

Proceedings of the Ninth 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 24th March, 1956.

PRESENT

Shri Rajendra Nath Barua, B. L., Deputy Speaker, in the Chair, the nine Ministers, the two Deputy Ministers, the two Parliamentary Secretaries and sixty-one Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

European owned Tea Gardens in Assam

Shri HARIHAR CHOUDHURY asked :

43. Will the Minister-in-charge of Labour be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No.28(b) asked by the Questioner in the Assembly on 25th November 1955, on the subject of "European owned Tea Gardens in Assam" and state the number of Indians employed in Managerial Staff of the European owned Tea Gardens in Assam during the years 1951-52, 1953, 1954 and 1955, Assamese and non-Assamese separately ?

Shri PURNANANDA CHETIA (Deputy Minister) replied :

43.—Not available. The Indian Tea Association does not keep figures separately for employment of Assamese and non-Assamese on Tea Gardens, as no distinction has been made hitherto between Indian citizens from different States of the Union.

Bipartite Agreement on Bonus for Plantation Workers

Shri RAM PRASAD CHAUBEY asked :

44. Will the Minister-in-charge of Labour be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government received the text of recent bipartite agreement on bonus for plantation workers effected in New Delhi ?
- (b) Whether Government made any enquiry as to the number of tea estates in Assam where the terms of the bipartite agreement will be implemented ?
- (c) What steps do Government propose to take in cases of non-implementation of the terms of the said agreement by any tea estate ?
- (d) The names of the employers and workers organisations recognised by the Government in Assam ?

Shri PURNANANDA CHETIA (Deputy Minister) replied :

44. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes, in 335 gardens.

(c)—The matter is under consideration of Government.

(d)—The following are the organisations of employers and workers in tea plantation :—

Employers Organisations—

Indian Tea Association ; Assam Tea Planters' Association ; Assam-Bengal Indian Tea Planters' Association and Indian Tea Planters' Association.

Workers Organisations---

Indian National Trade Union Congress ; All-India Trade Union Congress and Hind Mazdoor Sabha.

The question of Government recognising any of these organisations does not arise.

Imposition of Cow and Buffalo Tax on the Forest Villagers

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA asked :

45. Will the Forest Minister be pleased to state—
- (a) Whether Government is contemplating to impose Cow and Buffalo Tax on the forest villagers of Silchar Subdivision ?
 - (b) Whether Government is collecting rent from some forest villagers of Silchar Subdivision under Sonai Range without allotment of land to them ?
 - (c) Whether Government has received any complaint from the forest villagers mentioned in (b) above of the above effect ?
 - (d) If so, what steps have been taken for allotment of land to those villagers ?
 - (e) What steps have been taken for allotment of land to the ten Barman families of Jibangram under Sonai Range, Cachar who had been temporarily granted land in the year 1950-51 in the nearest forest village ?

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister) replied :

45. (a)—Assessment of grazing tax for the forest villagers in all Forest Divisions is made under Rule 10 of Forests Village Rules at page 65 of Assam Forest Manual Vol. I and the Government have no contemplation in revising the same at present.

(b)—No.

(c)—No.

(d)—Does not arise.

(e)—These Barman families have been allowed to settle in Barmannagar Forest Village under Sonai Range.

People of Udarbond under Sonai Settlement

Shri RAM PRASAD CHAUBEY asked :

46. Will the Minister -in-charge of Revenue be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that people of Udarbond has been placed under Sonai Settlement and they are to pass through Silchar and thereby causing inconvenience to the people concerned ?

- (b) Whether it is a fact that the people of Udarbond were paying their Government revenue in Silchar Tahsil before ?
- (c) Whether Government propose to allow the people of Udarbond to pay their revenue under Sadar Settlement as before and thereby save the people from their inconvenience ?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Deputy Minister) replied :

46. (a)—Udarbond is for settlement and other purposes under Sonai Circle. People of Udarbond have to go to Sonai *via* Silchar. On account of easy communication existing between Udarbond and Sonai *via* Silchar, no question of inconvenience arises.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—They are still paying their revenue dues at Silchar as before.

Toll bridge over Namdang in Kharikatia Ali

Shri GIRINDRANATH GOGOI asked :

47. Will the Public Works Department Minister be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that there is a toll bridge over Namdang in Kharikatia Ali ?

(b) Whether Sibsagar Local Board moved a resolution requesting the Government to abolish tolls on this bridge from this year ?

(c) If so, what action was taken on the resolution ?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) replied :

47. (a)—Yes.

(b)—No resolution from the Sibsagar Local Board requesting the Government to abolish tolls has been received.

(c)—Tolls of the bridge will be abolished from 1st April 1956 as notified already *vide* Notification No.922-CFT. at page 2129, Part IIA of the *Assam Gazette*, dated the 23rd November 1955.

Announcement of the names of Members elected to Public Accounts Committee and Estimates Committee.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There is an announcement :—

I have great pleasure to inform the House that both the Government and Opposition Parties by mutual settlement have made elections to the Public Accounts Committee and Estimates Committee uncontested by limiting the number of candidates according to the number of Members to be elected. The following hon. Members are therefore declared elected :—

(For Public Accounts Committee)

1. Shri Chanoo Kheria ;
2. M. Moinul Haque Choudhury ;
3. Shri Akshoy Kumar Das ;
4. „ Dharanidhar Basumatari ;
5. „ Jogakanta Baruah ;
6. „ Debeswar Rajkhowa ;
7. „ Emonsing Sangma ; and
8. „ Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya.

(For Estimates Committee)

1. M. Moinul Haque Choudhury ;
2. Sriman Prafulla Goswami ;
3. Maulavi Md. Pahar Khan ;
4. Maulavi Md. Umaruddin ;
5. Shri Nilmani Phookan ;
6. „ Ananda Chandra Bezbarua ;
7. „ Emonsing Sangma ;
8. „ Radhika Ram Das ; and
9. „ Hareswar Goswami.

Demands for grants

GRANT No. 7.

“12—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act.”

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that a sum of Rs.12,70,700 (Rupees twelve lakhs, seventy thousand and seven hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head “12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act.”

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Motion moved is that a sum of Rs.12,70,700 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head “12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act.”

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.12,70,700 under grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, at page 40 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, *i. e.* the amount of the whole grant of Rs.12,70,700 do stand reduced by Re.1.

By this Cut Motion I want to raise a general discussion. Sir over and above the State Transport Organisation, there is in our State another organisation to control the vehicles run by other bodies and private persons and quite a big sum is spent for the administration of this Department, I mean, the State Transport Authority. Sir, we had the opportunity of discussing on several occasions about certain defects in that Department and we requested the Minister-in-charge to have a good Inspectorate so that these motor vehicles are run properly. First of all, let me come to the point of taxies. It is known to everybody going in taxies, especially between Pandu and Gauhati, that it is very difficult to get into a taxi which is to carry 4 or 5 passengers as it is always overcrowded with 9 or 10 passengers. If it is asked why they carry so many passengers, their reply is that unless they do so, it is impossible to meet the expenses. There is a scheduled rate of fare to be charged for this route, but it is never followed. It is seen that in the morning when there is a rush of passengers and there are more taxies available, the rate per passenger from Gauhati to Pandu comes

down to As. 8 or As.10, but whereas at night when taxis are rare and on occasions when only one taxi is available, the rate goes up to Rs.2 or Rs.3 per passenger. It may be said, "Why don't you report this kind of affairs to the Police?" Sir, reporting is not an easy affair as this process of prosecution is not a simple affair but it is an arduous thing. Nobody wants to stand on a witness-box from day to day and give these things. We have provided Motor Inspectors. Last year, motor cycles were purchased for these officers. I do not know what these Inspectors are doing when these things are daily happening before their very eyes. The taxi drivers charge as they like. Even in Shillong although there are meters for hire, these are not followed and it is not known also whether these meters are functioning properly. There is, it seems, no machinery to check these illegal things. Besides, these black-numbered taxis, there are many white-numbered taxis. Although the latter category is not registered, it is daily carrying passengers and charge whatever they like. There is no check of stopping these private cars plying as taxis. The black-numbered taxi has got to pay tax for registration for the purpose of using it as taxi but the white-numbered car does not pay anything although they carry passengers. I do not know how far it is true but it is said that the officers, including the District Transport Officers, are connected with this illegal business.

Another important thing about this is that at one time the control was in the hands of Police. Now there is a separate Department altogether called the District Transport Organisation. Because this is a separate Department, Police has also become apathetic to it. They do not care whether any particular taxi is carrying more than the requisite number of passengers, whether it is a regular taxi or an irregular taxi. That being the problem, we must have sufficient number of Motor Vehicles Inspectors who will not be Motor Vehicles Inspectors in the office but will be also on the roads and they will see that these things do not happen. Sir, as we find in the Budget, there are eight District Transport Officers for whom a sum of Rs.53,000 has been allotted. Then we have got also eight Motor Vehicles Inspectors for whom Rs.19,900 has been allotted and for both the District Transport Officers and Motor Vehicles Inspectors there are travelling allowance allotments of Rs.14,000 and Rs.20,000 respectively. All these things have been provided and even then efficient service is not obtained from these officers. If the vice of this illegal traffic goes on then we have no desire of passing such a big amount.

The next point which I also brought to the notice of the House last year is about the trucks. Sir, our lives have almost become risky from these trucks. Even on the Gauhati-Shillong Road, for these trucks, one cannot run a vehicle properly. When these trucks with loads of coal come at a speed of 40 to 50 miles per hour, there is every chance of an accident. Strangely enough they do not give even pass. I know of a certain truck of which I took the number. I know even of a State Transport truck of which the number was given at Nongpoh. It did not give me pass for 4 miles. All these trucks are running at top speed both on up journey and down journey. Unless there is some amount of control over these trucks, it is extremely difficult for a man to have this confidence in his mind that he will not meet with an accident. Sir, whenever you come along the Gauhati-Shillong Road, you will find one or two trucks falling into the ditch. Even today in mile 41 or 42 there is a truck which has gone off the road and is lying there. This is mainly due to its running at a top speed. There is absolutely no control over these trucks. Sir, what is most important is that they never dim their lights. Even at Gauhati town, the trucks will never have a dimmer and they will never dim their lights. Often a truck from the other end comes with flash light and it is very important that it should dim its lights as soon as it sights another vehicle from the opposite side, otherwise there is bound to be an accident. Although we spoke about it, nothing has been done. What I am trying to impress upon the House is this : that in these matters when a truck is passed, everything is found to be in order and nothing happens immediately. But next day or a few days after, you will find the opposite. The reason is this when a truck is brought for examination and passing it is fitted with some spare parts which are generally borrowed from others and as soon as the vehicle is passed, these spare parts are removed and returned to the owner. This is the state of things going on at the present time. So next day when the truck is on the road, there cannot be any dimmer. Unless there is strict vigilance over these things, the whole Transport Department has no justification to exist.

Then there is another thing which is also important. There was the nationalization of the Dhubri-Jogighopa-Gauhati Road and on this road some public carriage buses were given permits and when the State Transport began to ply their buses, these people were ousted. They then filed an application before the High Court. The High Court said that the nationalization was wrong because there cannot be any nationalization

without legislation. So the Road Transport Bill came before the House and we passed it, but as a matter of fact till to-day it has not been given effect to. In the meanwhile those people who have not been given permission to ply their trucks on the road were directed by the High Court to make application to the State Transport Authority. The High Court said that there cannot be such a thing ; either the road should be nationalised according to law or those people must be given their due. But nothing has been done to those applications and again those persons moved the High Court. This time the High Court said that these applications must be dealt with by the Transport Authority speedily. But, Sir, it is more than 8 months yet no decision has been given by the Regional Transport Authority. I think this is wrong on two grounds. Firstly, there should have been a decision and secondly if we behave in such a manner and deal like this even with the decision of the highest court of the land then people's confidence in the court also reduces which is a very bad thing in a democratic country. The decision of the High Court should be given effect to immediately, and in that view these applications should be disposed of according to law immediately. As I said it has taken more than 8 months and yet these applications are not disposed of. It is really a very serious thing. If the Regional Transport Authority is afraid of giving a decision in this matter, they should refer to the higher authority. It is very important that at least some decision should be given. I am surprised that when we deal like this even with the highest court of law in this matter, what other people will think of us ? I say that the Transport Organisation needs more supervision, and more control so that our people may express satisfaction. With these few words, I commend my Motion for the acceptance of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved is :

That the total provision of Rs. 12,70,700 under Grant No. 7, Major head—12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, at page 40 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 12,70,700 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, instead of moving my Cut Motion, I am supporting the Motion which has been moved by my Friend, Mr. Goswami, because the subject matter of the Cut Motion is the same. Previously it was the system that this Transport Department was under the Police Department of the district with the Superintendent of Police as its head. It was said by the

Government at that time that the Department was not working properly due to the multifarious activities of the Superintendent of Police and other Police officers. So Government proposed to start a separate Department with a District Transport Officer and a full-fledged staff with him. Now we are spending a considerable amount for this organisation without knowing whether the Department is working to our satisfaction and that people generally are benefited or not. Some years have already passed and what we are noticing? My Friend, Mr. Goswami, placed certain facts before the House for consideration. From this it will be best judged whether the Transport Department has worked better under the District Transport Officers or was it better in the previous time when it was under the Police Department. Sir, you have seen things in Gauhati and other places, but the people of Cachar are worst hit by the working of this Department due to the fact that not a single road has been nationalised and that there is no Government transport organisation in that part of the country with the result that the people have to depend mainly on the public carriers and private-owned transport for going from one place to another. We have noticed that in some roads very rotten trucks and buses are being passed by the Department as fit for use. I do not understand how these rotten trucks and buses, with rotten bodies and worn out machineries, engines, etc., which stop at least ten times in their journey from Silchar to Karimganj causing undue trouble and hardship to the travelling public every time are passed. It is really surprising how these things could happen unless there is an unholy alliance between the District Transport Officers and the permit holders. It may be true that out of, say, a hundred trucks, 5 or 6 may have been passed through negligence or oversight. But the fact is that out of one hundred such trucks and buses, 80 or more have been passed in this manner. Therefore, our obvious conclusion is that these are passed without proper checking or, as I have said, there must be some unholy and illicit alliance between these two parties, namely the Government Department and the permit holders. Somebody says it is a hanky-panky business. Unfortunately, we cannot give much credit to the newly appointed District Transport Officers who are supposed to render good services to the Department. But as a matter of fact the Department is deteriorating further because of their mal-administration.

Sir, it is a fact that Mr. Goswami has pointed out that these trucks and buses, when they ply at night, do not dim or put out their lights and it is a danger to cars coming from the opposite direction. Even when you travel in a private car you

must stop it when passing these trucks and buses at night to save your car and your own life. So, until and unless there is a proper checking on this, it is impossible to avoid accidents.

We have also noticed in matters of collection of fees and taxes by this Department—although it is exclusively meant for collection of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act, the collection is very unsatisfactory. In many cases you will see that huge arrears accumulated in the Department which justifies the fact that there is no proper checking and supervision in this respect also. I must place before the House that this accumulation of fees, fines and taxes is due to the fact that certain influential persons of the Congress Party are having permits for running these trucks and buses. Due to the undue influence of these persons it has become difficult for the District Transport Officers to issue strict orders and notices for collection of fees, etc., which resulted in the accumulation of arrears.

Now, Sir, coming to the next point. You will see that the incidence of taxation under the Motor Vehicles Taxation Act is much higher in our State when compared with other States like West Bengal, Madras and Bombay.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Did he say Assam is higher or lower, Sir?

