therefore, a separate Assam Railway with its headquarters at Pandu was formed. The mileage of this Railway was about 1795 miles.

In 1950 the Ministry of Railways mooted the proposal for grouping of Railways into 6 major zones. At present there are 7 zones, one being subsequently divided into two.

Under this scheme the Ministry of Railways proposed that the North-Eastern Railway Zone be set up consisting of (a) Sections of *Ex-East India Railway*, East of Lucknow and Kanpur (b) the coal fields areas served by *Ex-Bengal-Nagpur Railway* (c) portions of *Ex-Oudh Tirhut Railway* East of Chapra (d) the Assam Railway including the Assam Rail Link and the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. The headquarters of this Railway was proposed to be kept at Calcutta.

This proposal was opposed by the State Government, merchantile communities and political bodies and retention of the Assam Railway as a separate entity with its headquarters at Pandu was therefore strongly supported by this State Government or a new Zone with its headquarters at Pandu was demanded by this Government. The grounds on which the demand has been based are two well known to everybody and I need not repeat all of them again. The strategic importance of Assam as a Frontier State, surrounded by foreign countries on all sides, *viz.*, Burma, Tibet and Pakistan cannot be over-emphasised. The inadequate and under-developed railway communications are the principal cause of her economic backwardness. Bad communications are also the most serious handicap for industrialisation of this State which has already

been economically backward and industrially undeveloped. The reorganised North-Eastern Railway cannot carry the products of even the existing Agriculture, Forest and Industries of Assam. In spite of the re-grouping of the railways in 1952, the difficulties are always there. So, Sir, there are many other grounds such as efficient control and supervision which justify a separate Zone with headquarters at Pandu. I do not like to take the time of the House by repeating them again and again. It is well known to every hon. Member of this House. The matter was represented by the Transport Department as well as by the Government on several occasions to the Railway Ministry as well as to the Government of India. It was personally represented by our Chief Minister also to the Railway Minister on several occasions, and he was impressed very much by his arguments. The Chief Minister has also represented the matter personally to the Prime Minister of India. In spite of all these efforts it has not yet been possible for the State Government to make Government of India to agree to set up a separate Railway Zone for Assam with headquarters at Pandu. The present North Eastern Railway with its headquarters at Gorakhpur and comprising the former Assam Railway, the former Orrisa-Tirhut Railway and the portion of Bengal-Bihar and Central India Railway set up in 1952 has been continuing. The only argument given by the Railway Ministry was that former Assam Railway was running at a loss. But that plea cannot be accepted by this Government. If the Railway is run efficiently and if greater emphasis is put on control and supervision by the Railway authority, the loss would be made up.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Is it for this reason that the Railway authorities have provided bad passenger train and bad compartments on this line?

**Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister):** Sir, I cannot state the exact reasons. But it is said so.

Further this Government is convinced that Assam's strategic position and responsibilities required special treatment of the area. As I have already mentioned that an inspection of the map of India will reveal that Assam hangs to the main body of India by a mere thread in the shape of Rail Link which is liable to snap, as it has so often snapped due to devastating floods since the opening of the Rail Link, excepting a narrow area through which Assam is linked with India, it is surrounded on all sides by foreign States

namely Tibet, Burma, and Pakistan. Taking all these factors into consideration the State should receive special consideration. So the Railway Ministry and the Government of India should consider the case of Assam as a special one and the anticipated loss may not occur at all if the Railway line is run efficiently under the management of a headquarters at Pandu, under proper control and supervision. In pre-independence days the British Government considered it necessary to have deficit railway line in North West Railway mainly on strategic consideration.

So this Government feel that in addition to the present Pandu region of the North-East Railway, the new zone with headquarters at Pandu should also cover the Katihar-Barauni section and ancilliary branch lines so that after completion of the Ganga bridge at Mokameh and concentration of the main transshipment work at Barauni, the whole M. G. route from Barauni to Assam would form part of one administration and would thus be in accordance with the Government of India's policy of having one compact zone for each area. With the addition of this portion to the present Pandu region, mileage of the new zone would be approximately 2115 and the zone would, therefore, be quite feasible one in view of the strategic and geographical features of the North East portion of the country.

I assure hon. Mover of the Resolution and hon. Members of this House that the whole proceedings of the debate will be submitted to the Railway Ministry for consideration with an earnest appeal to the Railway Ministry to set up a separate Railway Zone for Assam with its Headquarters at Pandu.

