

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 1-30 P.M., on Friday the 31st August, 1956.

P R E S E N T

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

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answer were laid on the table)

Dalu-Baghmara, Baghmara-Darugiri and Baghmara-Moheskhola Roads

Shri EMERSON MOMIN asked :

1. Will the Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department be pleased to state—

(a) When the Dalu-Baghmara Road will be ready for the public use ?

(b) Whether it is a fact that Baghmara-Darugiri and Baghmara-Moheskhola Roads will be constructed from the next Autumn Session of 1956 ?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) replied :

1. (a)—The road is expected to be ready for public use by end of 1957-58.

(b)—The estimate for Section 1-12 miles of the Baghmara-Mahadeo Road is under scrutiny with Government of India. The estimate for Baghmara-Darugiri Road, Section 1-12 miles will shortly be submitted to Government of India for Technical approval and financial sanction. The work will be started as soon as Government of India's sanction is received.

Statement on flood situation in the State

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister) : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your permission I want to make a statement on the flood situation in the country to give a picture of the same to the House and to the public outside.

Sir, owing to the early onset of the monsoon, floods occurred earlier than usual, this year. The first flood was reported from Dibrugarh subdivision on the 5th and 6th May 1956. The Saikhowa area of the South Bank, and Paikmahal and Sisi Mouzas on the North Bank were submerged. The Bund constructed by the Embankment and Drainage Department near Dhola was breached and considerable areas were submerged. Simultaneously, the river Dehing was also in spate and inundated several areas in the Larua Mouza. The Aus paddy and Sali seedlings were damaged in the flooded areas.

The flood waters of the Brahmaputra also affected north-western Mouzas of Nowgong district, damaging jute and Aus crops.

The flood also occurred in certain Mouzas on the north bank of Gauhati subdivision and in the lowlying areas of Barpeta subdivision in Kamrup district in the second week of May, 1956. Considerable damage was caused to Aus and jute crops.

The floods occurring in the second week of May also damaged Aus, jute, kaun, china and onion crops over 50,550 bighas in Dhubri subdivision and 45,000 bighas in Goalpara subdivision of Goalpara district.

From the 6th June 1956, there was heavy flood in the Cachar district due to incessant rains in the Mizo district. Hailakandi subdivision was worst affected and all communications were cut off for some time. Prompt steps were taken by the District Officers to evacuate the marooned people and to provide them with temporary shelter and gratuitous relief. The flood continued with slight changes in the water level till about the 23rd June 1956, when it began to subside.

The Deputy Commissioner, Sibsagar, reported on 1st August 1956 that due to rise of local rivers from 23rd July, 18 Mouzas in Sibsagar, 3 Mouzas in Golaghat subdivision and 6 Mouzas in Jorhat subdivision have been affected. Water receded from 25th, July but lowlying areas in nine Mouzas mostly west of

Sibsagar-Khowang railway line in Sibesar subdivision and some areas in South of the Brahmaputra in Jorhat subdivision and Golaghat subdivision were under water. It is also reported that seedlings and granaries in lowlying areas are badly affected.

The Subdivisional Officer, Sibesar, reported on 26th June, 1956 that due to abnormal rise of water level of the Brahmaputra at Desangmukh the road to Desangmukhghat has been breached causing dislocation of transport of consumer goods and foodstuff thereby resulting in abnormal rise of prices of these commodities. The Subdivisional Officer also reported on 25th July, 1956 that due to rise of water in Dikhow river there was flood in Hahchara, Silakuti, Dhopabor, Juktoli, Jakaichuk, Kowarpur and Nazira Mouzas including part of Nazira town. In some of the areas in Simaluguri and Nazira the water level rose from 2 to 3 feet. Road communication including railway to Sibesar town *via* Simaluguri was cut off. Some people residing in places adjoining Bihubor took shelter in Bihubor railway platform. The Subdivisional Officer further reported on 29th July, 1956 that Sakekhati, Abhoypur, Mahmara, and Silakuti mouzas of Sonari Circle, Hopadhor, Nazira, Juktoli, Hahchora, Salaguri Mora bazar Mouzas of Nazira Circle and Khalai-Ghogra, Bokala Thowra, Belbari, Kowarpur, Meleka, Bongaon and Nagarmahal and Jokaichuk Mouzas of Sibesar Circle totalling 18 Mouzas comprising approximately three-fourths of the whole subdivision were affected by floods.

The Subdivisional Officer, Golaghat, reported on 27th July, 1956 that due to incessant rains the local streams Kokodonga, Ghilladhari and Mokrong were over flooded as a result of which some villages of Kacharihat, Athgaon and Ghilladhari Mouzas of Golaghat circle were submerged.

By the 5th and 6th June, the Kapili and Barpani rivers began to rise and submerged the paddy fields of 8 Mouzas, namely, Kampur, Jurabari, Gorubari, Kathialtoli, Jogijan, Jamunamukh, Hojai and Lanka in Nowgong district. Simultaneously, the Kolong and its tributaries also rose and submerged portions of another 8 Mouzas and extensive damage was caused to standing Aus and jute crops.

The Kulshi river in the south bank of the Kamrup district was in spate by the middle of June and submerged a large area of Chyayagaon Circle. The Pagladia and Boralia rivers in the north bank also rose and flooded certain areas in Nalbari and Rangia Circles. The houses of 45 families of Ulubari were washed away due to breaches in the Pagladia embankment.

The Brahmaputra was again in spate in the third week of June. Some damage was caused to the first stone-spur and the revetment above it at Dibrugarh. There was some erosion in the Bagibeel area down stream of Dibrugarh town. The dyke constructed by the embankment and Drainage Department on the north bank of the Brahmaputra was breached over a length of $\frac{1}{2}$ mile near Matmara; Sissi and Dhemaji Mouzas on the north bank were flooded.

There were floods also in the North Lakhimpur subdivision of Lakhimpur district and erosion of the Subansiri and the Brahmaputra rivers displaced about 250 families. Due to the erosion at Ghunasuti the Public Health Dispensary building, one M. E. School and one L. P. School buildings, etc., had to be dismantled.

It has been reported by the Deputy Commissioner, Lakhimpur, that Dehing river was in spate from 24th to 27th July, 1956 and there was flood in Sassani, Tengakhat, Kheramia Tipling, Tingkhong, Fakial, Larua, Khawang, Lengri, Moran Sepon and Maderkhat Mouzas. The Dehing Bund near Bamundi, Kuligaon, Haladhibari in Khawang Mouza has been breached in several places. Transplanted paddy and seedlings have been damaged. The Burridihing river was also in spate from 24th to 26th July and there was flood in transferred areas, and Margherita.

Since 25th July, 1956, the whole of Cachar district was visited by a third flood which caused additional loss to standing crops and transplanted seedlings, etc.

Due to heavy rains during the third week of August 1956, in the Garo Hills the rivers Jinari and Jinjiram have overflowed their banks causing fairly high floods in the neighbouring areas both in the Garo Hills and Goalpara subdivision. Vehicular traffic on National High Way was closed due to washing away of a bridge and damage to others.

Due to repeated floods some local officers could not yet complete the surveys and submit detailed report on the actual damage and loss caused by the floods. Based on the detailed reports so far received from the Subdivisional Officers,

North Lakhimpur, Goalpara, Golaghat, Karimganj, Hailakandi and Deputy Commissioner, Cachar—a statement of damage and loss is prepared and given as follows:—

Subdivision	Value of paddy, jute and other crops damaged	Value of properties lost
	Rs.	Rs.
North Lakhimpur	3,69,700	1,92,500
Goalpara	9,91,200	...
Golaghat	5,425	300
Silchar	19,76,200	59,850
Karimganj	8,70,160	...
Hailakandi	24,36,000	...
Barpeta	4,89,600	15,700

Sir, from the statement that has been prepared it has been found that paddy and jute cultivation to the value of Rs.71,38,285 just now mentioned has been damaged and also properties to the value of Rs.2,68,350 have been lost in the 7 subdivisions.

It has been reported that there were loss of 14 human lives in Dibrugarh subdivision, 2 in Hailakandi subdivision and 2 in Nowgong district. The deaths in Dibrugarh and Nowgong were due to boat disasters.

As a measure of relief the State Government have so far sanctioned Rs.2,85,487-8-0 as gratuitous relief, Rs.2,95,000 as agricultural loan, Rs.62,500 as rehabilitation loan and Rs.30,000 for test relief works. The subdivisionwise allocations are as follows:—

Subdivision	Gratuitous relief	Agricultural loan	Rehabilitation loan	Test Relief
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Dibrugarh	42,550	90,000	..	...
North Lakhimpur	76,375	..	62,500	...
Jorhat	4,000	5,000	..	..
Sibsagar	23,312-8-0	10,000	..	..

	Subdivision		Gratui-	Agricul-	Rehati-	Test
			tous relief	tural loan	litation loan	Relief
			Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Golaghat	5,000	..	..
Nowgong	15,000	25,000	..	..
Gauhati	47,250	60,000	..	..
Barpeta
Dhubri	25,000	..	..
Goalpara	8,000	20,000	..	..
Silchar	23,000	56,000	..	30,000
Karimganj	22,000	40,000	..	..
Hailakandi	24,000	49,000	..	..

Besides, about Rs.1,50,000 have already been sanctioned for maintenance of relief boats in various parts of the State.

From the Governor's Fund a sum of Rs.4,000 has been allotted for Hailakandi subdivision and from Chief Minister's Fund a sum of Rs.5,000 has been allotted for Gauhati subdivision, Rs.5,000 for Sibsagar subdivision, Rs.3,500 for Dhubri subdivision, Rs.16,000 for Cachar district, Rs.5,000 for Dibrugarh subdivision and Rs.2,500 for Goalpara subdivision.

Necessary cheap grain shops have already been opened where considered essential.