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: I said that in Assam it is higher when compared with other big cities and States. On the other hand we expect that when this taxation is higher, the people who own trucks or buses would get better facilities of tar-macadamised good roads. But unfortunately the road system in our State is the most unsatisfactory. I do not understand where all this money from motor taxes go. When, as I have said, the incidence of taxation from Motor Vehicles Taxation Act is higher, Government ought to have spent more money in the improvement of roads and bridges in every part of the State. Even before rains, some roads in Cachar District were closed for wheeled traffic; who will compensate this loss to permit holders?

Then again, Sir, it has been noticed that the compensation that is being given to the Local Bodies out of this Motor Vehicles Act is negligible—this year it has increased a bit. But if the Government view the matter dispassionately, they must allot more funds to these Local Bodies because, particularly in the urban areas, you will see that fleet of trucks and buses generally flock together and damage a big portion of their roads, but with the amount of compensation that the Local Bodies receive

from this tax, it is impossible for them to repair these roads. So I would appeal to the Government to look into this matter also and see their way if they cannot increase this compensatory grant to the Local Bodies so that they can also upkeep their roads which are being damaged by this Motor Vehicles Department.

With these words, Sir, I support the Cut Motion moved by my Friend, Mr. Goswami.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my Friend, Mr. Goswami, criticised that there is less control and supervision in checking cases of overloading. But, Sir, unless these overloading cases are brought to the notice of the Government by those who happen to know all about them, it is very difficult to take any action in those cases. In this connection, I must mention that last year when my Friend made this same criticism, I requested him to bring such cases to my notice or to the Department so that I or the Department can take action—he need not go to the court for that because the Secretary, Regional Transport Authority, has power to take action on such report. Unless these cases of overloading are brought to our notice, it is very difficult to take necessary action. In every month, in every district mobile court gives surprise visit and takes action against over-loading cases and other offences committed by the permit ho'der under the Motor Vehicles Act.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: They fine only the driver and not the owner of the vehicle.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Whether they fine the driver or the owner of the vehicle, I cannot interfere with inquiry and judgment. It is well known to my honourable Friend that practically every month mobile courts visit these roads without notice and take action against the permit holder for breach of the provision of Motor Vehicles Acts and rules made thereunder.

The Department have eight District Transport Officers and eight Motor Vehicle Inspectors. It is not possible for these District Transport Officers to inspect and check all the motor vehicles on the road and to take action against the offenders. It is not their duty also though Government have authorised them to do so as the Enforcement Branch has not yet put into action. For that reason, the Government has sanctioned an Enforcement Branch, and for appointment of those persons in the Enforcement Branch,

the Government had to go to the Public Service Commission. As a matter of fact, the appointment of such persons had to be confined to the retrenched personnel of the Supply Department. The Public Service Commission has submitted a list of probably 17 hands for being appointed in the Enforcement Branch. In order of merit, 8 persons were appointed. Of these 8 persons, two or three persons only joined, and others did not join because they have got appointments elsewhere. Even today I passed orders to appoint 3 persons out of the list submitted to the Government by the Public Service Commission. In this way I have been able to appoint only 5 persons out of the 17 names submitted by the Public Service Commission. These 5 persons have been directed to proceed to Dergaon for undergoing training there. Three have been appointed today. Without training it is not possible to obtain efficient service from them. They will have to be trained in our workshop at Gauhati for some time also. So we have already appointed 5 persons as Sub-Inspectors in the Enforcement Branch and another 3 have been appointed to-day.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : Sir, may I suggest to the Government for giving a direction to the Public Service Commission to take an under-taking from the applicants that when a candidate is interviewed by the Public Service Commission, if he is given a job, he will have to accept it.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Sir, how can I force the hands of the Public Service Commission and compel anyone to join in the service when he is in another Government service probably better than one in which he has been serving at present ?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : Sir, Government should give definite direction to the Public Service Commission to take undertaking from candidates that when a candidate is interviewed, if he is given the job, he should accept it.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Sir, how can we enforce it on the Public Service Commission? The policy of the Government is to give preference to the retrenched personnel of the Supply Department. In making such appointments, we sent all the names of the retrenched personnel received from the Departments for selection for appointments by Public Service Commission. In this particular case, the Public Service Commission had selected 17 names in order of merit. We have been appointing one after another. The candidates have probably got better appointments in the meantime in other Departments and hence they did not join. These are some of the reasons why there is delay in bringing this Enforcement Branch into action.

Then as regards the introduction of meter-box, I state for the information of the honourable Members that order, have been passed for introduction of meter-box in taxis at Gauhati and Shillong, and probably the last date of such introduction of meter-box was 1st of March. Now the Taxi-Owners' Association has filed a petition asking for some time to purchase the meter-boxes. I allowed them only one month's time. The lawyers generally come and press for them. Sometimes M.L. As also come and press for them for giving them some time.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Sir, many others also come and not the lawyers alone.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Sir, in this particular case he is a lawyer.

There may be unregistered taxis. But these taxis, when detected by the District Transport Officer and by the Mobile Court, action is taken against them.

My Friend also indicated that the number of Inspectors are not sufficient. We have not yet been able to put them into work. If found insufficient, number may be increased but as yet it has not been possible to put them into action because they are undergoing training at Dergaon.

Then, Sir, about the speed of trucks, it is very difficult to detect who runs the truck exceeding speed limit. If my honourable Friend finds that a truck or a vehicle does not give him pass and drive at the speed of 50 miles or more per hour, he should report the same so that action could be taken. As a matter of fact, our Chief Minister found one truck which did not give him pass on the road, he reported the matter and action was immediately taken against the driver.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : Sir, once I had already reported the matter to the Police at Nongpoh.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Sir, I shall be glad to know the time when he reported the matter, so that I may inquire and report to him if any action was taken against the driver or not.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : In the last November session of the Assembly.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : But, Sir, my Friend did not inform me. I could have taken some action.

My Friend has also referred to certain applications on which the Regional Transport Authority did not take any action for a long time. Sir, he is an eminent lawyer and he knows that the Regional Transport Authority is a quasi-judicial body. So how can I interfere with the action of the Regional Transport Authority? If the Regional Transport Authority's action is not according to law, one can file an appeal to the Appellate Authority.

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: Sir, may I know if the Government has fixed any rate of taxi fare at Gauhati?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Yes, Sir. You can ask for the list showing the rate of fare from the drivers. They are bound by rules to produce it when asked for.

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: Sometimes the drivers charge as much as Rs.3 for a trip from Gauhati Court to Ujanbazar.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): If these facts are brought to the notice of the local authorities, certainly action would be taken against them.

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI: What is the rate, Sir?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): I cannot say off-hand, Sir.

Shri BIMALA KANTA BORA: The list showing the rates may be fixed on the body of the taxi itself.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): That is the rule, Sir. If it is not obtained action will be taken if and when reported.

My Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, has criticised that the rate of taxes is higher in our State. It is not so, Sir. The rate of taxes of motor vehicles in the State of Madras is the highest. Ours was, I think, the lowest in some cases. The rules have been revised and the rate has been increased by 50 per cent only. Even then our rate is not higher than those of other States. Our rate is lower in comparison with the other States. Finance Commission suggested to increase our financial resources to the increased expenditure in Second Five-Year Plan. So in

order to increase the resources of our State to meet the requirements of the finances for implementing the Second Five-Year Plan, the rates have been increased only by 50 per cent. Even then our rate is not higher than what is prevailing in other States. Our rates are published in the Gazette and my Friend can compare it with those of other States.

My Friend, Mr. Das, also accused the Government for the unholy alliance of the District Transport Officers with the permit holders. Sir, the permits are issued by the Regional Transport Authority. The Deputy Commissioner presides over the meeting. The Superintendent of Police is a member and there are another 10 to 15 non-official members in the Regional Transport Authority Board. The Secretaries of the Regional Transport Authority who are District Transport Officers, cannot issue any permit of their own accord.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: I did not complain about the issue of permit. What I said was that when a permit is issued and the vehicles ply on the road, that unholy alliance grows up between them. The taxes are not properly collected. The vehicle is not properly checked.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, the District Transport Officers are not appointed for checking purposes. They are not appointed for that purpose. They only do it in addition to their duties, as it has not yet been possible to put the Enforcement Branch in duty. So we have asked them to do the checking whenever they get time.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Can the Enforcement Branch check the engines, etc. of the vehicle?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): It appears my Friend is confusing with duties and function of Motor Vehicles Inspectors. There are eight Motor Vehicles Inspectors and eight District Transport Officers, Motor Vehicles Inspectors issue the fitness certificates after proper inspection of the vehicles including the engine, etc.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: But they work under the District Transport Officers. So it is immaterial who does it. We only want that they should be properly checked.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, when the fitness certificates are given by the Motor Vehicles Inspector

then only the vehicles are allowed to ply on the road. Sir, it may be true that some owner of the vehicles, when they produce their vehicles before the Motor Vehicles Inspectors for checking, they put some new parts and after obtaining the fitness certificate, when they put the vehicles on the road, they may remove them. The Motor Vehicles Inspectors have been authorised to check the vehicles on the road.

I have asked them all, although it does not come strictly under the purview of their duties and function, to check motor vehicles on the roads. This fact was raised in the last Budget Session and I issued orders to that effect immediately.

Shri BIMALA KANTA BORA: How you propose to stop replacement of new parts by old parts ?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): This can be done by constant checking.

As regards the model, I have already stated that it can be fixed by the Regional Transport Authority. It is a quasi-judicial body and I cannot interfere with its decision unless somebody comes with an appeal against the decision.

Sir, I think I have replied to all the points raised by my Friends, Shri Goswami and Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, and I assure the Members that steps will be taken, if and when any offences committed under the Motor Vehicles Act are brought to my notice. My Friend will see his way to withdraw his Cut Motion.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that a sum of Rs.12,70,700 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head "12.—Charges on account of Motor Vehicles Taxation Act."

(The Motion was adopted.)

GRANT No.8

"13.—Other Taxes and Duties"

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs.6,52,000 (Rupees six lakhs, fifty-two thousand), be granted to the Minister-in-charge

to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head "13.—Other Taxes and Duties."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Motion moved is that a sum of Rs.6,52,000 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head "13.—Other Taxes and Duties."

There are two Cut Motions. (Shri Ranendra Mohan Das took his stand to move the Cut Motion in his name). I think Shri Bhattacharyya will do better to move the Cut Motion and you will speak on it.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.6,52,000 under Grant No.8, Major head—13.—Other Taxes and Duties, at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.6,52,000 do stand reduced by Re.1.

In bringing this Motion I do not propose to take a long time of the House. My purpose is to draw the pointed attention of the Minister only to a few points. Firstly, with regard to the question of Sales Tax, we find that unfortunately instead of giving further relief to the poorer section of the people, the common man, a new imposition has been brought in, for example, tax on 'Bidi', which is mostly used by the common people. The Minister-in-charge might say that smoking is a bad habit, and therefore it should not be encouraged. Might be it is so, but we have got many bad habits. But it is after all a very common feature. Unless and until we can persuade the people to refrain from using 'Bidis' or any such bad habit by educating them by propaganda and by such other means, I do not think it will be proper to put restriction in the manner Government wants to put on the use of Bidis. Moreover, it is also doubtful whether smoking of 'Bidis' does more good or evil. Because people require some amount of relaxation. If a poor cultivator or a rickshaw puller enjoys a little bit of relaxation by smoking a Bidi or two, I do not think that it is unnecessary. Because relaxation is needed by everybody. As they are poor people, they cannot afford to have costly cigarettes or scented 'Tambul' brought from Lucknow or good tea with sweets. Tea is also not helpful to health. It

has got vices along with virtues. But this tea is left untouched. That being so, I do not understand why in a welfare State, where welfare of the common people is the professed objective, 'Bidi' should be brought under the purview of the Sales Tax.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Is not smoking a luxury?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Smoking of 'Bidis' in my opinion is not so much a luxury as a relaxation or comfort. It is not just like lip-sticks or scents or such other things which are quite useless and which are still free from heavy taxation.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Bhattacharyya, ladies will object.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: No, Sir, our good ladies will not object, because they do not use such stuffs.

Shri RAM NATH DAS (Minister): We have, Sir, only one lady Member in the House.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: But there are wives of the hon. Members (*Laughter*).

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Sir, the question now arises is: who are the good and who are the bad ladies?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: In the interest of harmonious family life, we must give them that compliment.

My point is, Sir, that the vast majority of our people do use 'Bidis' as a sort of relaxation. This habit is not quite new to our people nor a habit which is not prevalent in other countries. It is a habit with the people of all other countries. If you would take a census of all the adult male population, you will see that the vast majority of them are used to smoking. I therefore do not think Government is justified to impose additional tax on the common men of the welfare State. So far my information goes, no other State has imposed tax on Bidis.

In my previous Budget speech, I had said something about sugar. In view of the transport bottlenecks, we in Shillong are purchasing sugar at Re.1 per seer. This being a necessary thing—all doctors will say that it is necessary, because it gives vigour and vigour is necessary for health—this additional tax on sugar should be removed.

Sugar is necessary particularly for the growth of bones and marrow of the children. We should see that our future generation becomes stronger with bones and marrow and to do this sugar ought to have been exempted. I come to matches. We have read in the books that in the old days the Rishis used to rub wood and stones to get fire. Now-a-days that system has vanished and matches have come instead and even the poorest of the poor has to use matches. So, Sir, imposition of this tax on matches is also a tax on the common man. Furthermore, the Minister-in-charge had given some promise on the floor of this House that with regard to the sales tax on medicine, Government would consider the matter so that some relief to the people can be given. Government has not given any noticeable relief in this respect. Government had said that for the medicine prepared in the Pharmacies on the prescription of the doctor some relief would be given. This statement will be found in the Assembly record itself. But the exemption has not been given as yet. As regards salt, Sir, in spite of the past promises to give some relief to the poor section of the people in regard to sales tax, far from giving relief, Government has imposed further tax on the common man. I think, Sir, this is not proper. Secondly, there are certain things on which Government has arbitrarily decided to impose higher rate of tax, as for example, onion. Government is considering onion to be a kind of spice and not vegetable. If the Minister-in-charge goes to a Muslim house of his own constituency and partake a meal there, if he has no objection, he will see that onion is served as a kind of vegetable and not as spice. Not to speak of the Muslims, even very orthodox Brahmins like myself (*laughter*) take onion as vegetable. In State like Madras onion is regarded as vegetable. But I do not know why our Government should consider onion as a spice and impose a higher rate of tax when in Madras, which is a land of orthodox Brahmins, it has not been done so. By the imposition of higher rate of tax in this respect, Government has been doing an injustice to the poor section of the people. Onion might be used in the past as a spice, but at present it is always used as a kind of vegetable. Now I come to entertainment tax. In the matter of granting relief in connection with entertainment which is a sort of relaxation, we raised discussions on several occasions in the past, but we now find that some relief has been granted to certain organisations but not to others and thus discrimination has been made from the point of view of encouraging certain types of art. This sort of discrimination is not proper. After all our nation is to develop

culturally and so all sides of art should be equally encouraged. The proper growth of the country can be possible only by all sided cultural development.