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

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The question is that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move that Government of India to constitute an additional Railway Zone in Assam with headquarters at Pandu for the eastern part of of the North Eastern Railway particularly Assam and its adjoining areas.

(The Resolution was adopted).

## Resolution regarding Extension of Behari-Bagbar Embankment in Barpeta Subdivision

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that in order to save the vast area of mouza Bagbar in Barpeta subdivision from future flood and erosion this Assembly is of opinion that the Behari-Bagbar Embankment be extended by at least 5 miles more on the western side.

Sir, it is true that the Behari-Bagbar Embankment on the northern side of the Brahmaputra has become very much beneficial to the people of a vast area and for cultivation. But this Embankment should be extended at least by 12 miles on the western side. To save the vast area of mauza Bagbar from future flood and erosion, 5 miles should be extended immediately. If this extension of 5 miles is not made now then this Embankment itself is becoming dangerous to the people of a vast area of mauza Bagbar. So, I have moved this Resolution and I hope the House will accept it.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Resolution moved :

“In order to save the vast area of mouza Bagbar in Barpeta subdivision from future flood and erosion, this Assembly is of opinion that the Behari-Bagbar Embankment be extended by at least 5 miles more on the western side.”

**Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is already a proposal for construction of an embankment from Bagbar to the Manas a distance of 14 miles of which survey is being made; but this being a new scheme for which funds are not available this year, it will have to wait till the next financial year. In the meantime a scheme will be prepared and sanction will be obtained if found suitable and funds be available.

So, in view of this, I request my Friend to withdraw his Resolution.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Ahmed, are you willing to withdraw your Resolution?

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, in view of the assurance given by the Hon'ble Minister, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

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



**Resolution for not enhancing the land revenue on the Char area of Barpeta Subdivision.**

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that in view of the present condition of the lands on the Char area of Barpeta subdivision on the southern side of the Embankment, this Assembly is of opinion that land revenue of that area should not be increased.

Sir, due to the construction of the embankment on both sides of the Brahmaputra the people of the soil in the Char area have become poorer and poorer every day. The current of the river has become much more violent than it was previously. Some families have been eroded and have become homeless without land to live and to cultivate. All the land left now has turned sandy and unfit for cultivation with the result that the people cannot pay land revenue which was fixed previously. During settlement operations in Barpeta subdivision land revenue has increased; so the people cannot pay now this increased land revenue. That being so, their land revenue should not be increased, rather it should be decreased than what it was previously. So I have moved this Resolution and I hope the House will accept it.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Resolution moved :

“In view of the present condition of the lands on the Char area of Barpeta subdivision on the southern side of the Embankment, this Assembly is of opinion that land revenue of the area should not be increased.”

**Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sorry I cannot see my way to accept this Resolution of my Friend, Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed. Sir, it is known to hon. Members of this House that enhancement of land revenue or for that matter, reduction of land revenue, cannot be made at the sweet will of any person. This has to be done under provisions of certain laws and regulations that obtain in the country. Enhancement of land revenue in Barpeta subdivision was made under the provision of law after settlement operations were made there.

Sir, in fixing land revenue many things have to be taken into consideration by the settlement authorities, for example, condition of the soil, condition of the people, a nature of the

the land, etc. All these factors are taken into consideration in the matter of enhancement of land revenue. And also objections are called for from the people and after hearing all these objections from the people, and taking into consideration all the relevant facts, a decision is made by the Land Records staff. This decision is then forwarded to the Government and it is considered by the Revenue Department and they put it up to the Cabinet for final decision in the matter. That, Sir, is the last stage—it is the Cabinet that decides in this matter. After taking all factors into careful consideration, the Cabinet then gives a decision whether to enhance the revenue or not. Therefore, as I have already stated, enhancement or reduction of land revenue is a matter which is done under provisions of law. It cannot be done the way my Friend wants it. In cases where the crops failed or for some reason the people cannot pay land revenue, there comes the question of temporary remission of land revenue only.

In view of what I have said, I hope my Friend will see his way to withdraw his Motion.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Mr. Tajuddin Ahmed, are you withdrawing the Resolution?