Just at the beginning of floods the local officers were instructed to keep a watchful eye over the flood situation and to render timely relief where found necessary.

From the statements that I have read out to the hon. Members of the House it will be seen that the intensity of floods in this year is the greatest in the district of Cachar. There were as many as three floods in repeated succession in that district and the damage caused has been very heavy. Sir, I have already stated that almost all the rivers in Mizo district were in spate and some rivers in Cachar also were in spate and the cumulative effect of this made the flood situation in the district of Cachar a very serious one. The water level of flood in the district of Cachar was reported to be the highest since the record flood of 1929.

Another remarkable feature of this year's flood is that on account of the onset of early monsoon there were repeated floods all over the State, but curiously enough there has been an erratic behaviour of the monsoon this time which resulted in not only repeated floods but also serious droughts in many places in the State. There are some places in the districts where on account of flood people have not been able to begin transplantation and at the same time there are some places where for want of water, people have not been able to steep their jute. That has been the position. On one hand there has been extensive flood caused by the early monsoon while on the other hand another serious situation has been caused by droughts. Sir, I have got a report from Goalpara district that in some places people have not been able to start cultivation at all and that they want that Government should come forward to their rescue, and provide water to their fields by artificial means, that is by means of pumps. But the question is whether it is possible to relieve the situation by using pumps. What is the number of pumps that we have got? Have we got sufficient number of pumps to provide water in the areas that have been affected by drought. Sir, to me it is not a feasible proposition. Therefore, I should like to bring to the notice of the hon. Members that if things do not improve we may also have a serious repercussion on the crop position of our State. However, Sir, there has been a silver lining in the dark horizon and fortunately during the last week we have some good showers and that has given a hope to the people that somehow we may be able to tide over the situation. This is in short the position caused by floods in our State. Position in the Cachar district is abnormal. In the Brahmaputra Valley there is of course considerable damage to the crops but still there is some time ahead of us for cultivation and it is hoped that if we get sufficient rains in the coming few weeks ahead of us, perhaps our people will be able to do the transplantation and also collect the jute crop. This is in brief my statement about the flood condition in our State. And I beg to resume my seat after the short statement. Thank you.

Shri JADAV CHANDRA KHAKHLARI: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, বর্তমান বানপানীৰ সমস্যাটো আমাৰ অসমৰ অকল ডিব্ৰুগৰতে নহয় গোটেই অসমতে এনে এটা সমস্যা হৈ পৰিছে যে ইয়াৰ গুৰুত্বপূৰ্ণ ভাবে এটা ব্যবস্থা কৰিব লগা হৈছে। এই বানপানীৰ কাৰণে বিশেষকৈ আমাৰ খেতিয়কসকলৰ বৰ আহকাল হৈছে, তেওঁলোক বিধবস্ত হৈছে। তাৰ কাৰণে লাখ লাখ, কোটি কোটি টকা বানপানী বিধবস্তৰ

সাধাৰণৰূপে খৰচ হৈছে। ই এটা অপব্যয় মাত্ৰ। বানপানী বন্ধ কৰিব পাৰিলে এই টকাখিনি আন আন অগ্ৰগতিৰ কামত খৰচ কৰিব পৰা হ'লহেতেন।

আমি ভাবো যে এই বানপানীৰ কাৰণ হ'ল, ভূমিকম্পৰ ফলত নদীবিলাক বিশেষকৈ ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ বাম হৈ যোৱা কাৰণেই হৈছে। আগতেও অলপ অচৰপ বানপানী হৈছিল। খেতিৰ কাৰণে অলপ বানপানীৰ দৰকাৰো। কিন্তু বাবে বাবে অসময়ত বানপানী হৈ থকাত খেতিয়কে খেতি কৰিও কোনো লাভ হোৱা নাই। আমাৰ খেতিয়কে সাধাৰণতে বহাগৰ পৰা কাতিমাহলৈ খেতিপথাৰ কৰে আৰু সদায় ভয় কৰি থাকিব লগা হয় যে বানপানী আহে নেকি। এতিয়ালৈকে দিহিঙত এবাৰ বানপানী হৈ গৈছে। পিছত কিছুমান ঠাইত খেতি কৰিছে, কিন্তু এতিয়াও বানপানীৰ হাতৰ পৰা সাৰিব পাৰিব বুলি খেতিয়কে ভাবিব পৰা নাই। ফলত কোনো খেতিয়কৰ শাস্তি নাই। মই বিশেষকৈ চৈখোৱা মৌজাৰ কথা কওঁ। তাত যি বান্ধ বান্ধিছে সেইটো নৰয় বুলি ভাবি তেওঁলোকে অস্থিৰ হৈছে। সেই লোকসকলক গভণ মেষ্টে যি মাটি আছিল দিলে, এতিয়া দেখিছো আৰু মাটি দিবলৈকো মাটি নাই। আগতে যি মাটি কিছু দিছিল সেইবিলাক ফৰেষ্ট বিজাৰ্ট আছিল। এতিয়া দেখা গৈছে সেই মাটিবিলাক খেতিৰ উপযোগী নহয়। চৈখোৱা অঞ্চলত ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰত যি মথাউৰি বন্ধ হৈছে সি বানপানী বাধা দিব পাৰেনে নোৱাৰে ঠিক কৰিব পৰা নাই। কাৰণ প্ৰতি বছৰে ঠায়ে ঠায়ে বান্ধ ভাঙিছে। সেইবোৰ এই নতুন অৱস্থাত বা আন কাৰণত ভাঙিব পাৰে কিন্তু পৰা হৈ পৰিলে ইয়াৰ সঠিক প্ৰমাণ পোৱা যাব। দিহিঙৰ বহুত ঠাইত মথাউৰি ভাঙি গৈছে। তাৰ মানুহে সদায় ভয় কৰি আছে যদি আকৌ বানপানী আহে তেতিয়া কি দুৰ্গতি হ'ব। চৈখোৱা মৌজাত আৰু ৭ মাইল মথাউৰি বান্ধিব লাগিব। সেই বিষয়ে মই মন্ত্ৰীমহোদয়ৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিলো।

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister): এইটো প্লেণত আছে নেকি?

Shri JADAB CHANDRA KHAKHLARI অকল সেয়ে নহয় তাত Sluice Gate ও দিব লাগে। এইটো হৈ নুঠাত মানুহৰ বৰ শোচনীয় অৱস্থা হৈছে। কেবল বান্ধিলেই কাম নহয়, একালে বান্ধিলে একালে ভাঙি যায়, পানীটো ওলাই যোৱাৰো দিহা কৰিব লাগে।

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister): ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ আৰু দিহিং দ কৰি পানী যাবলৈ দিয়া কথা কৈছে হ'বলা।

Shri JADAB CHANDRA KHAKHLARI : ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ দ কৰি খান্দি দিলেও গোটেই পানী টানি নিব। কথা হ'ল এসপ্তাহ বদ দিলেই নাও নিব নোৱাৰা হয়। তাৰ পিছত মোৰ পৰামৰ্শ হ'ল যে বান্ধ বান্ধি ইমান পানী বখা টান। গতিকে কিছুমান বিশেষজ্ঞ নিয়োগ কৰি কোন ঠাই দ কৰিব লাগে কোন ঠাইত বান্ধ বান্ধিব লাগে কোন ঠাইত Sluice Gate দিব লাগে তাক ভালকৈ পৰীক্ষা কৰি চাই অতি সোনকালে কাম আৰম্ভ কৰি বাইজক দুখৰ পৰা অব্যাহতি দিব লাগে।

দিহিং নৈখন খান্দি পোনাই দিব লাগে। অকল তাকে কৰিলেই নহ'ব; দিহিং নৈৰ লগতে ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ নদীও খান্দিব লাগিব। তেতিয়াহে আন আন ঠাইত যিবিলাক পানী জমা হয় সেই বিলাক ওলাই যাব পাৰিব।

অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, ইয়াৰ লগতে মই এই কথাও কওঁ যে আমাৰ গাঁৱৰ জনা-বুজা মানুহ বিলাকে চৰকাৰলৈ অনেক সময়ত আবেদন নিবেদন কৰিব লগা হয়, এম, এল, এ, বিলাকেও চৰকাৰৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰে তেনে স্থলতো কেতিয়া কত মথাউৰিৰ প্ৰয়োজন হয় চৰকাৰে উপলব্ধি কৰিবলৈ টান হয়। ইয়াৰ কাৰণ হৈছে সেই বিলাক ভিতৰুৱা ঠাইত চৰকাৰৰ চাৰ্ভে পাৰ্টি নাথাকে। সেই কাৰণে মই পৰামৰ্শ দিওঁ যেন চৰকাৰী চাৰ্ভেয়াৰ পাৰ্টি তেনে ঠাইত ৰাখে। অনেক ক্ষেত্ৰত দেখা যায় যে এই বিশেষ জৰুৰী মথাউৰিবিলাক পানীয়ে ভাঙিলে কোনোৰকম তাপলি মাৰি কাজ সমাধা কৰা হয়। ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা চৰকাৰৰ আৰু বাইজৰ বিশেষ উপকাৰ হয় বুলি নাভাবো কাৰণ এই তাপলি পুনৰ ভাঙি যায় চৰকাৰী টকা নষ্ট হয় আৰু বাইজৰ খেতিপথাৰ নষ্ট হয়। সেই কাৰণে মই কওঁ যে নামচাইৰ পৰা চৈখেৱালৈ বিশেষ কৈ পাৰ যত দৰ্কাৰ হয় পোনাই কাৰ্টি বান্ধি দিব লাগে।