My third point is with regard to realisation of this tax. We notice a great amount of evasion of this tax. Government would have earned much more money from sales tax and entertainment tax had there been no evasion. Unfortunately this evasion takes place sometimes due to the fact that the officers are in league with the people concerned. Of course, I cannot lay the entire blame on the Government. We have not been able to raise the moral standard of our people or nation to the proper level or standard and as a result of this, bribery and corruption are not regarded now-a-days as crimes. Formerly to give and accept bribe were used to be regarded as some sort of a heinous crime. Now-a-days some persons are found to accept bribes and yet no serious action is found to have taken on them. In place of dismissal from service as punishment such people or officers are found to rise ultimately. Such people are found to be given some trusted position by the Government. For example, I give the instance of a Deputy Director of Procurement. While in this position, he earned a lot of money and as a result there was a lot of talk and criticism by the public. He left the job or went on retirement and then started a big business. Such a person has been appointed by the Government as a Provincial Organiser of a semi-Government enterprise. What impression will then the public have on this account? (A voice from the Treasury Benches: You are beating about the bush). Yes, because such bushes are being nurtured by some hon. Members; I have no alternative but to beat about the bush. This is how, Sir, things are not done properly and tackled effectively. We find that bribery has become almost a common thing among our officers with regard to realisation of sales-tax and other taxes as well. It is probably known to all the hon. Members of this House that there are some business people who keep 2 sets of *Khatas*: One set for his own personal use and the other set for inspection by the officers of the State Government or the Central Government. If our officers are very careful then such things can be detected. Those businessmen who keep two sets of *Khatas* can easily evade tax. Supposing a businessman has earned a profit making him liable to pay a tax of Rs. 50,000 and he does not show it in the *Khatas* meant for inspection and instead paid Rs.5,000 to the officer concerned as bribe, still then there will remain a surplus of Rs. 45,000, and this Rs.45,000 is a big sum indeed!

It is not necessary to give five thousand ; even one thousand does a great deal. My suggestion is that Government should be very particular and very careful in checking these evasions. I hope Government knows that there is large-scale evasion, especially by a section of rich businessmen. On the other side, we find that these officers are to show some work to justify the salaries they are drawing and, therefore, they go on harassing the smaller section of businessmen. Generally, we find that in the matter of sales tax realisation there is a great deal of difficulty between the smaller section of businessmen and the tax collectors and very little between big businessmen and the tax collectors. This is not because the big businessmen are very good people and smaller businessmen are people of lower morals ; the reason is that the latter cannot offer big bribes and so, these unscrupulous officers, in order to satisfy Government that they are doing some work, jump on the smaller fries and the big guys escape. Government should take particular care to see that this does not happen. Of course, I am glad to say that in comparison with two years back the behaviour of the Superintendents and other officers of the Tax Department has slightly improved. This must be recognised. Government should see that those who do their job honestly and who deal with the public in a better manner are encouraged and others are asked to emulate them. In the matter of promotion and other facilities, those officers who do their job conscientiously and deal with the public amiably should be given better consideration at the hands of the Government than those who are very harsh and at the same time not very immoral.

These are the few observations I wanted to make in this connection. I hope Government will take my observations in the spirit in which they have been made and see that things improve in future.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved is that the total provision of Rs. 6,52,000 under Grant No. 8, Major head 13.—Other Taxes and Duties, at page 42 of the Budget be reduced by Re.1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.6,52,000 do so stand reduced by Re.1

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say a few words about the Sales Tax Department. My Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has spoken about increase of taxes on some items and I do not like to reiterate the same. I am going to discuss the Department from different angle.

Sir, we have seen that sales tax has come to stay in our land and Government is deriving a substantial amount from the Sales Tax Department. We are, frankly speaking, glad to note that after 4 or 5 years of strenuous fight from this side of the House, Government has agreed to impose tax at the source, at least for some items of commodities which are consumed in this State. The petty dealers will thereby be greatly relieved from maintaining accounts, etc., for inspection by the officers of this Department. On the other hand, evasion of tax would be much less if the commodities are taxed at the source. I am sure Government will get a substantial amount by taxing at the source and the smaller businessmen would breathe a sigh of relief.

Now, Sir, when this Department has become a very important Department, every effort should be made to remove all kinds of lacuna in the Act. Firstly, it should be the endeavour of the Government to see that small businessmen are not harassed unnecessarily. Mr. Bhattacharyya has cited some such cases; on the other hand, we find big evasions come from bigger section of merchants. So, if Government wants that this Department should work properly this evasion of tax by big merchants should be drastically checked. I shall discuss about the system of appeals in the Sales Tax Department. I have gathered some information and from my own experience I can say that in some cases of appeal, the appellant authority being the Assistant Commissioner, we have seen that the assessment which was made by the Superintendent of Taxes are reduced to half and even less than half by the Assistant Commissioner. This arouses a suspicion in our mind that he was won over by the party; when the Superintendent could not be won over but the appellate authority could be. The Superintendent, being officer under the Assistant Commissioner, cannot push cases to the higher authorities for the sake of his own safety in the Department. My suggestion to Government, therefore, is to establish a separate appellate body having no connection with the administration of the Sales Tax Department, so that they may deal with these matters judiciously. The Superintendent also, not being under the administrative control of the appellate authority, will be able to push the case to higher authorities, if necessary. If this is done, evasion of taxes can be checked to a great extent. Also the appellate authority being unconnected with the Department will be able to apply his judicial mind to all cases. If this lacuna in the Act be removed, I am sure Government, which needs more money for the

implementation of the Second Five-Year Plan, will get a substantial amount of which they are deprived of now due to evasion and negligence of the appellate authority or of any other officer and the merchants. At the same time, harassment of small businessmen will be minimised.

With these few words, I hope the Minister-in-charge will consider my suggestion, so that the Government can give relief to the people on the one hand, and get more money, on the other, for the implementation of the Second Five-Year Plan.

Shri MOHENDRANATH DEKA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, when we go to the Budget head--other items, we see that of Rs. 32,57,000, the income derived under taxes from sales tax and other duties, rupees one crore and five lakhs is from receipts from sales tax. It is the only tax under which the expenditure is very small if we compare with other sources of receipts. Out of this amount of one crore and five lakhs only, 2 per cent is spent towards expenditure on collection administration.

Sir, I have words to say against the contention of Mr. Bhattacharyya on taxation on Bidi. I want to draw the attention of the House to the Rahim Bidi propaganda van moving every night on the pitch roads of Gauhati Town with variety of coloured lights and singing songs with loud speaker propagating the utility of Bidi. This van is an example to show how this Rahim Bidi Company is draining out money from our poor people. I hope, my Friend will not deny the fact that from this Rahim Bidi, lakhs of rupees is squeezed away from our mass people. (*Hear, hear*). Does he find pleasure in hearing the songs of this Bidi? If he does not, why does he oppose with the proposal of Government for taxing only 2 pice for every rupee on the sale of Bidi? Does this tax of 2 pice which will be spent for our mass people, cause headache to him? Does he not grudge the firm of Rahim Bidi earning lakhs of rupees and that is also from the pocket of our poor people?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: There are Bidi workers also who get money.

Shri MOHENDRANATH DEKA: After paying the Bidi workers also the proprietor of this Bidi company earns huge amount which is squeezed out from our common mass. I do not understand why he does not raise any objection to the company taking away lakhs of rupees from the common mass,

but he objects to this raising of tax of only 2 pice per rupee in the sale of Bidi, which amount of tax will go to ameliorate the condition of our common mass. So, my request to Mr. Bhattacharyya would be that instead of making such unnecessary objection for having a small tax on Bidi, he will, in future, take such action as will help our common mass use Bidi less than now.

With these words, I oppose the Cut Motion moved by Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya.

Shri MAHENDRA HAZARIKA: মাননীয় উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয় আজিৰ সদনত আমাৰ বিৰোধীদলৰ বন্ধু শ্ৰীযুত গোবীশঙ্কৰ ভট্টাচাৰ্য্যই যিটো কৰ্ত্তন প্ৰস্তাৱৰ অৱতাবণা কৰিছে—তাৰ বিৰোধীতা কৰিবলৈ মই থিয় হৈছো। তেখেতে বিড়ি চেনি আদিৰ (দিয়াচেনাই ও.....a voice) ওপৰত যি কৰ ধাৰ্য্যৰ সম্পৰ্কে আলোচনা কৰিছে সেই বিষয়েই মই সমালোচনা কৰিম।

উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, শ্ৰীযুত ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য ডাঙৰীয়াই কৈছে যে বিড়ি পান বিলাসৰ সামগ্ৰী নহয়; ই আৰামৰ (comfort ৰ) কাৰণে হে। সেই কাৰণে সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ আৰাম ভঙ্গ কৰা উচিত নহয়।

মই কও ধূমপান কেতিয়াও আৰামৰ বস্তু নহয়। আমাৰ সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ মাজত বিড়ি পান কৰাটো নতুন প্ৰথা বুলি কৰ পাৰি। অতীজত বৈধৰ ধৰ্ম মতে এই ধূম পান নিগিদ্ধ আছিল।

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: তেতিয়াৰ দিনত বিড়ি নাছিলেই।

Shri MOHENDRA HAZARIKA: ধূম পানৰ প্ৰচলন যোগলৰ দিনৰ পৰাই আছিল। অৱশ্যে সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ মাজত সিমান প্ৰচলন নহৈছিল। ইয়াৰ মূল কাৰণ আছিল আমাৰ মহাপুৰুষ শঙ্কৰ দেৱে বৈধৰ ধৰ্ম প্ৰচাৰ কৰাৰ লগে লগে এই বাগীয়াল বস্তুৰ ব্যৱহাৰ নিষেধ কৰি দিছিল। এতিয়াও ই নিষেধ হৈয়ে আছে। ইয়াৰ পৰা আমাৰ জন সাধাৰণৰ স্বাস্থ্যৰো বহুত হানি হয়। আজিকালি বহুত বিজ্ঞ লোকৰ অভিমত যে এই চুবটৰ পৰাই কেনচাৰ আদি মহাৰোগ আৰিৰ্ভাৱ হৈছে। বছৰি বহুতো মানুহ এই বিড়ি খাই আকস্মিক মৃত্যুৰ মুখত পৰিছে।

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: বিড়ি নোখোৱা মানুহো মৰিছে।

Shri MAHENDRA HAZARIKA: অন্তত ইয়াৰ পৰা কেনচাৰ বোগৰ দৰে ডাঙৰ বোগৰ উদ্ভৱ হৈছে বুলি বহুত পাৰদৰ্শী লোকে অভিমত প্ৰকাশ কৰিছে। সেই কাৰণে আমাৰ চৰকাৰে কৰ লগোৱাটো অযুক্তিকৰ হোৱা নাই। অৱশ্যে চৰকাৰে বৰ কৌশলেৰেহে এই কৰ আদায় কৰিছে। খৰালী দিনত সূৰ্য্যৰ উত্তাপে যেনেকৈ পানী শোষণ কৰি লৈ যায়, কোনেও তলকিব নোৱাৰে; ঠিক সেইদৰেই আমাৰ চৰকাৰেও কৰ আদায় কৰিছে যাৰ দ্বাৰায় সৰ্বসাধাৰণ বাইজে মোঠেই অনুভৱ কৰিবলৈ নেপায়। এই কৰ ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ বিড়ি কোম্পানী সকলৰ ওপৰতেই হেচা পৰিব সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ স্বাস্থ্যৰ হানিকৰ এই বাগীয়াল বস্তুটোৰ ওপৰত কৰ লগোৱাটো নিতান্ত উচিত বুলিহে মই ভাবো।

চেণিৰ ওপৰত কৰ লগোৱাৰ বিষয়ে কওঁ যে চেণি সাধাৰণতে গাঁৱত ব্যৱহাৰ নহয়। গাঁৱৰ মানুহে গুৰ ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে আৰু এই গুৰৰ ওপৰত কৰ নাই। চেণি ব্যৱহাৰ কৰে চহকী মানুহে আৰু এনে কিছুমান মানুহে যি আগৰ অৱস্থাৰ সলনি কৰি এটা নতুন অৱস্থাতলৈ যাবলৈ বিচাৰে। কাৰণ তেওঁলোকৰ টকা পয়ছা আছে। সেই কাৰণে এই কৰ লগোৱাটো মোৰ বোধেৰে যুক্তিসঙ্গত হৈছে। আনহাতে ই আমাৰ ঘৰুৱা শিল্প গুৰ উৎপাদনতো সহায় কৰিব, কাৰণ গুৰৰ প্ৰচলন বৃদ্ধি পাব। এই কৰ লগোৱা হৈছে ব্যৱসায়ী সকলৰ ওপৰত টকাই প্ৰতি দুই পয়চা হিচাপে। যদি আমাৰ দেশখন উন্নত কৰিব লাগে তেন্তেহলে কৰ লগোৱা নিতান্ত প্ৰয়োজন, নহলে উন্নয়নমূলক কামৰ কাৰণে টকা কৰ পৰা আহিব। এনে বকমৰ কৰৰ বোজা বিশেষকৈ ধনী সকলৰ ওপৰতে পৰিছে।

অন্যায়্য সামগ্ৰীৰ ভিতৰত নোৰ বোধেৰে চাহৰ ওপৰত আৰু কৰ লগোৱা উচিত আছিল। চাহ খোৱাৰ পৰা আমাৰ উপকাৰ নহয় বৰং হানিহে হয়। চেণি আৰু বিভিন্ন ওপৰত যি কৰ ধাৰ্য কৰিছে তাৰ ওপৰত আমাৰ ভটাচাৰ্যা ডাঙৰীয়াই যিটো কৰ্ত্তন প্ৰস্তাৱ আনিছে তাৰ মই বিৰোধিতা কৰিছো।

কলা প্ৰদৰ্শনীত ট্যাক্স লয়। কিন্তু আমি জানো যে, আমাৰ গাওঁবিলাকত যি ভাওঁনা সবাহ, নাচ-গান আদি হয়, তাত ট্যাক্স বহুৱা নাই। যি বিলাকত ট্যাক্স বহোৱা হৈছে সেই বিলাকও সাধাৰণতে যাব টকা পইচাৰ অভাৱ নাই, সেই ধনীলোকসকলেই খায়। আমি দেখিছো বোলচৰি চাবলৈ একোজন লোক দিনে ২৩ বাৰো যায়। তেন্তে তেওঁ লোকৰ পয়চা নাখাকিলে যাব কেনেকৈ? আজি চহৰ বিলাকত যিবিলাক নৃত্য-গীত সাংস্কৃতিক প্ৰদৰ্শনী হয়, সেই বিলাকত কৰ বহালে আমাৰ সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ ওপৰত সেই কৰৰ বোজা নপৰে। গতিকে সেই বিলাকত কৰ বহোৱাটো যুক্তিসঙ্গত হৈছে। গতিকে ভটাচাৰ্যা ডাঙৰীয়াই যি কৰ্ত্তন প্ৰস্তাৱ আনিছে মই তাৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰিছো।

Shri BISWADEV SARMA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we all know smoking is a petty vice. At least smokers always take this excuse. A welfare State cannot encourage this. So, I oppose Mr. Bhattacharyya's contention that it is a pleasure for people to smoke. If this contention is accepted with regard to liquor, there are also people who say that they are taking liquor because it gives them pleasure. So his contention is not only incorrect, but it is harmful.

Sir, I also take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Government to the activities of a certain Bidi company who distribute Bidis to school-going children. I have seen at Tezpur also the representatives of this Bidi company give 2 Bidis to the school children with a coupon; if that boy can produce the coupon the next day, he gets 4 Bidis and also on the third day he gets 8 Bidis and so on. In this way, Sir, the Bidi company encourages smoking of Bidis in the country and that too among school-going children—they are pupils of our Lower Primary, Middle Vernacular and Middle English Schools. So, I would request Government to take immediate steps to check this so that this smoking habit does not spread in the country.