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** No, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Then I put the question. The question is :

“In view of the present condition of the lands on the Char area of Barpeta Subdivision on the Southern side of the Embankment, this Assembly is of opinion that land revenue of that area should not be increased.”

(The Motion was negatived).

### Resolution regarding writing off of Rehabilitation Loans granted to persons affected by communal disturbances of 1950

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that in view of the great hardship caused to the people by the communal disturbances in this State in 1950, this Assembly is of opinion that loans given to the affected persons for rehabilitation be written off.

Sir, during the riots in 1950 a large number of people in the Barpeta Subdivision was rendered homeless and hearthless and they were reduced to day labourers. They took loans from Government for rehabilitation. They have not yet been able to pay off their debts to Government nor is there any likelihood that they will be able to do so in foreseeable future. On the other hand Government are putting pressure on them to repay their loans and in many cases their properties have been attached and as a result they have again been reduced to utter destitution and all hopes of their standing on their legs have gone. I am, therefore, of the opinion that Government should write off these loans. With this end in view I am moving this Resolution which I hope the House will be pleased to accept.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Resolution moved is that in view of the great hardship caused to the people by the communal disturbances in this State in 1950, this Assembly is of opinion that loans given to the affected persons for rehabilitation be written off.

**Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister):** Mr. Speaker Sir, again, I am sorry, as I do not see my way to accept the Resolution moved by my Friend, Maulavi Tajuddin Ahmed, and I feel that this Resolution is not warranted by the circumstances of the case also. About 6 or 7 years back there was an unhappy and unfortunate incident which led to the migration of a large number of Muslims inhabiting in Goalpara and Barpeta Subdivisions of Assam to Pakistan. After going to Pakistan these people were greatly disillusioned when they discovered that they were going to a country, the Government and the people of which were not all willing to receive them. They went with great hope and expectation that the Government of Pakistan would receive them with open heart and would retain them there by offering them lands, jobs and things of this sort. But when they found their high hopes sadly belied, they again came back to Assam, and in the meantime law and order was restored by the Government of Assam in the area from which they went and where these unfortunate incidents had occurred. Just at this time an agreement was arrived at between the two Governments—Government of India and the Government of Pakistan—which is known as the Nehru-Liaquat Ali Agreement. Under the provisions of this Agreement, it became the duty of the Government of Assam to accept the poor and unfortunate people who came back after having been greatly disillusioned— not only to

accept them but also to give back their lands and properties and to rehabilitate them with loans and other kind of assistance. Sir, all these obligations were fulfilled almost to the letter by the Government of Assam, and almost 95 per cent. of the people who came back from Pakistan have been restored to their lands in Assam. Loans were also issued to them for the purpose of rehabilitation, and in cases where it was found necessary, some of these people were given gratuitous relief also. Now, Sir, it is more or less six or seven years since all these unfortunate happenings took place. Since then a lot of change has taken place. These people have now got back their lands, and Government helped them with loans and gratuitous relief. They are now setting themselves down as cultivators. It is about 5 or 6 years since they have been rehabilitated. Government are also not giving undue pressure on the people to make payment of their arrear loans. Whenever any of these people approach Government, they have been shown enough consideration by giving them time and easy conditions for repayment of loans. As I have already stated, it is now about five years since they have been rehabilitated. Most of the people are now in a far better condition, and are almost of the same condition as they were before the disturbances. Under the circumstances I do not subscribe to the view expressed by my Friend that these people are put to great hardships. I, of course, agree that there may be a few individual cases of hardship, but in cases of such individual hardship, when such cases are brought to the notice of the Government, Government are always willing to give due consideration. Under the circumstances, Sir, I do not see my way to give general exemption.

With these few words, Sir, I request my Friend, Maulavi Tajuddin Ahmed, to withdraw his Resolution.

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, in view of the assurance given by the Hon. Minister that he would give sympathetic consideration to all individual cases of hardship brought to his notice, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my resolution.

(The Resolution was withdrawn by leave of the House).

### Resolution regarding giving of sufficient loans to the flood-affected people in Barpeta Subdivision

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that in view of great damage caused by the untimely flood this year in Barpeta Subdivision, this Assembly is of opinion that to save those flood-affected people sufficient loans be given to them.