তাৰ পিচত মই কওঁ এই কামবিলাক কৰোঁতে অনেক দেখি হৈ যায়; কেতিয়াবা এনেও হয় যে এতিয়াই কৰিব লগা কাম খিনি কৰোঁতে কৰোঁতে দুই-তিনি বছৰ পাৰ হৈ যায়। সেই কাৰণে মই আমাৰ চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ কৰোঁ যেন, কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ পৰা টকা পয়চাৰ সহায় লৈ অতি সোনকালে এই কাম বিলাক অৰ্থাৎ মথাউৰি বিলাক বান্ধি শেষ কৰি দিব লাগে। ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰ খন শেষত বন্ধা কৰিবলৈ যে কেনেকৈ দ্ৰুত গতিত কাম কৰি পেলালে—ঠিক তেনেকৈ এই মথাউৰিবিলাকৰ কাম শেষ কৰিব লাগে। নহলে দিনক দিনে বান-পানীৰ পীড়নত সৰ্ব সাধাৰণ বাইজৰ আৰ্থিক অৱস্থা বেয়া হৈ যাব। এইটো সত্য কথা আৰু ভৱিষ্যৎ গুৰুতৰ হৈ পৰাৰ আশংকা হয়।

(ষণ্টা পৰে)

ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰখনৰ অৱস্থা আৰু ভাল হৈ থাকিলহে তেন যদি মথাউৰি বন্ধা কামটো আৰু দুই-তিনি বছৰৰ আগতে হাতত ললেহেঁতেন।

(পুনৰ ষণ্টা বাজি উঠে)

সেই কাৰণে মই চৰকাৰৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিব খুজিছোঁ—যেন যিবিলাক ঠাই অতি ভিতৰুৱা যত সদায়ে বোকা পানী নুগুছে আৰু বটলৈ সহজে কোনো চৰকাৰী কৰ্মচাৰী অথবা আমাৰ এম, এল, এ, ও যাব নোৱাৰে।

(Voice—এম, এল, এ, বিলাক বোকা পানী গচাক নফুৰেনেকি?)

তেনেকুৱা ঠাই বিলাকৰ যাতে অতি সোনকালে উন্নতি হয় তাৰ কাৰণে চেষ্টা কৰে। এম, এল, এ, বিলাক কেতিয়াবা যাব নোৱাৰা অৱস্থাও সেই ঠাইত হয়, যেনে মানকটা মৌজা, লেঙেৰী মৌজা আদি। এই বিলাক অৱশ্যে যোৱা সমষ্টি নহয়।

(পুনৰ ষণ্টা পৰে)

Mr. SPEAKER: আপোনাৰ সময় হৈ গল।

Shri JADAB CHANDRA KHAKHLARI: অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আৰু অলপ কলেই হব।

Mr. SPEAKER: বহুত দেখি হৈ গল আপুনি বহক।

(Voice—সেই সমষ্টি বিলাক কাৰ?)

Shri JADAB CHANDRA KHAKHLARI : ময়ো ঠিক নাজানো
.....বোধ হয়.....

Mr. SPEAKER : আপুনি বহক।

Shri JADAB CHANDRA KHAKHLARI : ইয়াকে কৈ নই
চৰকাৰৰ দৃষ্টি গোচৰ কৰি সোনকালে মথাউৰিৰ কামবিলাক ঠিক মতে কৰিবলৈ অনুৰোধ
জনাও।

Shri SARVESWER BARUWA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are thankful to the Revenue Minister for giving us an opportunity of discussing the flood situation in the different districts of this State.

He has given us the dates of the early floods and also the dates of the floods that occurred later which had devastated the different parts of this State this year also. Sir, in my own Subdivision there had been floods, of courses this year's floods are lesser in number there than in previous years. But the early floods—the quite unexpected early floods of this year, have caused more damage to the Ahu aud Bau crops of my Subdivision than they used to have done before, because the people did not expect such heavy floods in our place in May. Just as stated by the Revenue Minister there were heavy floods in the first week of May and also about the middle of May. These floods the almost totally destroyed the Ahu crops and also greatly damaged the Bao crop, besides damaging the early seedlings that were sown by the people. Now, Sir, for some time there were no floods till the middle of July but again very recently in the third week of August, we had heavy floods. Now many embankments which were the hopes of the people that they would give them the necessary protection to their homes and protection to their crops—unfortunately gave way at the early May flood which damaged most of the Ahu cultivation in the Bordoloi Mauza. The later flood heavily damaged the Brahmaputra dyke which was constructed in the Dhakuakhana Mauza and people faced great difficulties. The embankments near the Mathmora area about which a reference has been made in the Revenue Minister's speech, was also breached by the erosion of the Brahmaputra river and the High School and other institutions have been damaged there very badly.

Mr. SPEAKER : The High School or the Middle English School ?

Shri SARVESWAR BORUWA Sir, the High School of Mathmora was damaged and the Middle English School at Ghunasuti also was thoroughly washed away along with the Inspection Bungalow and the Dispensary. Then the embankments on the Singla river have been damaged very recently and the embankment of Kaki river was also breached with very disastrous effect. All the crops of the people who live on both the banks of the river was damaged. Thus, Sir, these floods have caused heavy damages. At the same time, along with other places of the State, my Subdivision has also suffered from draughts as well as from floods. The transplantation of the paddy in my Subdivision has been suspended for a long time due to want of rain and as such what has become the fate of the State as a whole has been true in the case of North Lakhimpur. The State has suffered from droughts and floods and my Subdivision has not also been spared of these disasters.

Therefore, we fully endorse the Revenue Minister's statement that the State has been very unfortunate in this matter this year, and we all wish that with the help of God and also with the help of the Government we shall be able to tide over the difficulties.

With these words, Sir, I resume my seat.

Shri KHAGENDRANATH NATH: মাননীয় অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আজি বাজহ মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে বানপানীৰ সম্বন্ধে আলোচনা কৰিবলৈ এই সুযোগ দিয়াত তেখেতক ধন্যবাদ দিছো। এইবাৰ অসমত বানপানী বহাগ মাহতে আৰম্ভ হৈছে। তাৰফলত অকল গোৱালপাৰাতে নহয় গোটেই অসমতে মৰাপাট, আছ আৰু বাও খেতি কৰিব পৰা নাই। লগতে খাদ্যাভাৱ হৈ বহুত ঠাইত মানুহৰ হাঁহাকাৰ হৈছে আৰু কিমান লাখ টকা যে ক্ষতি হৈছে তাক কোৱা টান। সেই বানপানীৰ পিচতে আকৌ আহিল খৰ। সেইকাৰণে অনেক ঠাইত শালী খেতি কৰিব পৰা নাই। গোৱালপাৰা জিলাৰ বহুত ঠাই খৰ হোৱাৰ কাৰণে ৰাইজৰ মাজত হাঁহাকাৰ হৈছে; কাৰণ বৰষুণ নহলে শালী খেতি কৰিব নোৱাৰিলে মানুহ শুকাই মৰিব।

যোৱা ১৬ আগষ্টৰ পূৱাৰ পৰা আকৌ ধাৰাসাৰে বৰষুণ আৰম্ভ হৈছে আৰু কিছুমান ঠাইত তিনি তিনি বাতি সমানে বৰষুণ হৈছে। চলিত ১৮ আগষ্টৰ পৰা কৃষ্ণাই, জিনাৰী, জিজিৰাম আদি নদীত বানপানী হৈ গাৰো পাহাৰৰ নামনিৰ গোৱালপাৰা এলাকাত বহুত ঠাইত হাঁহাকাৰ অৱস্থাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিলে। কেইবা ঠাইতো ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় পথ (National Highway) নষ্ট কৰি যাতায়াতৰ অসুবিধা ঘটাইছে, আৰু চৰকাৰী মটৰত মানুহ অনা-নিয়া কৰাও টান হৈ পৰিছে। সেই পথৰ এখন ডাঙৰ লোহাৰ দলং বানপানীয়ে উঠাই লৈ গল আৰু গাৰো পাহাৰৰ সদৰ ঠাই তুৰাৰ লগত অসমৰ বাকী অংশৰ যোগাযোগ বন্ধ হৈ গল। গাৰোপাহাৰৰ জনজাতি অঞ্চলৰ অশেষ ক্ষতি সাধন হৈছে। গড়কাপ্তানী আৰু লোকেলবৰ্ডৰ বহুত ৰাস্তা পুলি নষ্ট হৈছে,

মাইনৰ স্কুল আৰু প্ৰাইমেৰী স্কুল নষ্ট হৈছে, কৃষ্ণাই হাইস্কুলটোও বানপানীয়ে নষ্ট কৰিলে। কিন্তু দুখৰ কথা যে বানপানী পীড়িত বাইজসকলে যথেষ্ট পৰিমাণে সাহায্য পোৱা নাই। গোৱালপাৰা অসম বিলিফ ব্ৰাঞ্চ ফাণ্ডৰ পৰা কিছু কিছু সহায় দিয়া হৈছে স্থানীয় কৰ্তৃপক্ষক বাইজে জনোৱাত কৈছে যে আগেয়ে অনুসন্ধান কৰিহে পিচত সাহায্য কৰিব পৰা হ'ব। এই পীড়িত লোক সকলক কেতিয়া অনুসন্ধান কৰিব আৰু কেতিয়া সাহায্য কৰিব আমি ক'ব নোৱাৰো। সেই কাৰণে মই মুখ্যমন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ৰ ওচৰত তাৰ যোগে জনাইছিলো। তেওঁলোকৰ ধানৰ ভৰালবোৰ কিছুমানৰ উটাই নিলে আৰু কিছুমানৰ নষ্ট কৰিলে। এনে অৱস্থাত তেওঁলোকক সাহায্য দিয়া নিতান্ত বাঞ্ছনীয়। বানপানীৰ এলাকা প্ৰায় ১১১ শ বৰ্গ মাইলমান হ'ব। এই অঞ্চলত হাট-বজাৰ বোৰত চাউলৰ দাম বাঢ়ি গৈছে। গতিকে তেওঁলোকক কিছু সাহায্য নিদিলে অৱস্থা বৰ বেয়া হ'ব। সেই কাৰণে মই অনুৰোধ কৰিছো যাতে চৰকাৰে কিছু কিছু বিধান কিনিবলৈ টকা সাহায্য দি সেই ডেৰশ মাইল এলাকাৰ শ'শ' পৰিয়ালৰ মানুহ বোৰক ৰক্ষা কৰে। সোনকালে সাহায্য নিদিলে তেওঁলোকে খেতি বাতিও কৰিব নোৱাৰিব বুলি ভাবে।

M. MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are extremely thankful to the Revenue Minister for kindly giving us an opportunity to discuss the flood situation in Assam. I will confine myself mostly to the flood situation in the District of Cachar as I am well aware of all the happenings there.