With these words, Sir, I oppose the Cut Motion of Mr. Bhattacharyya.

Shri DHARANIDHAR BASUMATARI : মাননীয় উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, মোৰ বন্ধু ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য ডাঙৰীয়াৰ কতন প্ৰস্তাৱটো মেজৰ ওপৰত দেখিয়েই ভাবিছিলো। যে তেখেতে সৰ্বসাধাৰণ ৰাইজৰ উপকাৰৰ কাৰণে কিছু কৈ আমাৰ চৰকাৰক এই কামত সহায় কৰিব, কিন্তু তেখেতৰ বিবৃতিত যিখিনি উল্লেখ কৰি গল তাক শুনি বৰ দুখ পালো আৰু সেই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ মই তীব্ৰ প্ৰতিবাদ কৰিছোঁ।

তেখেতে বিড়িৰ ওপৰত কৰ বহুৱাৰ কথা কৈছে। সৰুকালতে আমি যেতিয়া গাঁৱত আছিলো আমাৰ গাঁৱলীয়া লোকে বিড়ি চিনি নাপাইছিল। তেখেতে বোধকৰো বিড়িৰ গাভীখনৰ চমক দেখিয়েই বা বিড়িৰ Illuminating light দেখি চমক লাগিয়েই নেকি, এই বিষয় হেন বিড়িৰ প্ৰচলন বজাই ৰাখিবলৈ আহিছে নেকি, কব নোৱাৰোঁ। নিশ্চয় তেখেতে বিড়িৰ কথাত মোহিত হৈছে নাইবা বিড়িৰ কাৰবাৰী সকলে তেখেতক ধৰিছে সেই কাৰণেই বিড়িৰ কথা উল্লেখ নকৰি নোৱাৰিলে।

যি হওক, বিশেষকৈ আমাৰ জনজাতীয় সকলে আগেয়ে খেতি কৰি ধপাত লাগিবে মলি ছকাত ধপাত খাইছিল; আৰু কিছমানে সেই চাদা ধপাতৰ পাতকে মেৰাই লৈ চিগাৰেট কৰি খাইছিল, নাইবা চাদাপাত কুটি শালৰ শুকান পাতেৰে মেৰাই বিড়ি কৰি খাইছিল। আজি কালি এই বিড়ি আদিৰ প্ৰচলন হৈ আনকি, আমাৰ জনজাতি সকলৰ কথাকে নকও আজি কালি মানুহে ধপাতৰ খেতি কৰিবলৈকে এৰি দিছে। বিড়ি খাই যে কিমান মানুহ ৰোগাগ্ৰস্ত হৈছে তাক নকলেও হব। সেই দিনা এটা প্ৰশ্নাত উত্তৰ দিয়া দেখা গৈছে আজি ৩ মাহৰ ভিতৰত ৯৭৫ জনৰ অকালতে মৃত্যু ৰোগত মৃত্যু হৈছে। ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য ডাঙৰীয়াই যদি এই বিলাক কথাৰ অলপ ভুলৈ তেখেতৰ আলোচনাটো কিছু প্ৰগতি-শীল কৰিলেহেতেন তেন্তে মোৰ কবলগীয়া নাছিল। তেখেতে কব পাৰে যে এই বিলাকৰ মৃত্যুৰ কাৰণ অকল বিড়িৰ ধুমপানেই বুলি কলেও বেচি কোৱা নহয়। মই কওঁ যে বিড়িৰ নিচিনা অখাদ্য বিলাক তেওঁলোকৰ মাজত প্ৰচলন বন্ধ কৰা যুগুত বুলিহে মই ভাবো। আগতে আমাৰ জনজাতীয় অঞ্চলত প্ৰায় মানুহ ৮০।৯০ বছৰলৈকে সতেজ অৱস্থাত ডেকাৰ নিচিনাকৈ কৰ্ম্মজীৱন যাপন কৰা দেখিছিলো; কিন্তু আজি কালি ৬০ বছৰো জীয়াই থকা বিৰল। এই বিড়িৰ নিচিনা অখাদ্যবোৰ খোৱাই তাৰ প্ৰধান কাৰণ বুলি মই কব খোজোঁ।

মেডিকেল ৰিপৰ্ট মতে নানা ৰকমৰ বেয়া বস্তু খোৱাৰ কাৰণে মানুহৰ মৃত্যু হাৰ বাঢ়িছে। এই বেয়া বস্তুৰ ভিতৰতে বিড়িও এটা। গতিকে বিড়িৰ হকে কথা কোৱাত মই আচৰিত হৈছোঁ। তেখেতে যিটো যুক্তি অৰতাৰণা কৰিছে সেইটো সৰ্বসাধাৰণৰ উপকাৰ্য্যে কোৱা নাই। গতিকে ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য ডাঙৰীয়াই বিড়িৰ ওপৰত টেক্স লগোৱাৰ বাবে চৰকাৰে যি ব্যৱস্থা কৰিবলৈ ওলাইছে তাত বিৰোধীতা কৰাত দুঃখ পাইছোঁ। গতিকে এই কৰ্ত্তন প্ৰস্তাৱৰ মই বিৰোধীতা কৰিছোঁ।

Shri HEM CHANDRA HAZARIKA : উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, আমাৰ দেশত বিড়িৰ প্ৰচলন হৈ দেশৰ নানা ৰকমৰ ক্ষতি কৰিছে। শ্ৰীযুক্ত ভট্টাচাৰ্য্য ডাঙৰীয়াই বিড়িৰ উপকাৰিতা বিষয়ে কোৱাত মই আচৰিত মানিছোঁ। আগতে আমাৰ মানুহে ধপাত খেতি কৰিছিল। বিড়ি ওলোৱাৰ পৰা সেই খেতি একেৰাৰে লোপ পাইছেহি। আগতে মানুহে হোকা খাইছিল সেই কাৰণে তিবোতা মানুহে ধপাত খোৱা অভ্যাস কৰিব নোৱাৰিছিল,—কাৰণ হোকাৰ শব্দ শুনিলে গৃহস্থই তিবোতাই ধপাত খাইছে বুলি জানি খং কৰিব সেই ভয়তে ধপাত খাব নোৱাৰিছিল। আজি গাঁৱৰ কোনো কোনো তিবোতাই পানী আনিবলৈ যাওতেও ঘাটত নিবিৰ্ববাদে বিড়ি ছপি খোৱা দেখা যায়। মাছ মাৰিবলৈ যোৱা কোনো কোনো তিবোতা মানুহৰ মেখেলাৰ খোচৰ পৰা পানীত বিড়ি উঠি যোৱা দেখা যায়। সৰু সৰু স্কুলীয়া লৰা ছোৱালীয়ে বাটে বাটে ৰাঙি ছপি যায়। বৰ্ত্তমান বিড়ি অতি আওহতীয়া গাওঁ বিলাকতো প্ৰচৰ

প্ৰচাৰ হোৱাত আমাৰ দেশৰ মহৎ ক্ষতিকৰ বিড়ি পান বন্ধ কৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে। দেশৰ হেজাৰ হেজাৰ টকা আমাৰ দেশৰ পৰা ওলাই গৈছে। গতিকে মই কও বিড়িৰ ওপৰত টেক্স অতিৰিক্ত ভাবে বঢ়াব লাগেই তদুপৰি বিড়ি Prohibition কৰিবৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব পাৰিলে ভাল হয়। আশাকৰো চৰকাৰে বিড়ি Prohibition কৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব, বিড়িৰ ওপৰত টেক্স বঢ়োৱাৰ মই সম্পূৰ্ণ পক্ষপাতি গতিকে মই এই কৰ্ত্তন প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বিৰোধীতা কৰিছো।

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am very thankful to the hon. Members sitting on the opposite, specially in view of the fact that this small matter has aroused such lively interest in the House. I am also thankful to them for the suggestions that they have offered to Government in the course of their speeches made on the floor of this House. Now some of my honourable Friends have replied to them very aptly and eloquently. Therefore, I would not like to speak on the points which have already been dealt with by them.

So far as taxation on Bidi is concerned, my honourable Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, says that Bidi is not a luxury and it is a necessity of the poor. It is doubtful, he says, whether it is dangerous to health or not. Therefore, this is a tax on the comfort of common men. I do not like to deal with this matter, except by saying that probably my honourable Friend knows how some of our merchants in Assam earn lots of money by selling Bidi. I know of one man that by selling Bandar Bidi he earns more than a lakh of rupees as commission. Sir, what we are going to do by this taxation measure is that we want to impose tax at the very source. As has been referred to by my honourable Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, that by such a measure we will be falling upon this kind of people who are importing Bidi from outside the State, and not on the ordinary sellers of Bidi. As has already been replied to by my honourable Friend, Shri Mahendra Nath Deka, that proceeds from this measure would be less than 2 per cent of the amount spent by our people in Assam on Bidi, I do not like to say anything more. I don't think my honourable Friends sitting on the opposite side would very much grudge on this matter.

My honouable Friend, Shri Biswadev Sarma, has brought to our notice a revealing information. I did not know that the distributors of Rahim Bidi were going to our school boys in the manner described by him. If I had known that before, I could have made some provision for prevention of such things in the present Bill itself. By the present Bill we are

trying to impose tax on such people who import Bidi and sell it. But these people who are distributing Rahim Bidi are not selling Bidi. They are only distributing Bidi. Anyway, this matter will be looked into, and if necessary and possible, some taxes will be levied on such distribution of Bidi. I take note of this.

Now, Sir, my honourable Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, has brought to the attention of the Government that there should be exemption of tax on entertainment. By this probably he is referring to exemption from the entertainment tax which some people at Gauhati wanted about a year back. But, Sir, in the name of entertainment if some people wanted to propagate a particular kind of political creed, probably Government cannot allow such exemption to this kind of entertainment. It was not a case of single entertainment. It was not free from politics. There was some motive behind this kind of entertainment. Government was satisfied that by this kind of entertainment the organisers wanted to propagate some kind of political creed among our people. So, Sir, how can Government be a party to such kind of things ; and that is why Government did not allow exemption of tax to such kind of entertainment.

With regard to sugar, my honourable Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya urges on the Government that there should be no tax on sugar. In this connection he was also very aptly replied to by my honourable Friend, Shri Mahendra Hazarika, from Nowgong. Besides, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the fact that there are taxes on sugar in every other States of the Indian Union, and only in Assam there was no tax on sugar. In West Bengal and Madras, it is reported that the tax on sugar is four pice per rupee whereas in Assam we are going to levy only two pice per rupee. We want to fall in line with other States of the Indian Union, in the matter of taxation on sugar. But in doing so, we have not gone to the extent which the other States have been doing in this matter.

I should like to draw the attention of the Members to another thing. When I placed my Budget before the House, it disclosed a deficit—both capital deficit and revenue deficit—to the extent of nearly three crores and ninety lakhs. Now, how to make up this big deficit and to make provision for financing the Second Five-Year Plan? In the developing stage of our country, money is absolutely necessary. Personally I do

not like taxes ; it also affects me. But what is the way out? All other States in the Indian Union have done it and we are following the suit.

Then my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, referred to certain kinds of tax evasion in our State. Sir nobody denies it, and there is some kind of evasion of taxes everywhere in the country. We know what a vast amount of income-tax was evaded by unscrupulous traders in our country during the war period. These people are generally very ingenious and clever and taking advantage of their ingenuity and cleverness, they resort to such tactics. We are trying to rope in these people, but sometimes, as is natural, we may fail. But our honest efforts are there and we are making some headway in this matter. As a result of our efforts, it will be seen that our tax figures are going up from year to year. No doubt there is still a great deal to be done. But if we get the co-operation from the public, our efforts to prevent evasion and to bring tax dodgers to book will be easier, otherwise it would be difficult to rope in these wealthy unscrupulous traders who are in a position to employ a large number of clerks under them to maintain two sets of Khatas as to dodge the tax. On suspicion alone we cannot go and search their houses; there are some difficulties. But if the public come forward and help us in giving the information in confidence, the clue will be helpful to rope in these people.

My Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, has spoken about the provision of appeal in the Sales-Tax Department. He says some cases of assessment by the Superintendents of Taxes, on appeal, the taxes have been lowered or reduced to a great extent, and as such he opines that atleast something should be done to do away with it. My Friend knows well that a sentence of death given, after taking the verdict of the jurors, may be set aside by the High Court on appeal and on that ground we cannot do away with the provision of appeal. That will mean putting the traders and merchants at the mercy of the Superintendents of Taxes.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : My point was that Appellate Authority should be separated.

Shri MOTIRAM BORA (Minister) : The Assistant Commissioner of Taxes was in-charge of appeals and he has nothing to do with the question of promotion and transfer of the Superintendents of Taxes. My Friend, Shri Das, has rather praised Government for taxing certain goods at the sources, according to the advice given by him. He now asks us to extend the same procedure in respect of other goods. Certainly we shall

do it, when we find that this mode of taxing is more advantageous and less irksome and we shall extend to other items also afterwards.

Sir, with regard to onion, about which my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, referred to, I want to say that it is after all a kind of food. According to him it is a kind of spices or a kind of vegetable. Some people take it as spice and some people may take it as vegetable. But after all it is a kind of food. Moreover it is known to the hon. Members that it is selling in the market at high price. So what is the harm if Government realises a fraction of it for the benefit of the people ?

With these observations, Sir, I request my Friend to withdraw his Cut Motion. There is another point of my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, and it is with regard to taxes on medicine. Probably he is referring to the assurance I had given last time with regard to this matter. I can assure my Friend that I shall look into it. I hope I have been able to explain the positions and I hope my Friend will see his way to withdraw his Cut Motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you withdrawing, Mr. Bhattacharyya ?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Very sorry, no, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the total provision of Rs. 6,52,000 under grant No. 8, Major head—13.—Other Taxes and Duties, at page 42 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 6,52,000 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

(The Motion was negatived.)

(After a pause.)

The question is that a sum of Rs. 6,52,000 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head—“13.—Other Taxes and Duties”.

(The Motion was adopted.)

Grant No.12

“27.—Administration of Justice”.

Shri BAIDYANATH MUKERJEE (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 14,46,400 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will

come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head "27.—Administration of Justice".

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Motion moved is that a sum of Rs. 14,46,400 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head "27.—Administration of Justice".