Sir, it is true that this year there was not much rain or heavy floods as in the previous years. But in spite of that, the damages done to the crops by whatever little flood occurred this year, are very great both in magnitude and intensity. In my own Subdivision in Barpeta, the Aus, jute and Bao paddies of some Mauzas such as Sorukhetri, Ghilazari, Nogaon, Paka, Mandia, Jania, Titapani and Rupshi were washed away. The people there moved both the Revenue Minister and the Chief Minister by various public wires and petitions. I also sent wires both to the Chief Minister and the Revenue Minister drawing their attention to these heavy losses, but unfortunately up to the time I left home for this session of the Assembly no reply had been received. As I have already stated, there was not much rain nor flood this year. But wherever and whenever flood occurred, it caused great damage to crops. The cause of this is, in my opinion, due to construction of embankments and low bed level of the rivers which cannot carry away the rain water in time. Again the rains this year was very untimely as the flood came only in the month of *Baisag*.

Now, Sir, as a result of the floods, the people have been very much hard hit. Unless Government are pleased to give them sufficient loans, they will not be able to stand on their feet. Therefore, I request the Government to give the affected people agricultural loans so that they may be able to purchase seeds and agricultural implements for the purpose of timely cultivation of agricultural crops.

In this connection I would also suggest Government to examine the condition of the existing Bunds and embankments and where necessary, to give sluice gates and to provide drains so that rain water can easily be able to go to the rivers. Government should also open some cheap grain shops so that people can purchase seeds and rice and paddy, etc. etc., at cheaper rates. Our poor people are ready to work and I request the Public Works Department Minister to see that these people are provided with work under various Public Works Department projects.

With these words, Sir, I commend my Resolution to the acceptance of the House.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The Resolution moved is that in view of great damage caused by the untimely flood this year in Barpeta Subdivision, this Assembly is of opinion that to save those flood-affected people sufficient loans be given to them.

**Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am again sorry to disoblige my Friend for the third occasion as this Resolution is not warranted at all by the circumstances of the case.

We had a general discussion, a general debate yesterday about the flood situation in our State and I made an elaborate statement about the floods that had occurred in our State and the steps that have been taken by the Government to alleviate the distress and miseries of the people in different parts of our State and there I also read out the figures of gratuitous relief and agricultural loans given to the different Subdivisions. Sir, I could not find out any amount being given to Barpeta. For Barpeta Subdivision we have not given gratuitous relief nor have we sanctioned any agricultural loan. That shows that while for all other Subdivisions such as Dibrugarh, North-Lakhimpur, Jorhat, Sibsagar, Nowgong, Golaghat, Gauhati, Dhubri, Silchar, Hailakandi, Karimganj, we have given some amount of relief either by way of agricultural loan or gratuitous relief, no demand came from Barpeta Subdivision for consideration.

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Sir, I have sent about 30 or 40 wires to the Revenue Minister in this connection.

**Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister):** Sir, I would have been too glad to sanction money for relief if it was found necessary. But the hon. Member should appreciate that it is not possible to sanction money on receipt of some letters and telegrams. The procedure is that the proper quarters should move Government for assistance. The Deputy Commissioners and the Subdivisional Officers are there and whenever they find that any relief is necessary, they move the Government for such assistance. In respect of Barpeta, we did not get any demand from the Subdivisional Officer there.

**Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED:** Who is responsible for this, Sir?

**Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister):** Sir, I cannot hold that the Deputy Commissioners or the Subdivisional Officers would be unmindful of the people's miseries during the floods. While the Deputy Commissioner of Gauhati could move for assistance for the people affected by the flood in Gauhati Subdivision, how is it that the same Deputy Commissioner did not make any demand for the Barpeta Subdivision? There may be floods, and we are getting floods often and they are also necessary, but that does not mean that the intensity of the floods are always great and the sufferings of the people are also great on all occasions, justifying relief measures. While I could give relief to the other Subdivisions, why should I not do the same in case of Barpeta? I am not here to make any discrimination. When I receive any representation from the people I send them to the local Subdivisional Officers or Deputy Commissioners for a report, and if the Deputy Commissioners or Subdivisional Officers recommend for any assistance we try to render the necessary help. But if there is no demand from the local officers how can the Government rush with help? My Friend should appreciate this. Whether there were any floods of the kind stated by my Friend, Mr. Ahmed, I cannot say from here, but I shall cause an enquiry to be made by local officers and if I find that any assistance is necessary, we shall try to provide the necessary help.