Most unfortunately this year the monsoon set in very early like other parts of Assam in the District of Cachar also. From the last part of May till the beginning of June there was incessant rainfall in the District and also in the Mizo District. During the last part of June there was rising of the water level of the rivers which had their origin in the Mizo hills and so the rivers Dhaleswari and Sonai and other tributaries of Borak went up very rapidly and as a result there was flood situation in the Subdivision of Hailakandi at first. The intensity of that flood was so high that such experience was unknown to most of the people so far as Hailakandi Subdivision was concerned. Although it is said that the flood of 1929 was the highest in the district of Cachar, but the extent of miseries that has been brought about by this flood particularly localised in some portions of the Hailakandi Subdivision was unknown to living memory. In 1929 even there was not so much distress caused by that flood. The flood water suddenly came down like an avalanche all around without practically any notice from the Mizo hills before the people could take shelter at safe places or even in their own houses which were submerged, cattle and every thing washed away. That was the situation there. People specially of Katlichera Thana in the Hailakandi subdivision had practically no time to take any precaution at the time when the flood water rushed in and everything was

submerged and as a result a large number of cattle were washed away and houses were damaged and there were two cases of death of human being as well. Along with the flood water an unusual quantity of sand and mud came and as a result the cultivations went under mud and so the entire paddy and sugar-cane cultivation were damaged in the whole subdivision. It may be known possibly to some of the Members of the House that most of the sugar-cane cultivation in Hailakandi subdivision is done on the sides of these rivers. In some places the silt deposit was as high as 8 c. ft to 12 c. ft. and fields after fields went under the silt and possibly there was no chance of any immediate rehabilitation of the people in those areas, so far as sugar-cane cultivation is concerned.

This flood very unfortunately was not confined alone to Hailakandi Subdivision; it spread to other parts of the district also. A large number of places went under water particularly the areas situated by the side of the tributaries of the river Barak which have their origin in the Lushai Hills. So, there were floods in some portions of Sonai Thana, the major portion of Silchar Subdivision and a portion of Borkhola Thana. Last of all, as the onrush of water accumulated in Katigora Thana, which is on the northern-most side of the district, Katigora went under water. There was practically no passage for this water to go out of Katigora Thana resulting in water remaining there stagnant for a pretty long time. Then, Sir, while other areas were being cleared and getting rid of this flood the river went on spate again and there was the second flood in the district of Cachar. This time the Karimganj Subdivision was also very badly affected. The rivers in Karimganj were in a flooded condition, including the whole of the Karimganj Subdivision almost two-thirds of the district of Cachar this time were affected. This flood came towards the latter part of June. Before this flood could completely subside and when the people were still in difficulties, the third flood came. This time the miseries of the people knew no bounds. The whole district was affected and almost at the same time. This is the chronological order of the difficulties that the people have suffered due to the flood in the district of Cachar.

Now, Sir, due to these floods a large number of bridges has been washed away and large tracts of land have become useless. Even to-day one would find flood waters still stagnant in a good portion of Katigora Thana, in the Katlicherra side of

Hailakandi Subdivision and the Palanghat side of Sonai Thana and also in some portions of circle Nos. 63 and 64 on the other side of Sonai river and a good area in Borkhola and Silchar Thanas and also Lakhipur Thana. A large number of school buildings were affected and roads were washed away in many places. The road from Sonai to Palanghat, a fine road constructed by the people with the help of the Community Project is practically not in existence in many places like many such roads. Most of the bridges have been washed away; school buildings, particularly the Lower Primary School buildings, have been affected very much in the Silchar and Hailakandi Subdivisions. Similar is the condition in some parts of the Karimganj Subdivision. It is true, and I must acknowledge it, that there was very sympathetic approach to the miseries of the people during flood from the side of the Government, particularly, the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar. I would be failing in my duty if I do not record a word of appreciation for the sympathetic attitude taken by the district authorities in tackling the flood situation and the difficulties of the people of the district. These floods have brought the greatest miseries to the people and the local authorities have been very sympathetic in dealing with the situation. Though, Sir, the help given by the local authorities is not and cannot be sufficient, but as it was, I must say, that they were all very sympathetic. The people also did not fail in their duty; Flood Committees were organised by the public in the Hailakandi and Karimganj subdivisions. In Silchar there was a joint Committee of officials and non-officials. Work of all these three Committees were upto the mark and considerable money was collected from the public by way of subscription. The non-official organisations helped a lot in ameliorating the sufferings of the people, but, Sir, considering the enormity of the problem this help as well as the Government help were meagre. It will be evident from the fact that due to the heavy rains in the beginning of the year and early setting in of monsoon, the people could not start cultivation timely and properly. Whatever little cultivation they had was taken away by the first flood. When they were preparing for the second time to cultivate the land the second flood hit them and then there was very little time left for cultivation. But whatever little they could cultivate in the meantime the third flood took most of that away; the Aus crop was destroyed or damaged by three fourths, I should say. The result has been that the people will have practically very little to depend upon in future months. There is widespread misery throughout the whole district, the purchasing power of the people has been reduced to the minimum and the people had

no earnings for a pretty long time during the flood. The result is widespread misery in the whole of the district. A large number of people, particularly those belonging to the middle class, are to-day practically starving. There are also no avenues of earning; the scope of employment is extremely limited even in normal times in the district of Cachar. To-day it is much less. Unless the people are helped in these lean months till they can harvest the next crop, their misery will know no bounds. Then, Sir, very unfortunately wherever efforts were made for some sort of test relief for which money was allotted there was so much rain and small floods and spating of rivers that practically no work could be done. The test relief work cannot be undertaken till the winter months come in, but in the meantime some measures will have to be taken, some means will have to be found out to keep on the people going. The test relief money cannot be utilised in rainy months. It is but natural because the people of Assam have practically no specialised knowledge of any sort of manual work. Beyond earthwork they do not know anything else and earthwork cannot be done successfully during rains. This is true of practically all places in Assam and so far as my district is concerned very little can be achieved in this direction during the rainy season. Therefore, we will have to think of other means by which we can help our people. In this connection I want to bring to the notice of the authorities some of difficulties that have been experienced. We find that the people in the flood affected areas are given a seed loan at the rate of Rs. 5 and gratuitous relief at the rate of Rs. 7 to Rs. 10. In our district our prayer was that this should be at least Rs. 15. Now, the difficulties are many; it is possibly known to the Members that there are also difficulties in getting this loan. One has got to go to the headquarters of the district or the Sub-Deputy Collector's headquarters to get this money. They have got to spend the most part of the day and after spending a day they sometimes get these meagre sum and sometimes they do not get. We will have to take steps to distribute the loan money or gratuitous relief as early as possible in the locality, if necessary, by mobilising all the officers for such distribution. As regards seed loan, Rs. 5 is very meagre considering the necessities and circumstances. If these grievances are removed, it will go to a long way to help the people. Then, Sir, in order to help the people some cheap grain shops have been started in some of the affected areas. These have proved very helpful; but considering the circumstances I should say that the rate is rather high.

I would request the Government to consider if they can give the people rice at the rate of Rs.15 per maund ; that would be of great help and relief to them. I hope, Government will consider this sympathetically particularly for the district of Cachar where miseries are very acute.

Now, coming to the long-term programme about flood, I do not want to speak much because we had opportunities earlier of placing our views on it, but I would request the Government not to leave things doing half way like construction of dykes here and there as this has resulted in having transferred the flood miseries in different avenues and directions. The places which were not visited by flood hitherto are now being visited by floods; places which were having flood before are not having it to-day. Reason for this is not far to seek. It is because the programme undertaken is not completed within reasonable time. The half-way programme and half-completed programme are the causes of these flood miseries in this manner. I do not know the view of the Engineering experts, but to a layman this half-way programme of the Government are fully responsible for such miseries and it is for the Government to remove that misunderstanding by immediately completing the works undertaken by them.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): What does the hon. Member mean by "immediately"?

Maulavi MOINUL HAQUE CHAUDHURY: As early as possible. (*Laughter*).

I would request the Government to take steps for early completion of these incomplete schemes.

Coming to my own district, I would only suggest two or three schemes which are already in the hands of Government and these would help flood protection. I would suggest immediate completion of the work of the scheme for Salganga river. Its banks should be raised and it should be dredged so that it can be deeper and its capacity to carry water is increased.

Then, there is a scheme for reclamation of Bakrihowar; I would request the Government to complete it as early as possible.

There is another scheme: This is under consideration for the last two years, *i.e.*, Boaljur-Sunanaku scheme in Silchar Thana. I would request the Government to pay early attention to it so that the scheme may be completed early.

There is another scheme for construction of a sluice gate on the mouth of the river Amjur where it had joined Sonai river. I wish that this scheme will be completed as early as possible.