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 14,46,400 under Grant No. 12, Major head—27.—Administration of Justice, at page 39 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 14,46,400 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

In moving this Cut Motion, I shall try to confine myself to only one point, and that is the question of separation of the Judiciary from the Executive. As all the hon. Members of this House know, the cry for the separation of the Judiciary from the Executive has been heard since long before Independence, and this has been getting support even in the top official circles so much so that it has got a place among the directive principles of our Constitution. It is now several years since we have become independent and we have got our own Constitution. But this directive principle has not yet been achieved and we do not know when Government is going to take measures to achieve this long cherished goal. There is no doubt some amount of separation of the Judiciary in certain level, for example, the Munsifs and the Subordinate Judges on the Civil side, are under the High Court and their promotions and transfers are to be done in consultation with the High Court and the Constitution also has guaranteed that the District Courts and the courts subordinate to the High Court should be under the High Court and their postings and transfers should be done by the High Court. But so far as the Magistracy is concerned, in the Criminal side, we find here the Executive and the Judiciary have been kept together and the High Court has no jurisdiction either in the matter of appointment and postings or in the transfer of the Magistrates. Not only that, The High Court is not consulted, nor even the District Court is consulted at the time of conferring First Class or Second Class powers on Third Class Magistrates. We find people only very recently recruited into the Cadre with very little experience are given Second Class or First Class powers, and they are given very heavy responsibilities to the detriment of the proper judicial administration. We also find that unlike

the recruits to All-India Services, the new recruits of Magistrates in Assam are not given sufficient training before they are given responsibilities of dispensation of justice and, therefore, we find that the Magistrates cannot actually work with a pure judicial mind free from Executive influence, their transfer, their promotion, their upgrading—all depending on the good opinion of the Executive side of the Government. Even the police report is much dreaded by the Magistrates. Any practising lawyer, and there are many practising lawyers in this House, will agree with me that sometimes the Court Inspectors and Court Sub-Inspectors dictate things to the Magistrate and the Magistrate, who may not like it, sometimes is compelled to swallow it because if he displeases the Police, then there may be police report against him and from the police report there will be transfer to a place, perhaps, which he may not like. At least there is the apprehension of his remaining under the mercy of the Executive and, therefore, if we want justice to be done, if we want that our people should have confidence in the administration, in other words, if we want to have in our country the rule of law, then the separation of the Judiciary from the Executive which was a cry during our National Movement, which is a principle incorporated in our Constitution itself, should not be held up any more.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved is that the total provision of Rs.14,46,400 under Grant No. 12, Major head, 27.—Administration of Justice, at page 89 of the Budget be reduced by Re. 1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 14,46,400 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in supporting the Cut Motion just now moved by my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, I would like to speak something about the judicial administration of the State. Sir, he has rightly said that it was the main object of our Constitution to separate the Judiciary from the Executive and after Independence, 8 years have elapsed, yet we see very little progress having been made to achieve this object by the State Government of Assam. It is known to all that there cannot be any justice and equity in the application of law, unless and until the Executive is separated from the Judiciary. Because these Executive Officers who are on the one hand to run the administration being under the Government and on the other hand they also try the cases as judicial officer of the State, Sir, very rarely you can get one man in a thousand or one

man in a lakh in a State or in the whole country who can very judiciously play double role. Let us take the instance of Subdivisional Officer. As Subdivisional Officer, he is to order for arrest of a culprit and to produce him before his court, and the same Subdivisional Officer, when he sits in the chair of justice, is to decide his action as Magistrate. So, Sir, how difficult it is for the people with general standard of morale to be successful in this endeavour, particularly when we have seen so much of interference by the Government in the affairs of administration ! The number of officers of all the categories has increased so much now-a-days that it is all the more urgent and necessary that there must be separation of Judiciary from the Executive if we want that there should be proper justice and that the administration is to run according to law.

Secondly, Sir, I want to bring before the House certain facts of Karimganj Court. The delay in justice is done in such a way that it is impossible for the litigants to spend money for the lawyer. So, Government should see that steps are taken for quick disposal of cases. Sometime back, I stated in the House that cases of 1949 and 1950 were still pending upto 1955. It was more than 3 or 4 years that some particular cases continued. But I must admit that things have improved a little. But I want further improvement in this direction.

There are 4 Magistrates for the criminal court of Karimganj, but there are 3 Ejlases. How is it possible for the 4th Magistrate to do his work in the Khaskamra which is not more than 10' x 10' ? Is it possible for the lawyers, for the witnesses, and the others to gather together in a small room like this in the criminal court of Karimganj ? Moreover, Sir, the whole court building of Karimganj is in such a bad state that it may collapse at any moment. During the rainy season, the whole building leaks continuously. So, Government should take steps to improve the court building so that the magistrates, the litigants and others can get proper facilities when cases are taken up. There is no spacious verandah also in the building for the people to take shelter when it rains. On the top of them, Sir, there is no latrine or urinal attached to the court building. The magistrates are to use the latrine and urinal of the Local Board Office. Hundreds of people are to visit the court building daily and yet unfortunately there is not a single latrine or urinal attached to it. Is it not funny ?

All these things require careful consideration and I hope Government will take immediate steps to improve the court building and to make 4 Ejlases therein.

Shri BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Members for bringing these matters before the House and I am also grateful to them for giving their suggestions. Though the suggestions are not new, yet they consider them to be urgent and that is why they have spoken about them. Preliminary steps have already been taken by the Government for the separation of judiciary from executive and also for speedy disposal of cases. Shri Bhattacharyya has agreed that something has been done in this direction of separation of judiciary from executive. But he wants that complete separation should be given effect to at the earliest possible opportunity. Sir, Government is also at one with Shri Bhattacharyya in this respect. But there are certain difficulties in giving effect to it to the fullest extent within a short space of time. Therefore, Government is taking some time. Government is not unmindful about it. They are proceeding in the matter step by step, as I stated the other day. It will take some time to have the required number of personnel also if we divide the work into two. The principle has been expedited, but the time to be taken is not entirely within the control of the State Government. However, Sir, the suggestion will be kept in view. My Friend, Shri Das, has stated that in this direction complete separation has not been done even after 7 or 8 years of Independence, but he has also admitted that something has been done. He is not satisfied with the manner in which the disposal of cases is done. Sir, the other day when I gave a reply to a question raised by my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, during the discussion of his Cut Motion on the Supplementary Demand, my Friend, Shri Das, was not present. However, for his knowledge I can say this much that Government is quite alert in this respect and are trying their best to see that the cases are not delayed unnecessarily. Adjournments are not taken unnecessarily. There must be valid reasons for such adjournments. It is not left to the discretion of the magistrates. Adjournments are taken by both the parties even. If we want that justice should be given by the magistrates without any interference in that case we can issue circular. that adjournment should be given with greater scrutiny but we cannot say that no adjournment should be given. We have brought this to the notice of the Magistracy by our circulars that all possible steps should be taken to see that justice is done at the earliest possible opportunity and cases are not kept pending unless it is absolutely necessary.

Now, Sir, regarding extension of Court rooms in Karimganj, for speedy disposal of cases and for development works, which had increased in the subdivision, we thought that the number of magistrates should be increased even though we could not for the time being provide sufficient accommodation. We hoped that the people of Karimganj would appreciate this and extend their co-operation (Shri Ranendra Mohan Das: we are glad). Very well, Sir, nevertheless, I can assure my Friend that I shall see how quickly this difficulty can be removed. As regards the other point, my Friend is here as a Member for the last four years and he had never brought this to the notice of the Government. If he had done so, Government would have at least seen whether there was any difficulty. Of course, he does not care to go to the court, but even the magistrates did not bring this to the notice of Government (Shri Ranendra Mohan Das: This was done). It has never been brought to my notice and I hope my Friend will accept my statement. Any way, Sir, I shall see that if there is any real difficulty, it is removed soon.

Lastly, Sir, my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, said that there are some magistrates who are afraid of the Police so much that they cannot do justice to the parties. I do not know, Sir, whether there are any such magistrates, but I can cite examples to the contrary where the Police got strictures from the magistracy. You will find, Sir, that in large number of cases the verdict has gone against police reports. Sir, the magistrates are held in high estimation of our people, they are educated persons recruited through the Public Service Commission. If they are so much afraid of the Police, then, Sir, it is better that we do not discuss this matter on the floor of this House; we should rather curse ourselves in our own rooms that the picked-up educated youngmen of our State cannot impart justice being afraid of the Police. Why? because they may not get promotion due to adverse police reports against them? Sir, there may be one or two such weaklings, which also I very much doubt. But to make a general observation like this is going too far and not fair. I don't think my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, really means it. He might have met one or two persons, who, though not so weak-hearted, might not have liked to cross with the police in the court; but that should not be taken as a general standard. I think my Friend did not mean it because in that case we shall be condemning ourselves in such a way that we won't be able to show our face to the people

outside..I think he had said these things, not because he himself believed in them, but possibly to make his arguments in favour of separation of executive from the judiciary forceful. Sir, I agree with him that there should be separation of executive and judiciary, but as I have explained, it will take some time due to the circumstances prevailing at present.

After I have explained the position and met the points raised by my hon. Friend, I hope Shri Bhattacharyya will see his way to withdraw his Motion,

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: In view of the assurance given by the Minister, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Motion.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that a sum of Rs.14,46,400 be granted to the Minister in-charge to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head "27.—Administration of justice."

(The Motion was adopted.)

Grant No.23

"42—Co-operation—1—Co-operative Societies."

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam. I beg to move that a sum of Rs.27,87,200 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957 for the administration of the head "42.—Co-operation I.—Co-operative Societies."

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Motion moved is that a sum of Rs.27,87,200 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957 for the administration of the head "42.—Co-operation-I.—Co-operative Societies."

There are two Cut Motions.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 27,87,200 under Grant No.23, Major head—42.-Co-operation-I.-Co-operative Societies, at page 351 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, i.e, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.27,87,200 do stand reduced by Re.1.

In moving my Cut Motion, I beg to place certain suggestions for the consideration of the Minister concerned. Sir, this subject, "Co-operation", has been given a great deal of importance by the Planning Commission. Unfortunately, though India is a country suitable for the co-operative movement, the movement has not advanced much.—I say this for India as a whole, because so far as my knowledge goes Assam does not lag far behind other States of India. Except perhaps some three States, *viz.*, Punjab, Madras and Bombay, Assam has got rather a good record, but that is a good record below the pass mark, which is known as 'গছ নোহোৱা দেশত এড়াই বিৰিখ' or in Sanskrit "এবঙোপি জয়ায়তে" *i. e.*, where there are no trees the "Erand" itself is a big tree. I am placing certain general suggestions which will be applicable to our State also.

Adjournment.

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

After a Lunch

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had been saying that the Planning Commission had given a great deal of importance to this question of co-operative and on an All-India scale. According to the directions of India, 50 per cent. of the rural indebted families were to be covered with all types of loans within 15 years.

Now, in our State the Congress Parliamentary Party was not satisfied with the present progress and they thought the progress should be much more and therefore the Party directed that the entire population of the State should be brought within the orbit or rural credit within the Second Plan period. This is really a good venture and if this target is to be achieved, the way the Co-operative Department is working at present will not do. Even to reach the Department's target according to their own calculation which is a *via-media* between the Central Government's view and the State Congress Parliamentary Party's view that 50 per cent. of the rural indebted families were to be covered with all types of loan within 15 years and indebted

families should be covered with loan within Second Plan period. For any one of these three, the target set up by the Union Government, the target set up by the Congress Parliamentary Party of this State and the target set up by the Department itself, the present tempo is too inadequate. Of course these three do not agree with one another. But even if we want to meet the minimum or the least of three, the All-India level, the Department shall have to be improved a great deal, not to speak of successfully reaching the via-media or the Congress Parliamentary Party's recommendation. We have seen from the Report of the Department itself that the progress in the past is not very promising. During 1952-53, the total rural credit was less than Rs.2 lakhs. I am trying to confine myself to the side of rural credit, because that is the most important aspect of the co-operative movement and that is the most difficult part of the movement too. In 1952-53, according to the Report, the rural loan advanced was less than Rs.2 lakhs. This has, of course, gone up and in the present year it has come upto about Rs.20 lakhs and it is said that about ten thousand families are expected to be benefited by this. Even if this rate is taken, the target will not be reached. Moreover, we have seen that there are pre-conditions for making the movement successful. The most important thing is to make the people co-operative minded. They should themselves feel that it is through this means that their difficulties will be over come and that Government is only giving aid advice and so on. The initiative must be there in the people. It is their thing, they must be able to maintain it and improved it and that requires a great deal of education, both general and technical because from experience in the past, especially, during the war years, it was seen that when there was difficulty in obtaining controlled commodities, many co-operative societies grew up on unsound footing. There were trading co-operatives for getting things like sugar, salt, cloth, etc. but they were actually meant to get the immediate ends. As soon as the war was over and the circumstances eased to procure these necessities, these co-operatives failed because control was removed and these things were easily available. This is one aspect. There are others.

Even at the time of forming co-operatives many were not very respectable persons, who are known as village touts, who wanted to make two piceout of these co-operatives by becoming Chairman and Secretaries and who actually made very good profits, some of them misappropriated money. Some of them were deected and many were brought to the Court of Law. These things scared many people. In other words, the experience

of co-operatives in war years made people lose the confidence for building co-operatives, made people lose enthusiasm for building co-operatives and instead of grasping the ideals of co-operative, they became scared and thought these co-operatives are nothing but a resort for village touts. That is one important reason for apathy or antipathy for the improvement of the Co-operative movement. This is a bad heritage of the past and this shall have to be removed. Of course, for creation of this, the present Government is not responsible. I do not blame them. But this heritage is still lingering. What is that? It is some thing which is known as "village politics" which is playing a great part. It is seen that many imposters have changed their colour overnight and have worn the garb of patriots though in the past when patriotism meant suffering, they were not to be found within the orbit of patriotic movement. These people have now managed to become the office-bearers of co-operative societies. People know the past records of these persons and the result is that people are not very enthusiastic to come forward under their leadership.

Sriman PRAFULLA GOSWAMI : Can you give an instance ?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Many instances can be found in the constituency of my Friend, Sriman Goswami.

Now, the point is that Government should see that this sort of village politics does not retard the progress of the co-operative movement.

It is a movement which is above politics and which must be kept above the factional fight of political parties. Unless and until all the villagers are enthused with the spirit of co-operation both co-operation and non-cooperation will be there, side by side. I think if co-operation and non-cooperation go side, by side there will not be desired result. We must remember that the ideal of this movement is very high and this ideal is very difficult to be attained unless and until all difficulties are removed from its way.

Another thing I am going to mention is rural credit. What we usually find is that this money does not reach the agriculturist in time. In other words, there is a great deal of delay in the actual disbursement of the credit. Government should see that this delay is lessened so that the man gets the money when he needs it. For example, a cultivator in a

particular village wants to purchase a pair of plough cattle. It is no good making the credit now and disbursing the money after because this is the time when he is to purchase a pair of bullock. If the money is given in this season then it really becomes helpful to the cultivator and if the money is given 5 months after then the entire amount is lost because being a poor man he will spend it in some other purposes which means consumption of other things. So the result will be that he will be in further debt ; instead of saving him from usurer it will be putting him in further debt if the money which was purported for the purchase of a pair of bullock was actually spent by him in other things. So these are the things which should be given attention to.

The next point is that Government has made a scheme of making three kinds of loan *viz* long-term loan, medium-term loan and short-term loan, and these loans are sought to be made on the average at Rs.200. This sum of Rs.200 is not sufficient now-a days for an agricultural family to purchase a pair of bullocks, not to speak of purchasing better seed ; better implements and sometimes also food during the period of agriculture. So my submission would be that even if we cannot reach the target set by the Congress Parliamentary Party we should at least try to reach the *via-media* target set by the Department. But even if we want to reach the target set by the Planning Commission or the Government of India we cannot do so by giving small loans, by ineffective loans. The other day when my Friend, Mr. Lohar, was harping on the question of giving Rs 1,000 per family, my other Friends laughed perhaps for the fact that he was repeating it very often. But I, for myself, found that there was some substance in his suggestion. Really at least Rs.1,000 is necessary for a family to give a good start. If you cannot cover the entire number of families within 5 years that does not matter. But so far as Government is concerned they are to see the country as a whole and if they have a long plan, say a plan for 15 years then at the end of this 15 years all the families will be covered. So, instead of trying to cover all the people within 5 years or instead of giving them only one-fifth of their requirement, I think, it would be better to cover only one-fifth of the people but to give each family the total amount required by them because that will really help a family in making a start. But if only a part is given, nobody will be actually benefited. I, therefore, personally think, though I quite appreciate the eagerness of the Congress Parliamentary Party and I rather congratulate them for being very eager on this point, that from practical point of view let us

do even half or one-third, but let us do it well. For that purpose my suggestion is that at the time of giving loan we should not say that everybody must get something but those who get must get it adequately so that they can give a real and effective start in a Welfare State.