Sir, I hope my Friend will appreciate my position and he will see his way to withdraw the Resolution.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** The question is that in view of great damage caused by the untimely flood this year in Barpeta Subdivision, this Assembly is of opinion that to save those flood-affected people sufficient loans be given to them.

(The Resolution was negatived).

### **Resolution shifting for the Shillong Civil Hospital from its present site.**

(With regard to \*Resolution No.25, the Speaker requested Shri Rupnath Brahma, Minister-in-charge of Medical Department to let the House know how the matter stood. Sriman Prafulla Goswami also agreed to hear the Minister first.)

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister):** Sir, regarding this Resolution, I may inform the hon. Member that we have already decided to shift the present Shillong Civil Hospital to a better site and we have already selected the Firs and Dacca Cottage for the purpose and we expect to begin the construction of the necessary buildings after the plans and estimates are prepared by the architect whom we are expecting here by the next month. We have written for an architect and when he comes in September next he will draw the necessary plans and estimates and as soon as this is done we shall be in a position to begin construction of the buildings.

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** Sir, I am very glad to have the information and in view of that I am not moving the Resolution.

### **Resolution regarding Establishment of a Hospital for treatment of Cancer**

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** I want to move †Resolution No.32, Sir.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Let us hear the Medical Minister first.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, with regard to this Resolution, which my Friend, Sriman Prafulla Goswami, desires to move, I may inform the hon. Member that we had already taken steps to open a cancer ward in the Assam Medical College at Dibrugarh.

\*Resolution No. 25—This Assembly is of opinion that the Shillong Civil Hospital be shifted from its present congested site to a better site at Shillong.

†Resolution No.32—This Assembly is of opinion that a hospital for the treatment of Cancer be established by the Government in the State of Assam.



**Mr. SPEAKER:** With how many beds?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister):** Sir, we have already given the administrative approval, Sir, there will be a Radium Ward for the treatment of the cancer patients and I think the number of beds will be about 24.

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** In view of what has been stated by the Minister, Sir, I do not like to move my Resolution.

### Resolution regarding Constitution of a State Pharmacy Council

**Mr. SPEAKER:** \*Resolution No.34. Will it be moved ?

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** I want to move it, Sir.

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister):** Sir, in connection with this matter we have already taken steps. An agreement remains to be signed by the Manipur State and our Government and that the necessary rules are being framed now.

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** Will Government constitute a State Pharmacy Council, Sir?

**Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister):** Yes.

**SRIMAN PRAFULLA GOSWAMI:** Then I need not move it.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Then today's business is over (*A voice:* There is a Resolution in the supplementary list). The Member concerned is not in the Chamber to move it.

**Mr. A. ALLEY (Minister):** Sir, may I be permitted to move the Resolution standing in my name?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** No, I cannot allow.

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\*This Assembly is of opinion that Assam Government do take steps to constitute a State Pharmacy Council as provided by the Central Pharmacy Act, 1948

### Fixation of time and date to take up certain Bills

**Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister):**

Sir, I am sorry to disturb you. So far as I remember it was decided that two Bills, namely, the Report of the Select Committee on the Municipal Bill and the Assam Good Conduct Prisoners' Probation Release (Amendment) Bill, would be taken up for decision on the 1st September. I may be excused if I am wrong in this respect, but I do not know whether in the meantime any other arrangement has been made in this respect. I hope you will kindly allow it, otherwise these two Bills cannot be taken up in this Session.

**Mr. SPEAKER:** A Notice has already been issued which is dated 31st August, 1956 wherein it is stated that "In addition to the Bills (mentioned above) the Motions for consideration and passing of these two Bills (referred to by Mr. Mookerjee) will also be made either on the 5th or 7th September, 1956, and notices of amendments, if any, to those Bills should also reach the Assembly Secretariat before 4 P.M. on Saturday, the 1st September, 1956". This has been accepted by the House.

**Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister):** Will they be considered clause by clause ?

**Mr. SPEAKER:** Yes. If more time is required that can be given provided that does not inconvenience the Members.

I hope in future the Members in whose name s Resolutions stand will be alert and be present in their seats so that they can be moved in time.

### Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A.M. on Monday, the 3rd September, 1956.

Shillong,

R. N. BARUA,  
Secretary, Legislative Assembly,  
Assam.

The 10th April, 1957.