Coming to the river Barak: We have plans for having dykes in both the sides of this river but it must be completed immediately. But some interim measures are necessary. Katigora is the worst-affected area. Water pass from that area slowly after the water of the whole Silchar Subdivision is being accumulated there. The reason is this, that the river Barak which is the only channel for drainage is incapable of discharging the water early and efficiently. We must deepen the river from Badarpur side from the spot up the railway bridge to increase the capacity of the river. In order to save this area from the miseries of flood and also to tackle the flood situation in the district we should, I think, take some effective measures in this line as soon as possible. As my time is over, I resume my seat thanking you for giving me the opportunity.

Shri RAMPRASAD CHAUBEY: Sir I fully support the views put forward by Shri Moinul Haque Chaudhury in his speech regarding the flood situation in my district.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, really we are grateful to the Finance Minister for he has offered us an opportunity to speak on the flood situation, which we have experienced in our State of Assam. But unfortunately, I must say it has become a regular custom or convention that every year we have been having floods and in each session of the Assembly after flood we come to discuss these as a matter of course. But what is the remedy? Floods were there before Independence, and even before the disastrous earthquake.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your time is limited.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Sir, as the number of Opposition Members is small, I may be given some extra time, especially because the intensity and extensiveness of the flood in the district of Cachar and Karimganj are very heavy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I hope, you will finish within the time limit.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: I will try.

The question is that the flood was prevalent in the State during the past years. But at present the intensity and extensiveness of floods are occurring in such a way that in every district and every subdivision we are having floods every year and almost simultaneously. The devastation caused in Assam Valley has been fully explained by the Finance Minister and about Cachar district by my Friend, Mr. Chaudhury, who tried to give successfully an impression about the intensive damages caused in that district.

In discussing the flood situation, I should like to make it into two categories. Firstly, immediate causes and immediate reliefs and the remote causes and long term measures which Government would like to take for permanently stopping these flood. I should like to give more importance to the second item, *i. e.*, long term programme of the Government by which flood havocs can be met with permanent measures. Until and unless we can stop this, our entire Second Five Year Plan would be nullified. We are going to spend Rs.60 crores in this Plan period for our people but if there is recurrence of these calamities due to flood every year it will not only damage the properties and crops of our people but it will frustrate the whole Plan. Therefore, it should be seriously considered by Government to devise permanent measures to stop further recurrences. Unfortunately, we have not got any indication from the Finance Minister in his speech as to what measures he is going to take in this regard in the 2nd Five Year Plan period. We want to be enlightened on this point, otherwise the discussion would be meaningless.

I shall give my own suggestion in my own way. It has been said by Mr. Chaudhury in details about my district. I also discussed many times on the floor of this House about the embankment or a Bund here and there by the Embankment and Drainage Department. They are making such embankments, etc., without having proper drainage system. This is one of the main reasons of recent floods.

It is attributed in Upper Assam that the flood is merely due to the earthquake. But there is no damage by the earthquake in Cachar District which took place in 1950. But then why we had three floods? The Finance Minister has rightly told that the intensity of flood was so great in the Hailakandi Subdivision that it had surpassed the record of 1929. So it should be considered by the Embankment and Drainage Department whether they are doing the work properly or whether they are wastefully spending public money.

Secondly, a scheme for a Bund may be prepared so far as the technical side is concerned. Instead of completing their project in proper time the Department used to complete in four or five years. That may be another reason for experiencing floods in those areas where there was previously no flood; also incomplete earthwork goes on with the flood. This is a wastage. So far this side is concerned, long-term schemes should be taken up. We hope that the Government will give their considered opinion so that we may not have very much flood every year. I think there is something wrong some where; if this is not found out, then the money which is going to be spent in the Second Five Year Plan would be useless.

My third suggestion is that I have got the statistics of rivers Barak and Kusiara. Every year these two rivers use to rise by slit deposit in their beds. The contour of the Surma Valley is like the palm of your hand and big part has now gone to Pakistan. So cent per cent water never goes out due to water-pockets and particularly due to the rising of the beds of these two big rivers, *viz.*, Barak and Kusiara, this is why we have been experiencing flood every year. So I should like to suggest that there should be proper dredging of the river beds of these two rivers.

Now coming to the expenditure incurred by the Government for the relief of the flood-affected people, I must thank the Government for the considerable expenditure which have incurred for the relief of the flood-affected people. Some of my Friends from our side said that the Government have been wasting money uselessly for the relief of the flood-affected people. I would tell them that the Government had been doing the right thing by spending money for the relief of the flood-affected people. If necessary we must empower the Finance Minister with a view to double or treble the amount which should be spent for the purpose of giving relief to the flood-affected people and to save their lives for which the Government stands. But the difficulty is that the money is not sent by the Government timely. I shall give you an instance. As my hon. Friend, Mr. Choudhury, has said that when the first flood came, the

Hailakandi Subdivision was practically cut-off for three or four days from the rest of Assam. Road communication was paralysed and parts of the railway line and other communications were also disturbed. We visited Hailakandi on the 6th day of the flood with some food-stuff worth about Rs.5,000 and with some cloths. We reached Hailakandi on the 6th day, but up till then no money was sent by the Government for starting relief work for the relief of the flood-affected people. The Relief Committee started their relief work with the money which they got from some Friends of Karimganj. I had the opportunity of meeting our Minister, Shri A. M. Majumdar, in the Circuit House at Hailakandi. I got the report from the Subdivisional Officer that the intensity of flood in Katlicherra and Southside of Hailakandi had surpassed the record of 1929. When we met our Minister, Shri Majumdar, in the Hailakandi Circuit House, he did not seem to take the flood situation seriously, as this was an annual fare. He was sitting idle and wasting time with his flatterers there. I think, Sir, that should not be the attitude of a public man representing the Government. It is unfortunate for us that our representative did not move in the matter timely, to save the people in distress.

As I have said already there was similarly no fund at the disposal of the Subdivisional Officer in Karimganj to spend money immediately for the relief of the flood-affected people there. We requested the Subdivisional Officer Karimganj to send wire to Government for sending money for giving relief to the flood-affected people in Cachar. We had to collect about Rs.3,000 to Rs.4,000 immediately with which we had to start the relief work.

(At this stage the Speaker left the Chamber and the Deputy Speaker occupied the Chair)

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to be clear on certain point. I should like to be clear when a responsible officer like the Subdivisional Officer said that there was no money for the relief of the flood-affected people when they have already been empowered to spend money on this score, and that is why I want my hon. Friend Shri Das to make his statement very clearly.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : Sir, we met the Subdivisional Officer twice in the Flood Relief Committee who told us that there was no money to be spent immediately for flood relief work, and then informed us that he was sending wire to the Government for sending money to him. I am not saying anything against the local officer who told us that he was out of fund.

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister) : But, Sir, the Subdivisional Officer had already been empowered to spend money for the relief of the flood-affected people.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : For sometime, at least for a week, we had very bad experience. We know that money was not available so far the Government is concerned. So we at once had been to the market—I hope my Friend, Mr. Jalil who was also present in that meeting will admit that we had to go to the market from where we collected about three thousand rupees from the local people. Sir, I do not blame the officers or anybody when I say all these things. In such matter Government at Shillong is responsible.

Now, let me come to the food situation. Food situation was also very acute due to floods. Price of rice and other essential foodstuffs rose considerably. I hope hon. Members will give due attention to this point.

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister) : That is not strictly relevant, Sir.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : It is quite relevant, Sir, because due to the floods, prices of foodstuffs also shot up. We heard in Karimganj that some Burma rice was coming to Karimganj. We knew that it was booked in the first week of June either from Calcutta or some other place I can't say, but this rice arrived Karimganj on the 7th July but till 6th of August—for one month this stock of 30 thousand maunds of Burma rice was kept in the ration godown because the price could not be fixed up. Why fixation of price could not be taken up during this one month's time especially in time of emergency like this, one fails to understand. I must say that this red-tapism on the part of Government department should be stopped. Strangely enough it took two months for the Supply Department to fix the price of rice which was blocked in the ration godown at Karimganj whereas, on the other hand, hoarders and profiteers got ample opportunity to sell rice at an exorbitant price. That, Sir, was the food position at Karimganj and in Cachar district as a whole. We have heard that the Supply Secretary had

to fly to Delhi to get the price of this rice fixed up, but unfortunately we did not get this rice which was despatched two months back—which arrived on the 7th July and the price was fixed on the 7th August. I do not know how I shall condemn the Government for this inordinate delay.

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister): I think Sir, this is not strictly relevant here.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): My Friend is always irrelevant. I shall however, give a reply.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Now, Sir, coming to test relief. The day before I left Karimganj, about four to seven hundred people, particularly women had come in rags—they were coming for doles. This question was discussed in the Flood Committee meeting with the Subdivisional Officer and others as to how to cope with the situation. It is not known how long this giving of doles will continue. Government should consider this point seriously, particularly so far it relates Karimganj subdivision and Cachar district as a whole where refugee settlement was very dense—refugees are also affected by flood and they can hardly stand this second shock. The original settlers could somehow stand and survive, but these refugees have become worst sufferers and unless some employment is given, the number of beggars would increase and this would ultimately jeopardise the economy of the State.

Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH: On a point of information, Sir, এই ভগনীয়াবোৰ পাকিস্তানৰ পৰা অহা নতুন ভগনীয়াৰ নে আগতে অহা ভগনীয়াবোৰেই ?

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: This relates to old as well as new refugees. Now, Sir, as I have said, regarding test relief work—Government sanctioned some money for this in Cachar as also in the whole State of Assam. So far this work is concerned, I agree with my Friend, Mr. Choudhury, when he says that test relief work means earth work for construction of roads, etc. That being so, test relief work cannot be started now, but it can be started after the rainy season say, after September or October. For the interim period Government should see if bamboo-matmaking, bamboo craft and cottage industry could be introduced, particularly weaving. If weaving

is introduced, I think a large number of people in Cachar will be benefited as there is a large number of weavers. So I request Government to consider this suggestion of mine for the interim period before we can start actual test relief work in the shape of earth work. Unless we can give some work to these people I do not know how Government will be able to tackle the unemployment problem.