My next point is with regard to the return of the loan. Government has said, it has to be returned within 15 months, but I think this 15 month period is too short a period. Sir, a man after getting this money has to get a pair of bullock to do his cultivation and then get something out of that and it is not possible that within 15 months he will be in a position to repay the money. It may be said that he may come under the category of medium-term period. In that case the short term period may be done away with. Let us begin from the medium-term period and see that he gets at least 2 years for repaying the money. I think Government should consider this question very carefully that the cultivator should be given 3 years time to pay the money because if he has to pay it earlier, perhaps he will have to pay from his capital and it is not proper to lessen his capital before it is mature and before it is capable of giving some return.

Then comes the question of security. On this point I again refer to what my Friend, Mr. Lohar, said the other day. Of course, Government has now liberalised this provision of giving security and I congratulate the Government to that extent; but I think there is scope for further liberalisation in this matter. After all, the very existence of a citizen is dependent on his willingness and capacity to work. If the intention of the Government is to help the lowest to rise from that position to a higher position there should not be much stringency in this provision of security. Even some bad debts may be there and Government has actually made some provision for writing off this bad debt, if necessary. So there is no reason to fear anything. Constitution of a State Relief and Guarantee Fund and State Co-operative Fund for the purpose of writing off bad debts and for industrial development is urgently necessary. There is already some proposal of the Government for such a Fund where bad debts can be written off whenever necessary. If there be a real national movement and real people's movement for development of co-operatives in the country, the percentage of bad debts will not be very high and the guarantee will be the people of the State themselves. Therefore, there should not be too much stress on the issue of guarantee. These are the few suggestions from this side.

Again Sir, it is the officers after all who are to conduct these things and in the selection of these officers also we should be very careful. We have seen a tendency that whenever the question of developing some Departments comes in a the first thing that is looked to is the Registrar, the Deputy Registrar, the Secretary, their stenographers, etc., as if the primary work is hereat the capital. I do not say that these are not necessary but my point is that too many deputies and too many officers may not be necessary if there is a fair amount of decentralisation in the matter. As a matter of fact co-operative movement itself is basically a movement for decentralising economy and an emphasis on national reconstruction. We have also found, Sir, that at the time of selection of these officers particular care is not taken: sometimes even the posts are not advertised. High posts are filled up without advertisement or without interview or without actually coming to the Public Service Commission. These things happened with regard to the appointment of the Deputy Registrar himself. So, in the selection of officers there should be greater care and particularly the Department should be asked to see that those people alone are selected for this movement who have experience of contact with the mass people. After all, it is they who have to understand the mind of the people, to appreciate the difficulties and aspirations of the people and those who are not connected with the people; those who are only arm-chair officials may not be quite effective for such posts. The Minister-in-charge of the Department will perhaps agree with me when I say that there are officers—to use a rather moderate term—who are very pessimistic. Whenever any scheme or proposal is placed before them, they see only the difficulties and they think that after all this co-operative movement will not or cannot succeed. If these officers who are at the helm of affairs, themselves have no faith in the movement, how can they inculcate that faith in the people? How can they inspire the people to co-operate for the success of this movement? So we should see that those people are placed at the helm of affairs who have got robust optimism, who really appreciate and understand the mind of the people and who are determined to see that this movement is accepted by the people—voluntarily of course, and that it is carried through to complete success. So, Sir, as I have already said, in the selection of these officers who are to guide, conduct and control the movement, Government should see that only those officers are appointed who have got such confidence in the people and in whom there is confidence of the people.

Then again, we should see that certain difficulties of the past are removed as soon as possible. For example, in such a

new or rather a growing Department redtapism should be loosened, if it cannot be altogether removed and there should be more popular discussion in the matter. I must say with thanks to the Minister concerned that of late, in the recent past we have seen some tendency on the part of this Department to seek co-operation of all sorts of opinion irrespective of political leanings or colour. We expect that the Minister and the Department will ask their district officers also to emulate that example: I do not understand one thing here, Sir, and that is this: I was invited to the State Co-operative Advisory Committee, my opinion and suggestions are taken, but while here I am supposed to be desirable—at least not undesirable in the district level when we sometimes go to offer our co-operation and give certain suggestions or when we want to suggest that “you better discuss certain matters with us—we also have got some contact with some sorts of people who can help you with their experience, who can tell you how the people think about you, how they feel about you, or offer constructive criticisms, and all these things will certainly help you and will benefit you in furthering this movement”—well, the explanation that we get from the officers is ‘yes, we would love to’—not only ‘like’—but they say ‘we would love to have your opinion, but the trouble is that if we are in contact with you a Communist then there are people who will report about it and we will be in trouble and we will be suspected’. That is the difficulty, Sir, with regard to district committees. I cannot understand this when this co-operative movement has got nothing to do with Communism. It is a fact that this fear still lingers in the minds of these district officers—I don’t know whether this is only imaginary fear or a real fear. But whatever that may be, I hope the Government will inform the officer in the district level that in these matters they should seek the opinion and co-operation of all sets of people, as I have said, irrespective of political colour. If you want cent per cent success of this movement, then you must cover all people of all sets of opinion in the State. You should not make any discrimination. If the officers are still going on with the idea of fear or pessimism, that idea should be removed and that too the sooner the better.

Now, Sir, I do not want to take much time of the House. I can only hope that Government will appreciate my points and direct those responsible for cent per cent success of this movement to see that this expectation is fulfilled. With these words, Sir, I commend my motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved is that the total provision of Rs.27,87,200 under grant No.23, Major head—42.—Co-operation—1.—Co-operative Societies, at page 351 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, *i.e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.27,87,200 do stand reduced by Re.1.

Shri JOGA KANTA BARUAH: মাননীয় উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, চলিত বছৰ কাৰণে প্ৰায় ২৮ লাখ টকা কোপাৰোটিভ বিভাগৰ জৰিয়তে খৰচ কৰিবলৈ গভৰ্ণমেণ্টে ঠিক কৰিছে।

ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ আঁচনি মতে বিশেষকৈ আমাৰ গাঁৱলীয়া খেতিয়ক ধৰুৱাসকলৰ শতকৰা ৫০ ভাগ এই সমবায় আঁচনিৰ জৰিয়তে ১৫ বছৰৰ ভিতৰত নাইকিয়া কৰিব। কিন্তু দেখা যায়, আমাৰ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ বৰ্ত্তমান আঁচনিটো সেইফালৰ পৰা আৰু উন্নত। কিয়নো, আমাৰ গৱৰ্ণমেণ্টে ১৫ বছৰৰ সলনি সেই একে কামকে এটি ৫ বছৰীয়া আঁচনিৰ জৰিয়তে সমাধান কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিছে। সঁচাকৈ মোৰ বোধেৰে এইটো বৰ সাহসৰ কথা।

আমাৰ ৰাজ্যত ১৩ লাখ পৰিয়াল আছে। তাৰ ভিতৰত শতকৰা ৫০ ভাগ ধৰুৱাকে ৫ বছৰৰ ভিতৰত নাইকিয়া কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰাটোত মই বৰ সুখ পাইছো।

আমাৰ বিৰোধীদলৰ ভটাচাৰ্য ডাঙৰীয়াই এইটো যাতে কাৰ্য্যকৰী হয় তাৰেই কেইটামান পৰামৰ্শ হৈ আগবঢ়াইছে। তাৰ কাৰণে মই তেখেতক ধন্যবাদ দিছো। এটা কথা আমাৰ এই সদনত যোৱা বছৰৰ পৰা আন্দোলন হৈয়েই আছে। সেইটো হৈছে এই যে, আমাৰ প্ৰত্যেক খেতিয়ক পৰিয়ালক এহেজাবকৈ কৃষিক্ষেত্ৰ দিব লাগে। সেইটো ঋণ দিবলৈকো এই বৰ্ত্তমান সমবায় আঁচনিৰ জৰিয়তে ব্যৱস্থা কৰিবলৈ যত্ন কৰিছে। জেনেকুৱা সাহায্য দিবলৈ বন্দোবস্ত কৰাটো বৰ সুখৰ কথা।

আমাৰ ৰাইজৰ ভিতৰত বহুতে এই সমবায় বিভাগৰ দ্বাৰা বিশেষ কাম হোৱা নাই বুলি অভিযোগ কৰা শুনা যায়। কিন্তু আমি বুজা উচিত যে এই বিভাগৰ কৃতকাৰ্য্যতা নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে ৰাইজৰ সহযোগিতাৰ ওপৰত—অকল চাকৰীয়ালৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰি থাকিলে নহব। সমবায় আন্দোলনত আমি সচাকৈয়ে বিশেষ ভাবে আগবাঢ়িব পৰা নাই। আমাৰ দেশত বৃহৎ শিল্প গঢ়ি উঠিলেও সকলোৱে টকাৰ অংশ সমানে নাপাব। গতিকে ৰাইজক বুজাব লাগে যে ৰাইজৰ অৱস্থা টপকিয়াল কৰিবলৈ হলে সমবায় আন্দোলনৰ বাহিৰে উপায় নাই। ভটাচাৰ্য ডাঙৰীয়াই কৈছে অন্নমাদী ঋণ যি দুশ টকা দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে সেইটো খুব কম হৈছে। কিন্তু অন্নমাদী ঋণ ইয়াতকৈ বেচিকৈ দিলে ৰাইজে অলপ সময়ৰ ভিতৰত ঘূৰাই দিব নোৱাৰিব। এইটো দিয়া হয় যাতে একে বছৰৰ ভিতৰতে যেতিয়া ধানৰ দাম বাঢ়ে সেই সময়ত ধান বেচি টকা খিনি পৰিশোধ কৰিব পাবে। তাৰ বাহিৰেও দীৰ্ঘমাদী ঋণ ১ হাজাৰলৈকে দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা আছেই। গতিকে ভটাচাৰ্য ডাঙৰীয়াৰ আসোঁৱাই খিনি দ্বৰ কৰাৰ উদ্দেশ্যেৰে মই এই কথা খিনি কলো। অহা পাঁচ বছৰত মুঠ ৫ কোটি টকা ধাৰে দিবলৈ যি বন্দোবস্ত কৰা হৈছে তাক সমবায় সমিতিৰ যোগেহে দিবলৈ ঠিক কৰা হৈছে। গতিকে ইয়াক কাৰ্য্যকৰী কৰিবলৈ হলে, গোটেই দেশ সমবায় সমিতিৰে ভৰাই পেলাব লাগিব আৰু ইয়াক কৃতকাৰ্য্য কৰিবলৈ হলে কেৱল চৰকাৰী কৰ্মচাৰীৰ ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিলেই নহব।

এই সমস্যাৰ আন্দোলন কৃতকাৰ্য্য কৰিবলৈ হলে সকলো নেতৃস্থানীয় লোক আৰু বাইজ উদ্ভিপি লাগিলেহে হব। বৃহৎ উদ্যোগ স্থাপন হলে দেশখন ধনী হব পাৰে কিন্তু সকলো বাইজে তাৰ সুবিধা পাব নোৱাৰে। দেশৰ সকলোৱে সমানে আগবাঢ়িবলৈ হলে সমস্যাৰ আন্দোলনেই একমাত্ৰ উপায়। মোৰ বিনীত অনুৰোধ যেন সকলো নেতৃস্থানীয় লোক আৰু বাইজে ইয়াত উৎসাহেৰে যোগ দি দেশখন আগবাঢ়াই নিয়ে।

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to speak a few words, because I am taking a good deal of interest in the Co-operative movement from the very beginning. It is a fact that the very word "Co-operative" presupposes that there must be co-operation between the two parties. So the Government officials and the public both should co-operate in relieving the ignorant masses from the clutches of the money-lenders. After Independence, the policy of the Government has been changed to a great extent. Now the Government is giving emphasis, I should say, not only to relieve the poorer section of the masses from the clutches of the money-lenders, but they are actually making a policy which will not only relieve them from distress, but also give them various benefits and new avenues of life. Therefore, it is high time for us all that the co-operative movement must not be taken for any political party colour in relieving the common man which is the object of all the parties that we profess. Therefore, in this matter of co-operative movement we put our claim as a national objective and not a political party objective. We must see that our poor peasants who are exploited by hundreds and one way by money-lenders and others while making some transactions with our peasant classes, and who try to cheat them, are relieved and saved from the clutches of such money-lenders and others. It is high time, therefore, to take seriously the co-operative ideal in every sphere of our life. We must see that without co-operative movement, our peasants, specially who are poor masses, will never be free from penury and want.

Sir, as regards the machinery working under this co-operative movement we should consider that it is a sacred duty of one and all to gear it up. But in practical experience, and in my humble experience, we find that the co-operative organisations were organised in such haphazard way that neither the co-operative officers nor the natural leaders have been able to take this seriously. The whole movement depends not so much upon the short-term and long-term loans, but actually it depends upon the character of the people who are members of the Co-operative Societies. We must see our

personal integrity and character above all. To build up the Co-operative Societies all the persons at least require co-operative knowledge and co-operative principle to understand the very meaning of the co-operative movement.

As regards the short-term loan, I find that short-term loans are given on annual term. In the Lower Assam where there is a money crop, this short-term loan given on annual term works very well, because after a year people get the money crop and by immediately selling such money crops they could repay the loans. But in Upper Assam where there is no such money crops *viz.*, Jute the people find it difficult to pay the loan immediately. After harvesting their crops, the people can repay the loans by selling their food crops. Naturally due to this, they always find themselves in the defaulter's list though it is not intentional on the part of the people. Therefore, there must be some sort of principle in this matter of short-term loan for placing the different crops along with the money crops, food crops and whatever crops it may be, with a view to repay the loans.

Then, Sir, while forming the co-operative societies it should be the duty of the co-operative officers to take into confidence the natural leaders of the locality. To fulfil the object of the co-operative movement the natural leaders of the locality should be found out and taken into confidence and not to leave the co-operative societies in the hands of the bad people. This is the only panacea for the poor people. The natural leaders of the locality should be entrusted with such works, and opportunities should be given to both the natural leaders of the locality and the Government officials to try their level best while organising the co-operative societies whether credit or multi-purpose societies to find out the real and honest men of the locality who have hearts to do the work and to feel for the poorer people. If these things are seriously taken into consideration, not only by the Government Officials but by the natural political leaders of any political faith then the movement will certainly grow stronger every day as it is growing stronger now. We must admit that the Co-operative movement has taken some root in the minds of our people at the present movement. If the Government and the local leaders work upto that ideal, then I have no doubt in my mind that the mass people will also follow that ideal. Sir, due to the bungling of some people without character these Co-operative Societies come to grief and to remove that impression from the minds of the people a certain amount of propagandist work is necessary so that the people can realise the economic benefit behind this organisation.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to my Friend, Sri Bhattacharyya for the various suggestions which he has given to the Government in moving his Cut Motion. I shall take into consideration his suggestions, but it will be difficult to accept all his suggestions. I think, he himself will revise some of his suggestions if he goes through the Report of the All India Rural Credit Survey and the recommendation made therein. I shall point out to him why all his suggestions cannot be accepted in course of my reply and quote the Statistical data given in the All India Rural Credit Survey Report in formulating our plan. The other day my Friend, Sri Bimala Kanta Borah, criticised this Department for lack of thinking and plan also. I could not reply to him that day. There is no lack of thinking. He also accused that there is no plan; there is no lack of planning also. Even he criticised that the Minister-in-charge has no contact with the people. I do not like to say much about myself. Sir, I served in the Non-Official Organisations for 27 years—12 years as Secretary, District Congress Committee, Gauhati, 13 years as Secretary, Provincial Congress Committee and 2 years as President of the Provincial Congress Committee. So I can claim at least some contact with the people within this 27 years of service in the Non-Official Organisations. Sir, I request those who claim to be friends of Co-operative Movements to read the book—at least the Second volume of All India Rural Credit Survey, at least the small abridged book. I propose to translate it into Assamese and distribute it to the public.