Then, Sir, damage done to roads, schools buildings, bridges, etc., by flood is intensive. In some places of the S. T. Road which is near-about 34th mile between Silchar and Karimganj, I have seen with my own eyes that it was under water in seven or eight places and in some places the water level rose to as much as 2 to 3 feet and during these three floods on account of the breaches on this road, traffic was stopped for more than one and a half month—only jeeps could ply. Another road, Sir, that is to Patharkandi which is the main line of supply to Tripura, is also badly damaged and Public Works Department could not cope with the situation up till now even. I have also sent reports to the Government that most of the roads of the Karimganj Municipality and Local Board had been damaged. I think Government will also consider this point by giving help to the local bodies so that they may not have to suffer again in the next flood.

Now, regarding cattle loan. I had a discussion with the Subdivisional Officer and also the Deputy Commissioner that cattle loan should be given only if there is cattle death. So it was reported that Government has given an order that there should be a survey in this connection. I know cattle death was not much in this flood. But what we considered in the Flood Committee meeting in which the Deputy Commissioner as also the Subdivisional Officer agreed with me, is that the people should be given this cattle loan because their cattle which they have, have been almost half-starved for want of fodder. So the people must be given some help in this way or that way so that they can supplement their income. This rule be relaxed.

With these words, Sir, I request Government to consider the suggestions that I have given and also to take steps to control flood on long term basis.

Shri MOHENDRA NATH HAZARIKA : উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, বানপানীৰ সম্পৰ্কে মই কব খোজো যে ই এটা অসমৰ সংক্ৰামক ব্যাধিৰ দৰে ।

থ্রুতি বছৰে বানপানী আছেই আৰু ইয়াৰ পৰা সোনকালে পৰিত্ৰাণ পোৱাটোও সহজ নহয়। এই বানপানীৰ সমস্যা সমাধান হয়তো তৃতীয় বা চতুৰ্থ পঞ্চ-বাৰ্ষিক পৰিকল্পনাত সমাধান হ'ব পাৰে। অসম উপত্যকাৰ দুয়োফালে দুটা পৰ্বত আছে আৰু সুবমা উপত্যকাতো দুই ফালে পৰ্বত আছে। পৰ্বতত বৰষুণ হোৱা লগে লগেই ভৈয়ামত বানপানী হয় আৰু বাইজৰ অশেষ দুগুণ তি আৰু ক্ষতি হয়। এই বানপানী নিবাৰণৰ কাৰণে যথেষ্ট টকাৰ দৰকাৰ হ'ব। সেই কাৰণে দ্বিতীয় বা তৃতীয় পঞ্চ-বাৰ্ষিকী পৰিকল্পনাত এই সমস্যাৰ সমাধান সম্ভৱপৰ নহ'ব; হয়তো চতুৰ্থ বা পঞ্চম পাঁচ বছৰীয়া পৰিকল্পনাৰ দ্বাৰাহে সম্ভৱ হ'ব পাৰে। যিবিলাক জান-জুৰি পৰ্বতৰ পৰা নামি আহে সেইবিলাক যদি দুই পৰ্বতৰ মাজত থকা খাল বিলাকত আটক কৰি নিয়মিত ৰূপে কামত ব্যৱহাৰ কৰিব পাৰে তেনেহলে জান-জুৰি বোৰবো নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ হ'ব আৰু পানীবোৰ আন আন কামত খটাব পৰা হ'ব। আমাৰ দেশৰ খেতিয়কে পানীৰ কাৰণে ওপৰলৈ চায় কাৰণ পানীৰ যোগান নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে প্ৰকৃতিৰ ওপৰত। কিন্তু পশ্চিম দেশৰ খেতিয়কে চায় তলৰ ফালে কাৰণ তেওঁলোকৰ পানী যোগান নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে ভূগৰ্ভৰ পৰা খান্দি উলিওৱা কুঁৱাৰ ওপৰত।

নদী নিয়ন্ত্ৰণৰ ওপৰতে আমাৰ খেতিৰ উন্নতি নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিছে। তথা বাইজৰ মঙ্গল নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিছে। মানুহৰ মঙ্গলৰ কাৰণে চৰকাৰৰ তৰফৰ পৰা যথেষ্ট পৰিমাণৰ মঠাৱৰী বন্ধা হৈছে। মই ক'ব খোজো যে কেৱল মঠাৱৰী বান্ধিলেই নহ'ব। অকল মঠাৱৰীৰ দ্বাৰাই আমাৰ সকলো সমস্যা সমাধান হ'ব নোৱাৰে। তাৰ লগে লগে যিবিলাক ওখ ঠাই আছে, তালৈ খাল খান্দি পৰ্বতীয়া নদীবোৰ পানী নোহোৱা খৰাং ঠাইলৈ বোৱাই আনিব পাৰিলে বানপানীত ক্ষতিগ্ৰস্ত মানুহ বিলাক বানপানীৰ উৎপীড়নৰ পৰা হাত সাৰিব পাৰিব বুলি মোৰ ধাৰণা। কেৱল মঠাউৰীৰ ফলত একালে বানপানীয়ে বাইজৰ সকলো শস্য হানী কৰিছে। আনফালে পানীৰ অভাৱত মৰাপাটকাটি গোৱাৰ পৰা নাই আৰু বাওধান পঠাৰত শুকাই যাবলৈ ধৰিছে। কেৱল মৰা পাতেই আমাৰ নগাঁও জিলাত ২০ লাখ মোনতকৈ বেচি হয় এই ২০ লাখ মোণত কামও ১ কোটি টকা কৃষকৰ ক্ষতি হ'ব কেৱল পানীযোগানৰ ভাল পৰিকল্পনা নোহোৱাতেই। গতিকে ইয়াৰ ভাল পৰিকল্পনা লবৰ কাৰণে গড়কাপ্তানীবিভাগৰ মন্ত্ৰী ডাঙৰীয়াৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিলো।

নগাঁও জিলাতে আঘাৰ নাহৰ পৰা তিনিটা বানপানী হৈ গ'ল। কামপুৰ, জৰাবাৰী, যোগীজান, গৰুবাট, জাগীয়াল, পাখীমৰিয়া, উত্তৰখোলা, গোভা, লক্ষা, হোজাই, কন্দলী আদি কৰি প্ৰায় ১১টা মৌজাত সাংঘাতিক ক্ষতি হৈছে। কামপুৰ মৌজাৰ আধা, জৰাবাৰী সম্পূৰ্ণ, যোগীজান আধা, গৰুবাট ৩ ভাগ, জাগীয়াল আধা, পাখীমৰিয়া আধা, উত্তৰখোলা আধা, গোভা আধা, লক্ষা ১/২, হোজাহ ১/২, কন্দলী ১/২, ক্ষতিগ্ৰস্ত হৈছে। ধান মৰাপাট নষ্ট হোৱাৰ কাৰণে মানুহে সেই অঞ্চলত অতি অভাৱৰ মাজেদি দিন কটাব লগাত পৰিছে। ধানৰ মোণে ১৬ টকা আৰু চাউলৰ মোনে ২৮ টকালৈকে দাম চৰি গৈছে। যি নগাঁও জিলাৰ ধান এসময়ত ৰাজ্যৰ বিভিন্ন এলেকাৱত বিতৰণ কৰিছিল সেই নগাঁৱৰ এতিয়া ধান চাউলৰ হাহাকাৰ হৈ পৰিছে। চৰকাৰৰ তৰফৰ পৰা সাহায্য হিচাবে যি ১৫ হাজাৰ টকা সেই ১৫ হাজাৰ টকা একেৰাৰে নগন্য, কৃষি ধান যি ২৫ হাজাৰ দিয়া হৈছে তাক ৩.১৪ টকাকৈ দিয়া হৈছে সিও মানুহৰ উপকাৰত অহা নাই কাৰণ মানুহে ধান লৈ কঢ়িয়া পেলোৱাৰ লগে লগে তিনি বাৰ বানপানীয়ে কঢ়িয়া নষ্ট কৰি পেলাইছে। গতিকে মানুহে সেই ধনো পৰিশোধ কৰিব পৰাৰ আশা নাই। সিদিনা চিলঙত যি বৰষুণ হৈ গ'ল তাৰ ফলত নগাঁও বা কি আকাৰ ধাৰণ কৰে কোৱা টান। গতিকে মই আশা কৰো যাতে Enbankment আৰু Drainage বিভাগে বানপানীৰ কাৰণ পৰীক্ষা কৰি এই কেইটা মৌজাত কেনেকৈ বানপানীৰ উৎপীড়নৰ পৰা ৰক্ষা কৰিব পৰা যায় তাক কৰিব। চৰকাৰে যেতিয়া নলা আদি খন্দা কাম হাতত লয় তেতিয়া যদি নলা কোনো

প্রতিপত্তিশালী মানুহৰ মাটিৰ উপবেদি যাব লগা হলে তেনেকুৱা মানুহে এখন টেলিগ্ৰাম চৰকাৰলৈ কবিলেই সেই কাম বন্ধ হৈ যায়। মই কব খোজো যে এনেকৈ টেলিগ্ৰামৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰি চৰকাৰে হাতত লোৱা কাম যাতে বন্ধ কৰি দিয়া নহয়। ইয়াৰ বাবে মই গড়কাপ্তানী বিভাগৰ মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিলো আৰু তেখেতক ইয়াৰ ব্যবস্থা গ্ৰহণৰ বাবে অনুৰোধ জনাই মোৰ বক্তব্য শেষ কৰিলো।

(At this stage the Deputy Speaker vacated the Chair and the Speaker occupied it.)