Shri BIMALA KANTA BORAH: Sir, it appears from the speech of the Minister that I know nothing about this Organisation. For his information, I can tell him that I am the President of the Nowgong Land Mortgage Bank and I was a Director of the Provincial Co-operative Bank. I was the editor of the only quarterly Co-operative Journal of Assam “সমবায়”. I was honorary Organiser of the Co-operative Societies for many years. I am connected with a lot of similar institutions. (*Laughter.*)

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): I have not said so. So, Sir, there is no lack of thinking or lack of plan. There may be some lack of co-operation. Sir, in this connection I refer to the Plan and also the small Booklet entitled “Co-operatives in Assam’s Second Five Year Plan and Progress made under the First Five Year Plan”. Sir in

Assam there are 13 lakhs rural agricultural families and of these 40 per cent, *i.e.*, nearly 5.2 lakhs families are indebted. Of this we propose to issue loan to 50 per cent of these families, *i.e.*, 2 lakhs and 51 thousand indebted families, during the Second Five Year Plan. The plan for the Government of India is to cover 50 per cent of the indebted families of whole India within the period of 15 years. We have got 36 crores of people in India and five out of every six live in the rural area and the total agricultural population in India that is self-supporting persons and their dependents who live either in rural or urban areas and who derive their income is about 70 per cent. Of this, 7 out of 10 persons live on agriculture or atleast their principal means of livelihood is agriculture. About half the national income of India is derived from agriculture and animal husbandry. In Assam we have got 5 lakhs 20 thousand indebted agricultural families.

Now, what is our Plan? Personally, I may lack in thinking, but our country is full of great many thinkers, and our Plan is practically speaking is the product of their thinking. The General Report of the Committee of Direction, All-India Rural Credit Survey, has been welcomed as a report of great value and significance for the future of the Co-operative movement in India. The Government of India and all State Governments have generally accepted the basic principles and lines of re-organisation underlying the integrated scheme of rural credit recommended in the Committee's Report, and in particular, accepted State partnership as a method of re-organising and developing Co-operative institutions. The Second Five Year Plan Schemes formulated by the Co-operative Department agree with all basic principles laid down by the Committee of Direction, All India Rural Credit Survey, and approved by the Planning Commission, Government of India, subject however to such minor variations as were deemed necessary in order to provide for special requirements of our State and to suit local conditions. The main principles involved in the integrated scheme are given like this.

(1) State participation in the Share Capital of Co-operative Institutions at all level.

(2) Formation of larger sized limited liability primary agricultural credit societies in place of smaller unlimited primary credit societies.

(3) Security is to be determined more by the character of the borrower than the landed or tangible properties possessed by him.

(4) Constitution of State Relief and Guarantee Fund and the State Co-operative Development Fund for the purpose of writing off bad debts and for industrial development respectively.

(5) Integrated scheme of Rural Credit to be introduced. Production is expected to rise along with credit facilities and the producers shall have to be provided with facilities for marketing the produce. Products which can be processed before marketing such as husking, oil crushing, Gur making, cotton ginning, jutebaling, etc., should also be done by the agriculturist on co-operative basis. Thus credit, processing and marketing are to be integrated.

(6) Arrangement for proper training of officers of the Co-operative Department and office bearers of Co-operative Societies and also provision for educating general public in Co-operative matters.

Sir, our Plan is based on these principles. During the Second Five-Year Plan period a total sum of Rs.14 crores, 15 lakhs and 17 thousand will be involved in the various schemes in the Co-operative Department as follows:—

	Rs.
(1) Government contribution to share Capital and Subsidies.	170 lakhs
(2) Short medium, and long term loan. ...	1245·17 lakhs
Total ...	1415·17 lakhs

Government Contribution to share Capital and subsidies will amount to 1 crore 70 lakhs of rupees and the short, medium, and long term loans will be Rs. 12 crores, 45 lakhs and 17 thousand. Sir, this is indeed a very big amount.

Now with regard to the point of Shri Bhattacharyya that Government have no such administrative machinery to cope with such a huge programme, I would only say

that Government is quite conscious to its responsibility with regard to this matter also. About 115 or 120 Assistant Co-operative Officers and Deputy Co-operative Officers, on the recommendation of Public Service Commission, will soon be appointed by the Department. Sir, for administrative convenience the staff of the Department has been reorganised. It is now proposed to place two Mauzas or two Chaukidari Unions in charge of an officer. There will be one Assistant Co-operative Officer in two Mauzas or two Chaukidari Unions and one Deputy Co-operative Officer for every two Thanas. There will be one Assistant Registrar for each district. Most of the complaints received by the Department are based on one point mainly, and that is the delay in registration of societies. As the hon. Member know well, until recently we had only one Registrar with headquarters at Shillong, and the responsibility of registering the societies was vested in him. Apart from this and other responsibilities vested on him as the head of the department, he has to go very often to Delhi and other places in India in connection with the work of his Department. Naturally therefore there is some delay in registration of societies. To eliminate this difficulty, Government have now appointed one Assistant Registrar in each district who has been authorised to register the primary societies.

So, in every District there will be one Assistant Registrar and he is authorised to register the Societies and to see that delay in registration is avoided. At present there is one Registrar of Co-operative Societies, one Joint-Registrar of Co-operative Societies, three Deputy Registrars of Co-operative Societies, thirteen Assistant Registrars of Co-operative Societies. We do not make selection of candidates for such appointments of Assistant Co-operative officers and Deputy Co-operative officers. Appointments are made at the recommendation of Assam Public Service Commission. About 115 new appointments will be made shortly on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission. So, Sir, steps have already been taken up to gear up the administrative machineries to cope with the work of co-operation in the Second Five Year Plan.

I admit that there is not much propaganda and therefore, the hon. Members of this House and the public outside do not know much about our plan and also of this movement. I shall try to improve the propaganda machinery. My Friend also suggested that Government should see that Co-operation of all is received by Government, irrespective of party politics. Sir I seek the co-operation of all

irrespective of cast, creed or party. Sir, I invited Shri H. Goswami, Shri G. Bhattacharyya and others to attend the meeting held in this connection in February and March. Mr. Bhattacharyya attended for a day only, that is, on the 19th February. On the meeting held on 20th March unfortunately he had to be busy otherwise and so he could not attend. But Mr. Hareswar Goswami attended for an hour only. Probably he was otherwise busy and could not attend to full discussion. If my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, would have been there during discussion on both the days he would not have given certain suggestions here. He suggested that Rs.200 on the average is a very small amount for short term loan. It is not so. He will find at page 217 of the All-India Rural Credit Survey Report that the average loan borrowed by an average person in Bombay is 105, Madras 50, but our figure is 7 only. Now we have provided Rs.200 on average which is 30 times more than the Assam's average in the past and many times more of other States and 2 times above Bombay level. I quote the figures which are as follows—

Bombay	...	105
Madras	...	50
Coorg	...	38
Punjab	..	49
Madhya Pradesh		108
Assam	...	7

Madhya Pradesh has the highest. So, Sir, our average is not less. This is almost double than the highest, about 30 times more than the average of the State.

I now come to short term, medium term and long term loans. This was discussed in the last meeting of the Advisory Board. The short term loans are very popular and successful for localities where the people cultivate money crops like jute, mustard, potatoes, etc. But in places like Upper Assam where the people do not grow such money crops, such as jute, mustard seeds, etc., they find some difficulties to repay short term loan. But there is a provision to convert the short term loan into medium term loan if the borrower desires to convert them. So, there will be no difficulties for the cultivators or the debtors to convert this short term loan into medium term loan. As regards short and medium term loans to be advanced to each family, it has been paid at Rs. 200. As for long term, it has been paid at Rs. 1,000 each family. Short term, medium

term and long term loans proposed to be issued during the period of the Second Plan period is as follows:—

	1st year	2nd year	3rd year	4th year	5th year
Short term ..	50 lakhs	100 lakhs	150 lakhs	200 lakhs	250 lakhs
Medium term ..	25 „	50 „	100 „	150 „	200 „
Long term ..	„	15 „	20 „	35 „	50 „

For issuing loan the following important credit institutions will be set up and some of the existing ones will be re-organised during the second plan period for rural credit.

- (1) Assam Co-operative Apex Bank, Ltd. (Re-organised).
- (2) Assam Co-operative Central Land Mortgage Bank, Ltd. (Registered).
- (3) Seven Central Co-operative Bank (will be organised).
- (4) Fifty Large Size Primary Co-operative Credit Societies (will be organised) ; minimum share capital to be achieved by 1961 for each institution (50 per cent of which is to be contributed by Government) is 30 lakhs ; for Assam Co-operative Apex Bank, Ltd., 10 lakhs ; for Central Co-operative Land Mortgage Bank, 6 lakhs ; for each of 7 Central Co-operative Banks, 0.20 lakhs ; and 0.50 lakhs for 15 size primary land mortgage banks.

As regards security, Sir, character is the main thing. Security is to be determined more by the character of the borrower than landed or other tangible property possessed by him.

Then, Sir, with regard to delay in actual disbursement, I have already explained that there was some delay due to shortage of officers in the past. Now administrative machineries have been re-organised and we have better result. I do not like to enumerate here the reasons for failure of the co-operative trading societies in the past ; but one reason was certainly lack of proper control and supervision over them. Now, Sir, there will be one Assistant Co-operative Officer for every two Mauzas and one Deputy Co-operative Officer for every two Thanas. We can now expect better control and supervision over the societies. It is also proposed to train our officers and office bearers of the Society as far as possible.

As regards appointments, I have already said, Sir, that appointments are made on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission.

My Friend, Mr. Barua, suggested that small industries should be organised on co-operative basis. Sir, we are trying to establish a sugar mill in the State on co-operative basis and, if possible, to take some other small industries in future on co-operative basis also.

Mr. Phookan suggested that in Upper Assam, short term loans would not be useful. If short term loans are not

successful there, they can easily be converted into medium term loans or medium term loans may be issued. This suggestion will be taken into consideration.

Sir, I think I have replied to all the points raised by my Friends, Messrs. Bhattacharyya, Barua and Phookan. I now request Mr. Bhattacharyya to withdraw his Cut Motion. I also request every Member of this House and through this House the public to fully co-operate with this Department. This is a department which cannot succeed without co-operation from all concerned. I invited many Members of this House who are interested, to attend the last meeting of the Advisory Board held on the 21st here for discussion. Some of them attended and gave us valuable advice. Shri Bimala Prasad Chaliha, M. P. came from Delhi and attended the meeting from beginning to the end; he and some other Members gave very valuable suggestions. I appeal to every Member to extend their co-operation for the success of our scheme. If criticisms are made only for criticism's sake and are not constructive, it will be helping the enemies of this movement. We have many enemies; the businessmen and traders are not very friendly with co-operative movements, Sir, at the time when the Apex Bank was started. At the time our late revered leader, Lokapriya Bordoloi, when he was Chief Minister (Prime Mover then) and Shri Bimala Prasad Chaliha was in-charge of the Department, in Calcutta some representatives of Trading Community invited Lokapriya Bordoloi and they praised this movement, but they suggested that finance should not be arranged by Government or Apex Bank should not be started. He came back and spoke about this that they appreciated our Co-operative scheme but they suggested that we should not make arrangements for finance; that means, the Apex Bank should not be organised. You can, therefore, see the game. So, I say that we have many enemies of Co-operation and we should not play into their hands.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: এখন বুজতে পেরেছি বড় ভুলই হয়েছে, এতটা Cut Motion রয়েছে এবং সময় মাত্র ৪৩ মিনিট রয়েছে। যাই হয়েছে, আর লাগবেনা (হানি)

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): If I am wrong, you fall upon me. But I request every member of this House and through this House and the public of Assam who call themselves as the friends of co-operatives to give full co-operation to this Department and give necessary advice to remove the defects. Co-operatives failed in the past, but it must succeed in future. I therefore request the hon'ble Members to withdraw the Cut Motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is the hon. Member withdrawing his Cut Motion?

(Mr. Bhattacharyya nodded assent).

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that a sum of Rs. 27,87,200, be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head "42.—Co-operation—I.—Co-operative Societies".

(The Motion was adopted.)

GRANT No. 24.

"42.—Co-operation—II.—Rural Development".

Shri SHIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 69,27,600 (Rupees sixty-nine lakhs, twenty-seven thousand and six hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head—"42.—Co-operation—II—Rural Development".

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Motion moved is that a sum of Rs. 69,27,600 (Rupees sixty-nine lakhs, twenty-seven thousand and six hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1957, for the administration of the head—"42.—Co-operation—II.—Rural Development".

There are two cut motions, one in the name of Shri Hareswar Goswami who is not present in the House and the other in the name of Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya. Will you move your motion, Shri Bhattacharyya?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: As there is only 40 minutes left to four, I am not moving it.

(The Motion containing the Demand was then put by the Chair as a question before the House and was adopted).

GRANT No. 5

“10.—Forests”

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 74,96,300 (Rupees seventy-four lakhs, ninety-six thousand and three hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head—“10.—Forests”.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Motion moved is that a sum of Rs. 74,96,300 (Rupees seventy-four lakhs, ninety-six thousand and three hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1957 for the administration of the head—“10.—Forests”.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 74,96,300 under Grant 5.—Major head—10.—Forests at page 24 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1 ; *i. e.* : the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 74,96,300 do stand reduced by Re.1.

The purpose of my Cut Motion is to raise a general discussion.

Sir, Assam which is so much rich in forests could have been made, so to say, a land of gardens instead of a land of jungles, which it is to day. In this Department of Forests, as I shall show later on, the rule of the jungle is going on and public money is squandared away like anything. It reminds me of what a friend told me the other day—

राम की चिड़िया
राककी खेत
खा लो चिड़िया
भर के पेट

This means all this property belongs to Ram and all these birds belong to Ram ; so let the birds fill up their bellies to the full. There is no rule and regulation, so eat to your satisfaction as much as you can.

Sir, it will not be possible to deal with all the items. I shall confine myself to a few. Very big promises were given to us at the very beginning of the First Five Year Plan that there would be large scale plantation of teak, sal and other trees, saw mills, resin tapping mills, treatment of wood, celloloid manufacturing,

manufacture of charcoal, cinchona cultivation, etc etc., Now let us see what amount of progress in these respects has been made in all these 5 years and what is the return we have got? I remember, in the very first year of my attendance in this House, the Forest Minister was speaking eloquently about this resin and turpentine industry in Assam, which was repeated in the next year and third year also. In page 34 of the budget under Miscellaneous—Pinewood Industry, what do we find? It is a big zero. No allocation is made here, where has gone that pinewood industry about which we heard so much and for which Rs.3½ or 4 lakhs has been spent? Where is that industry to day? Who is responsible for the fact that this industry does not exist today and there is no allotment for this in the budget? In the original estimate the amount allotted for 1954-55 was Rs.45,600 and in the revised it was Rs.46,200. This industry is non-existent today, although about this industry there was much of talk and noting. It is stated thus in a booklet, styled as, Notes on Forest Industries for Assam, issued by the Forest Department:—

“In 1950, a Special Officer was entrusted by the Forest Department of the State to further carry out investigations into the possibilities of exploiting Assam pines on a commercial scale. Experiments in resin tapping were carried out by this officer in the neighbourhood of Shillong to find out the optimum conditions for resin tapping in these hills”.