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate the Finance Minister for what he has spoken regarding the flood measures. And these palliatives are certainly helpful at the present moment, but he himself should agree, if I may say so, that this distemper of floods has become chronic in our State for the last few years. After the great earthquake, the topography of our State has undergone changes and for that reason, I believe, all these troubles have come. So I only want to place some suggestions for serious consideration of this House as well as for the Government and specially of the Finance Minister with whom the matter directly concerns. At present all the measures that we have taken—the Government have taken—to remove the scourge of the floods from the country are these: First; the rivers—where the rivers could not be bridged, they have taken recourse to Bunding system, and these Bunds have not proved an un-mixed blessing as yet. If a river is Bunded, it is silted up; also if water is not prevented to do damage, it causes damages to crops, and homesteads in the contiguous regions. Again, silt is deposited in the bed of the river and after a few years again it creates havoc. Then what is the remedy? Sir, it is a big question. One State cannot solve it alone, but we can at least do whatever is possible under the circumstances and that should be done expeditiously. Now we find that whenever any Bunding project is undertaken, it is taken up late. If there are audit objections and procedural difficulties, all these difficulties must be got over; they should be settled early and the commencement of the work should be without unusual delay so that the work may be finished in time—before the rains set in. I have a sad experience in this regard. With regard to some such work in Majuli area, I sent two or three telegrams, but the work started in February and within the two months the sandy soil could not consolidate and the result was that the Bund was at several places washed away by the very first rush of water. Why this delay? That must be removed at any cost. Then again the people who reside between the Bunds and the river, they should be removed from there to some other places by Statutory provision or by enactment.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): By law ?

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: Yes, if necessary.

If you cannot provide them with equal amount of land elsewhere, we can take a statistic of all the families to be removed and all the young able-bodied persons may be given some artisan work. Some workshops may be opened in the neighbourhood of the place where these families are removed and all the above able-bodied persons may be provided with work there. There are some works which even unskilled or semi-skilled persons can do. Take the case of Upper Assam Districts. They are all tea districts. There are many unskilled workers who earn their livelihood by working in the Tea Estates in various ways. Why can these things not be organised ? They can be done by proper planning.

Again on the side of the Bund a belt of forests should also be created. They will not only keep the Bund intact but will also absorb the water, vapour, moisture, etc., and they will stop the on-rush of the water. At the same time those valuable trees will yield good revenues when matured.

Mr. SPEAKER: What kind of trees you suggest ?

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: Of course the Forest Minister will be in a better position to deal with that. There are trees which thrive best under water. They send their roots deep into the soil which forms a sort of natural dykes for the river. Well, it is a technical matter and the Forest Department can give the necessary suggestions. Along with the Bunding system, there should be sluice gates at definite intervals. The Bunds without sluice gates will not be scientific. I request the Government to examine this point. Then again we find that due to the Bunding of certain areas say, an area of ten square miles get marshy as the water accumulates there as a result of the Bunding, the result being that the cultivable land becomes marshy land. That is my experience. This year as a result of such Bunding in the Bhogdoi river the land with smiling paddy fields 7 or 8 years back have almost become marshy. Only 15 or 20 days back I saw there that water was 6 to 10 feet deep. Now who will suffer for it ? Therefore the area within the Bund should be canalised.

Now as regards the relief measures, I have experience of the potato seeds supplied in the Majuli area. The seed was supplied by the Agriculture Department after the season was over. This should be the first business of the Agriculture Department to supply the seed in season, and they should be supplied by the Government direct from the field. If it is supplied through the middle men, they not only earn profit, but they send all the rotten potatoes and the officers cannot help taking them or the officers are helpless in the hands of these merchants for some reasons (*laughter*), the result is that cultivators suffer greatly. I would request the Finance Minister to examine whether it will be more profitable, if I may say so, for the Government to give these seeds at the half price at cash payment in place of the anticipation of repayment of the full seed loan with interest. If we examine the cases of agricultural loans and seed loans for the last ten years, I am sure, he will agree with me that even half the loan was not realised. It is a serious thing. It is no use giving loan and charge full price when they are in difficulty. Pay half the price and take the whole thing, and that will help the cultivators as well as bring some money to the Government coffers immediately.

Another thing I want to speak is regarding grant of gratuitous relief. I am sorry to say in this respect—though there can be difference in man and man—that I sent telegrams regarding such serious cases, but they have not been acknowledged with replies from the Department concerned in due time. In my telegrams I sent very sensible and practical suggestions to buy steamers from the Steamer Company for using as ferry. But I have not got even the acknowledgment letter. Is this the way, Sir, that the Members of the Assembly should be treated? I sent my telegrams to the Public Works Department Minister himself with copies to the Chief Engineer, Executive Engineer concerned and to the several important persons.....

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): May I enquire of the Member whether the Steamer Company is willing to part with any of their vessels?

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: I sent suggestion for the consideration of the Government, but am I not entitled to get a letter of acknowledgment to the effect that my suggestion will be taken into consideration? I am entitled to that much courtesy from the Government because I am a part and parcel of the Government itself. If Government shabbily treat.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Your statement is irrelevant to the flood-situation.

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: What I want to stress is that the gratuitous relief should reach the people concerned in time, but not after the situation is over. Such relief should be given at the time when the people starve. Every year I have been harping on the same string for the consideration of the Government so that Government may make arrangement for having a permanent apparatus for rendering flood relief works in the State. Such a permanent apparatus is not found anywhere in the State at present. Unless a permanent department is created for rendering such relief works throughout the year the people will not remain satisfied and the money will never be properly spent in this connection.....

Mr. SPEAKER: There is already a Flood Control Department.

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: Yes, with this Flood Control Department the suggested department should be linked to do such works in connection with flood relief and such other works. I give my suggestion for full consideration of the Revenue Minister. What I want to see is that there should be a permanent organisation of the Government in tackling such works throughout the year.

For want of a ferry for crossing the river Brahmaputra during the flood time, Sir, the people of the whole of Assam suffer. Relief can be granted, but how can it be given without a ferry to cross the river ?

Mr. SPEAKER: A sum of something like Rs.30 lakhs has been provided for having steamers.

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: I am glad to know about it, but through a letter of acknowledgment this should have been communicated to me. This is what I object.

My next point is regarding provision of sluice gates. At certain intervals in some areas there should be minor irrigation projects to take out the flood water where they accumulate and this can be done through sluice gate. Unless this is done the flood problem will not be solved and after 10 years or so our cultivable fields will be barren for which we will be responsible.

This is what I have to say and I finish.

Maulavi ABDUL MATLIB MAJUMDAR (Minister):

Mr. Speaker, Sir, before the Revenue Minister replies I want to speak a few words and I think I have your permission.

I have come to know just now that when I was not present in the Chamber something was said by Shri Ranendra Mohan Das that in connection with the Hailakandi flood situation Government authority there, including myself, were very callous and had done nothing. In view of such a statement made by him I want to make the position clear.

It is known to most of the Members of the House that there were three successive floods this year in the Hailakandi subdivision. I had been there just after the first flood and found that a relief committee had already been formed there in consultation with the Subdivisional Officer. I called a meeting in which I learnt that the Subdivisional Officer had taken sufficient steps in that connection and started a fair price shop, and I was satisfied that all possible steps were taken by him for rendering relief to the people. All this was done not only by the Subdivisional Officer but also by the relief committee that was formed already. While I was there, suddenly one afternoon Mr. Das appeared in the Dak Bungalow. He was there with certain people who had been opposed to the Congress in the last Assembly election. I was quite surprised to find him there apparently for a political game when the people were suffering so much due to the flood. It was clear that political game was more prominent in his mind than the flood problem and yet, Sir, he now says that the Government had done nothing to minimise the suffering of the people. He only enquired of me as to what steps were taken; I informed him that all necessary steps had been taken by the Subdivisional Officer and the Relief Committee and that further steps would be taken and on hearing this he left me and did not take his seat even for two minutes. And surprisingly enough he now comes to make a statement that Government Officers there were callous and did nothing whatsoever. I have no doubt that he is playing some game in order to make some propaganda by making this sort of statement.

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a lively interest has been evinced by the hon. Members who took part in the discussions on the flood situation in our State. I am glad that the hon. Members who took part in the discussions had also thrown some very valuable suggestion for Government to act upon.

Now, Sir, besides those pertinent suggestions some of the hon. Members sought to lay the blame for these floods at least partly on the shoulders of the Embankment and Drainage Department. According to some Members, these successive

floods and also the draught in some parts of the State are due to the haphazard way in which embankments are being constructed or due to delay in completion of some embankments or due to river beds silting and rising up on account of the embankment, and so on. Sir, I am not competent to make a reply on these points. I have requested my Friend, Mr. Sarma, who is in-charge of this Department, to give a suitable reply to this points.

Then, Sir, so far as flood control is concerned, that is also a proper subject for my Friend, Mr. Sarma to deal with.

With these few words, I should like to reply to certain points raised by my hon. Friends in course of the discussion.

Sir, my Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, wanted to say that the Subdivisional Officer of Hailakandi could not take prompt steps to give relief to the people for seven days because no Government order reached him directing him to take steps to alleviate the misery of the people caused by flood! Sir, I cannot understand how that is possible. There has been a general circular issued by the Revenue Department to all Deputy Commissioners and Subdivisional Officers that whenever any natural calamity, like floods, earthquake, etc., visits any part of the State, the Deputy Commissioners and Subdivisional Officers concerned should take prompt steps to give relief to the people without waiting for sanction of funds by Government. They have been told that in emergency measures they need not wait for funds when they consider relief measures emergent. In the face of such general authorisation by the Government I cannot understand how could the Subdivisional Officer of Hailakandi wait for seven days without giving any relief to the people (A voice:—This is not a fact.) I am quite sure, Sir, that the picture that he has given about that officer is far from truth. However, I shall make an enquiry into it. If an officer would sit tight in the face of distress of the people affected by flood that deserves notice by Government. I have taken note of it and shall make an enquiry. I cannot personally believe an allegation of this kind and when such an allegation is made by a responsible Member of this House, I shall make an enquiry whether this is true or not. I believe no Subdivisional Officer could remain inactive on the plea of waiting for sanction of funds in the face of the general authority we have given to him. Not only that, Sir. In anticipation of floods this year—as floods occur almost every year—the Revenue Department convened a conference of the Deputy Commissioners and Subdivisional Officers where the action to be taken in case of floods and other natural calamities was discussed threadbare and clear instructions were given how to take prompt and effective action. They were given a general

authority in that Conference to go ahead in anticipation of sanction of funds by Government. In face of all these, I fail to see how a particular officer could take the plea of lack of funds to sit idle and practically do nothing. As I said, Sir, I am reluctant to believe it and will look into it.

My Friend, Shri Khagendra Nath Nath, from Goalpara has made another allegation that the local officers were not moving promptly and therefore they could not take prompt steps to give relief to the people. I don't know how far this is true. This is also a matter which should be looked into. If our officers sit idle and not move about promptly, when floods visit their areas, and give relief to the people, surely they are not doing their duties properly. I cannot, of course, say off-hand whether Mr. Nath's allegation is true or not, but this is a matter which needs enquiry and I shall cause an enquiry into it.

Sir, most of my Friends had, while giving due praise to Government for relief and other measure undertaken, stated that the relief by way of agricultural loans and gratuitous relief was not adequate and they made a plea to Government to increase it as far as possible. Sir, I cannot offhand say whether it will be possible but I am taking a note of these suggestions from the hon. Members and shall see whether the amount can be increased. I am keeping an open mind and I shall certainly do whatever I can, in this regard.

Sir, my Friend, Mr. Moinul Haque Chaudhury, said that seed loans given in his district was at the rate of Rs.5 per head or per family and gratuitous relief was at the rate of Rs.10 per family. He wanted at least Rs.15 as gratuitous relief and he also wanted the seed loan to be increased. They held a meeting with Deputy Commissioner as the President of that meeting and recommended more seed loans and more gratuitous relief to be given but that was not forth-coming. I have already said that the intensity of the flood in the Cachar district is greater than in other districts and I have given as much attention to this district as is possible.

For the information of the House, I would like to state that my Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, gave a completely wrong picture about two of my esteemed colleagues in the Cabinet, who went to the Cachar district during the floods. He said that they were not taking keen interest in the matter. That is not true. Rather, all funds allotted for flood relief in that district by way of agricultural loan and gratuitous relief were allotted on the recommendation of the two hon. colleagues. It was on my request they visited the district of Cachar three times during the floods and they visited different areas of the flood-affected places and heard the grievances of the people

and after visiting the entire flood-affected areas they recommended to me for reliefs and I have accepted their recommendations in *toto*. The allegation that they simply visited the district and did not visit the flood-affected places is absolutely untrue, on the contrary they visited different areas at great risk to themselves. They have done what they could do and not only once but three times they visited the flood-affected areas. They went from place to place and almost from door to door, and gave their suggestions and recommendations to me for certain effective measures. In face of all this, the allegation made by Mr. Das is not only baseless, incorrect and unjustified; but I think, he has made these charges with some political ends in view.

It is known to the Members that I have not been keeping so fit for the last three, four months. As I could not visit the flood-affected areas myself, I requested my two colleagues and on my request they were pleased to visit different areas under hazardous circumstances. To say that they did nothing is hardly justifiable and I am sure, it is actuated on some motive and what is that motive I need not dilate now as it can be easily guessed by the House.

My Friend, Shri Mahendra Hazarika, said that the relief given in the district of Nowgong was inadequate in comparison to the damages done in the district. I should like to say that the relief given to the people on account of distress caused by the flood not only in this district but in all other districts was not in proportion to the amount of damages and it was mainly due to paucity of funds. I would not have grudged in the least to give more money for this purpose but for want of sufficient funds, I have to be a bit cautious. However, I would look into the matter and if more assistance is possible, I will see to it.

Shri Ranendra Mohan Das mentioned about the acute distress in Cachar district, of the refugees due to the floods. I do not deny that. To meet this Government is trying to open a reception centre to take away some of the refugees from Karimganj to another place. We have passed orders to accommodate 250 refugee families outside Karimganj Town. These would give much needed relief to the refugees. I agree that these refugees were hard-hit but whatever possible, is being done.

So far as dredging of certain rivers is concerned, that is a subject not within my jurisdiction. My Friend, Shri Sarma, will reply to this.

My Friend, Mr. Phookan, from Jorhat said that paddy was supplied but not in time and he said why should we not give potato in half the price. That is a suggestion which will be examined carefully by Government.

He also said that gratuitous relief does not go in time but he has not cited any instance, or, at least I have not got any report or complaint in this regard from any quarters. Gratuitous relief is given by the Deputy Commissioner taking into consideration the need of the distressed people and he can afterwards come for sanction from Government. When this could be done by the Deputy Commissioner, under the general instruction given by Government, Mr. Phookan ought to have discussed with him before bringing this to the notice of the House.

My Friend, Mr. Hazarika, from Nowgong had made another suggestion that Assam is a land of rivers and not only that but of turbulent and mighty rivers, unlike the rivers in other States of the Indian Union. River control is a subject which should receive prior consideration on account of the annual serious flood situation in the country. (*Voice*: Exactly). We are all unanimous on this point. Government is fully one with Mr. Hazarika on the contention that the river control should get first priority in the State, because it is a land full of turbulent rivers which causes flood havocs almost every year and almost in all parts of the State. But this is a subject which also pertains to the Government of India. Starting of Hydro-Electric or River Valley Projects are dealt by them. But these are such big things that they cannot be done immediately. The Government of India have started several Engineering divisions in Assam which are surveying the rivers and to have River Valley Projects. We have also moved in this direction and have requested the Government of India repeatedly and they have already begun taking some action. Let us hope that the time is not distant when these floods will be an occurrence of the past and some of the turbulent rivers will be brought under some kind of control and distress of the people caused by these floods will be over and will be a forgotten chapter.

With these words, thanking my hon. Friends for giving valuable suggestions, I would like to finish. With regard to the point raised by my Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, relating to the price of rice of the 30,000 maunds that was given by the Government of India, my colleague, Shri Mookerjee, will give a suitable reply.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, over and above the money that has been allotted by the Government, a sum of Rs.13,000 was given from the Governor's Fund and another sum of Rs.16,000 from the Chief Minister's Fund for the district of Cachar. So the hon. Member who mentioned about the donation of the public money and criticised the Government, I think it would have been fair on his part to mention the names of these two dignitaries also who contributed for the relief of the flood-affected people in the district of Cachar. Sir, as usual, the gentleman after saying something against me falsely has disappeared from the House. I was waiting for his arrival but in vain. As I promised on the floor of this House that I would give him a suitable reply I touch his points otherwise I would have treated his remarks about me contemptuously which they really deserve. The charge made against the department is this that though the rice brought by the Central Government and was kept in godowns for a long time, Supply Department did not issue the same to the suffering public. I would like to place the matter before the hon. Members to draw their own conclusion. My hon. Friend cannot take his stand without remembering me and he cannot conclude his speech without pointing out something about me. I do not want to hit him below the belt. Let that be his monopoly. The bare fact was that the price of rice was fixed by the Central Government. The rice was stocked in the towns. I had to think equally for the inhabitants of the towns as well as of the villages. A flat rate was fixed for rice. But who would bear the cost of transport to the villages that point was to be decided. Accordingly I sent my Secretary to Delhi to clarify the point. It was agreed that upto Rs.2 would be allowed as transport cost for a maund of rice for the villages. The rice stored at the Central Store at Gauhati would be sold at Rs.18 per maund whereas in Boko the people will not get rice at Rs.18 per maund unless rebate was made although they are people of the same district. I did not like the idea that the town people only will get rice at Rs.18 whereas the people living in the villages will have to pay more because of the transport cost. To remove this anomaly and to give a fair deal to all I had to take a little time and to expedite the decision the Secretary of the Department was sent to Delhi to settle the matter by discussion across the table.

Sir, the question of not giving relief to persons who suffered from flood is not a true picture. Government gave relief to all. Over and above the gratuitous relief, rice was given at a

subsidised rate. The statement was made with a certain motive by my hon. Friend. Now I think I have been able to satisfy my hon. Friend who accused the Government unfairly and wanted to draw the pointed attention of the hon. Members of this House towards Government's apathy for the people. If I have failed to make him understand, Sir, I would like to tell him that I cannot give him the power of understanding. The defect lies there. Only a mad man bites the hand that feeds him. He was trying to accuse the Government as if Government is doing nothing for helping these flood-affected people.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr Mookerjee you cannot say 'mad man'.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Sir, I have said that only a mad man bites the hand that feeds him.

Mr. SPEAKER: But I would like to request you to withdraw the words 'mad man'.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Sir, if you so desire these two words stand withdrawn.

Mr. SPEAKER: Only you should reply to the charges made against you.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE (Minister): Sir, his charges were not only levelled against me but against my colleagues also. Every time I had gone to Karimganj I met the members of the Flood Relief Committee and the hon. Friend also. He did not brought to my notice that money was not available for the relief of the flood affected-people. We did all that was necessary and in spite of that the hon. Member has accused the Government just like a professional accuser.

Adjournment

Mr. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned till 10 A. M. on 1st September, 1956.

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A. M. on Saturday, the 1st September, 1956.

R. N. BARUA,

Shillong:
The 4th April, 1957.

Secretary,
Legislative Assembly, Assam.

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