It goes on to say.—“The resin obtained from the Khasi Pine was then analysed by the Special Officer and found to be of very good quality, containing an average of 25 per cent of oil or turpentine with a boiling range of 154-158° C and clear golden yellow resin (5.70 per cent approx.). The turpentine oil was found to be within specifications laid down for high grade oils as imported from the United States of America and contained about 80 per cent alpha-pinene, the starting material for synthesis of camphor. The results were further confirmed by the Forest Research Institute, Dehra Dun”.

Then, it says: “Based on results of experiments as to the yield of resin and its qualities, and estimation of the potentialities of the raw material resources of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District, a scheme for distilling 2,000 lbs. resin a day in Shillong was submitted to the State Government. The scheme found approval of the Government and has been in operation from 1st April 1951”.

What do we find now is that this industry with a capital outlay of Rs.3½ lakhs and odd, about which it was said that this State would be able to get a profit of Rs.200 per day and in a year about Rs.72,000, is out of the picture now. In fact, it was said to us that Assam's requirements for resin and turpentine required for soap, varnish, etc., would be available in sufficient quantities and also the yield of turpentine would be of high quality and it would have great demand and it was expected that this produce would be of the order of oils imported from U. S. A. and would contain about 80 per cent alpha-pinene, the starting material for synthesis of camphor and production per day was expected at 2,000 pounds of resin and after the experiment of Shillong it was expected to extend the scheme to other parts of Assam. Those big promises were given by the Government.

After five years' work we find that the industry to-day is to be closed down. Why? Was it because the turpentine produced from this factory is of a very inferior quality? Not in the least. The two things that were produced from this factory that is, turpentine for medicinal and commercial purposes or in other words, the turpentine of one distillation and the other of double distillation is found to be one of the best in India because its standard which is used for medicinal purposes could be made only from the resin that is got only from the pines of the Khas and Jaintia Hills. Even this turpentine of one distillation is also of very high quality and yet this factory has to be closed down—why? Because the whole thing was badly managed. We shall have occasion when these accounts will be audited and when this House will be faced with audit objection when a copy of the audit report will be placed on the table, we expect to know many details about this affair. But even without going into details we can see that a house was constructed there at a cost of Rs.30 thousand. That is lying there useless. There are machineries and equipments including a laboratory for which about Rs. 60 thousand was spent. That is also lying useless. A truck was purchased at about 18 thousand rupees for the purpose but to no use. A gas plant of about Rs. 2 thousand is lying idle and a boiler costing about Rs. 10 thousand also is lying there. And above all, after all we can have hundreds of Ministers but it is very difficult to get technicians. The technician who had done this pilot plan and made all these things, his services are no longer required—he was made a scapegoat. For the failure

and irresponsibility of the Minister-in-charge this chemist was sacked.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Can you say who was responsible for this?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: The Minister-in-charge is primarily responsible for all this bungling. It is the Minister who had brought this plan before the House, it is the Minister who had the sanction for this scheme, it is the Minister who made promises on the floor of this House year after year that this plan would succeed. But today he came with a budget provision showing a blank—now you ask me who is responsible for this?

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): But why should he be so angry, Sir?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I am not angry, but I am stating facts. This as a serious matter—it is a question of wasting public money. Not only that, this failure will discourage our people from starting any new industry: what if the clinchona factory is established and it fails? If all these factories that have been established in Assam fail in the like manner what remains? We shall be

দৰিদ্ৰ যেনিয়ে যায়,

সাগৰ শুকাই মানিকো লুকায়।

that is to say—whatever is placed in the hands of this Minister disappears in the oblivion—even the sea will dry up at his touch. So I say, Sir, this is a very serious matter—it is not a matter for fun. We know that all these things were done with high hope and big promises, but all for nothing. Let us hope that when all these things will come after audit as they will certainly come sometime or other, we shall be able to go into further details. As for now, let me point out to one thing, Sir. Here we find that this double-distilled turpentine was sold to a Calcutta concern to one Kanoria at annas 15-6 per gallon. Now if any hon. Member goes to the bazar to purchase one ounce of single-distilled turpentine—that also not of as good quality of Assam turpentine, what he will have to pay? He will have to spend 6 annas for one ounce of turpentine and thus if he wants to purchase one gallon of double-distilled turpentine then he will have to pay about Rs.60 for it. As I have said, this turpentine which is not as good as that produced in our factory costs Rs.60 per gallon, but our turpentine was sold at annas 15-6 per gallon to this man Kanoria of Calcutta....

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Because he is related to the Birlas!

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I am not concerned with that. I know that because they are in a tight corner they sell it to whoever can buy it. You will be surprised to know, Sir, that this chemist who is an expert and who was brought here to make researches in the laboratory to develop this produce, was not allowed to do so. Instead of doing that research work he had to run to Dibrugarh, to Gauhati and other places in search of purchasers—why? It is all on account of the inefficiency of the Forest Utilisation Department, because this Forest Utilisation Department does not know how to utilise it. This expert was made a salesman instead of doing research work in the laboratory. More than that, I know that the Assam Chemical of Gauhati, had offered Rs.27 per maund for the Resin, but Government wanted Rs.39, yet instead of giving this to this Assam Company and instead of realising Rs.27 per maund for this resin, the Assam Government gave it to this gentleman Mr. Kanoria of Calcutta at Rs.12-8-0 per maund. Then, as I have already said in the beginning, we have also seen that this factory and other things are lying idle. I want to know from the Minister-in-charge whether this factory which was built there was built as other Government buildings are built? Whether the truck that was purchased for this purpose, was purchased with proper sanction as any other Government vehicles were purchased and whether it was run for the purpose for which it was purchased and so on. We remember too well that for the last three years the Minister gave us every good promises—yes he gave these promises for three years consecutively; but what is the position now? It is closed down? It has failed. Who is responsible? Is it not the Minister who is primarily responsible for this failure? We know only the Minister who came here, it is he who takes the money, it is he who promised us that this scheme would be successful.

Then let us come to another thing—that is about Cinchona. We find that Cinchona cultivation is there but when we turn to the Budget we find a blank there also. I will just refer to the capital outlay stated at page 526 of the Budget.

If we compare it, a horrible picture will come. Here in page 526 of the Budget for the year 1956-57 under the

Head—Quinine Factory—it is blank. But we find in the revised estimates for the year 1955-56, Rs.2,300 were taken by the Department on the original Budget estimates of Rs.2,28,100. This being the position, only last year the Minister had promised that he would make a factory, and this House sanctioned a sum of Rs.2,28,100 for this purpose. This House believed him and gave the grant. Ultimately he could not spend it and did not spend it, that is to say, his promise remained unfulfilled. On what foresight did the Minister promise that he would make the factory? I have utterly failed to understand. This only I see that before the year ends his promise becomes entirely baseless.

We find also in page 530 that it is entirely blank. On the plantation side also it is blank. In other words, Cinchona which was also an industry of big promise as stated by the Government have also proved a failure. It was said about this industry that experiments, were going on in Assam about it from as early as 1867, in a hanky-panky manner. But after this long experience, ultimately the Government come to the conclusion that it could be done on a commercial scale. Therefore, this grant was very important. But after long years of experience the Government have ultimately failed.

Then another thing was promised that oil could be extracted from Nahar seeds, and now it is said that the Coconut oil is very cheap and easily available from the place of the present Senior Conservator of Forests, and so this should be abandoned. That being so, we find now that all promises made by him on Cinchona and on Nahar ultimately end in a zero. Without going into any further details, as the time is very short at my disposal, I want to say that let this Minister who is in-charge of the Forest Department give a satisfactory explanation to the House and to the country. He must satisfy the country and this House that within these five years of his term whether things have been made worse or not. This at least is our hope and expectation. Also it will be better for our Government to consider whether he can be replaced in the Cabinet by a more suitable person, because the country cannot and should not continue to suffer for the sake of an individual.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved is that the total provision of Rs.74,96,300 under Grant No.5, Major head—10.—Forests at page 24 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.74,96,300 do stand reduced by Re.1.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI :** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not want to take much time of the House by repeating what my hon. Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has said. He has brought to the notice of the House certain serious irregularities done by the Minister-in-charge and demanded an explanation from the Minister-in-charge. I would also like to draw the attention of the House to other serious irregularities in the Forest Department. The Forest Department is not an ordinary Department of this Government, but it is revenue earning Department. If we could properly utilise the forest resources of our State on commercial basis, it could bring a lot of revenue to the State coffer which is very essential for financing our development plans.

Sir, I would only refer to certain irregularities in felling timbers in Doom Dooma, namely, in Philobari Forest Reserve. It is reported that hundreds of trees have been felled illegally, because the Divisional Forest Officer-in-charge of the area was in link with some of the contractors. Thus the revenue from it which is due to the State Government has been deprived of and felled trees had been taken from there. We have also heard that the Divisional Forest Officer had been in charge of the Division for more than five years and he was about to be transferred from there when the Conservator of Forests found this illegality. When it was reported that the Divisional Forest Officer should be transferred immediately as he was there for more than five years, his transfer had been cancelled. I do not know how far it is true. I would like to draw the pointed attention of the House that this is a serious matter where a responsible officer is involved, and in this matter not only the moral turpitude of the Divisional Forest Officer is involved, but the State Government had lost revenue also for which it is essential that the Divisional Forest Officer should have been transferred from this part of the area.

I would also refer to another thing. In Borduar Reserve of Kamrup some trees were felled illegally. The Batadraba Sankar Mission wanted to have some trees and paid a royalty of Rs.1,800. Many trees had been felled, and it was found that 38 trees were sufficient to cover that amount of royalty. Again an additional amount of royalty was given for felling more trees, and in this way only 40 or 50 trees remained to be felled. I could learn that the contractor who was given the work of felling trees had taken away all the trees. It is really unfortunate that trees are felled in this manner and taken away illegally. It is not proper to allow the contractor to have undue share in this matter.

Thirdly also I will refer to the system which have been in vogue in our State with regard to the Forest people. According to that system the Forest people give their labour and in lieu thereof they get some trees and some other things free for their own use. But although it has not been suspended in the Borduar area where the Forest people were ready to give their labour, they were not given any fuel, etc., for their use. Then, Sir, I have to draw the attention of the House to the urgent necessity of remodelling the Forest villages because these villages are not properly looked after. There is no proper facility of water supply, the condition of the roads in these area are also far from satisfactory. Generally these areas are malarious; the Public Health Department should pay more attention to these areas. I request the Minister-in-charge to see that the need of these people, in respect of road, water supply, health, etc., are looked after properly and with these words, Sir, I support the Motion moved by my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya.

Shri JOGAKANTA BARUAH : উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, অহা বছৰৰ বাজেটত বন-বিভাগৰ কাৰণে ৭৫ লাখ বন্যত আনন্দ পাইছোঁ। মই এই সদনলৈ অহাৰ পৰাই কৈ আহিছো বন-বিভাগটো আমাৰ অতি মূল্যবান বিভাগ। এটা মূল্যবান গছ পুলি বুলি ৫০ বছৰৰ পিছত সেই পুলিটোৰ পৰা অন্ততঃ ১০০৭ টকা পোৱা যাব। আমাৰ ৬৫৯৬ বৰ্গমাইল বিজাৰ্ড আৰু ১৭৮৮৮ বৰ্গমাইল অনা বিজাৰ্ড হাৰি আছে তাৰে যথেষ্ট পৰিমাণ নাটতি গছ ৰোৱা হলে আমাৰ চৰকাৰৰ আয় ইমান বাঢ়িল হেতেন যে তাৰেই গৰ্বমেণ্ট চলাব পাৰিলেহেতেন। এই দ্বিতীয় ৫ বছৰীয়া পৰিকল্পনাৰ ভিতৰত আমি যদি গছ-ৰোৱা বাবে ১০ কোটি টকা খৰছ কৰো তেনেহলে ৫০ বছৰৰ ভিতৰত এই ১০ কোটিৰ পৰা ১০ হেজাৰ কোটি টকাৰ সম্পদ হব। গতিকে এই বিষয়ে যাতে চৰকাৰে মন দিয়ে তাৰ বাবে নিবেদন জনালো। নহলে আমাৰ ভবিষ্যত বংশধৰ সকলে আমাক গৰিহনা দিব আৰু বইজেও আমাক দোষ দিব।

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my Friend, Shri Barua, has said that Government should have spent more money than what is provided for the development of the forest resources in Assam. I quite agree with him, but the Government is circumstanced by the limitation of finance which is placed under them.

Sir, with regard to the criticism of my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, I am afraid that he had made this unfounded criticism without knowing the real fact of the case. He has attacked me and also the Department because the Government has closed the Rosin Factory. Sir, if I would not have taken steps to close the Rosin Factory, Government would have been blamed in a way more than what he has unreasonably done to-day. Sir, in the general discussion of this Cut Motion he has raised a specific point. From what I

remember, I will meet his points from memory. When the scheme was planned for the establishment of a Rosin Factory, it was shown by that chemist about whom he has spoken so much that the scheme, if implemented, would fetch an income to the Government to the tune of Rs.60,000 per year. It has been admitted by my Friend over there that in the scheme this chemist has shown what would be the income of the Government. Relying on this scheme submitted by that very chemist through the Conservator of Forests who made slight modifications, the Government approved that scheme.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD UMARUDDIN: Was it not verified by other chemist ?

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Our scheme was examined by the Senior Conservator of Forests. I do not lay the entire blame on that chemist, because it was scrutinised by the Head of the Department too. Sir, the scheme which was prepared by the chemist and supported by the Head of the Department shown the estimated income of Rs.45,000 minimum per year. It was not approved by me because I took the Forest portfolio in 1952. My Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, must realise that this scheme was going on prior to the taking over this Department by me. It was accepted by my predecessor who is sitting on the right of me and it was not accepted by the Forest Minister Ram Nath Das. Hence there should have been no personal attack on me. This was also approved by the hon. Members of this House. If after approving the scheme in that way, now Shri Bhattacharyya comes to blame the Minister and the Government for the closure of the scheme without knowing the reasons thereof, then I must say that Mr. Bhattacharyya has levelled this criticism out of motive and that is with a bad motive in his mind.

Sir, when this scheme was submitted, it was shown that the expenditure on production per maund of rosin would be Rs.33 or 34. But when the scheme was put into operation by that chemist, about whom my Friend has spoken so highly now, it came out at one stage that the cost of production per maund of rosin was about Rs.54 or 55. What is more, this expert who estimated that the sale price would be much higher than that of the production cost per maund of rosin, but at the time when the rosin was actually put in the market, it did not fetch more than Rs.35 even for the best quality on retail sale basis. Now, Sir, was not the Minister-in-charge knowing that this venture had no prospect in future, justified in drawing the attention of the Cabinet and seeking its decision as to whether

the scheme should be run at a loss or it should be closed down so that Government might not undergo further loss. I leave it to the House to decide whether I, as the Minister-in-charge of the Department, acted wisely or not in keeping with duties and responsibilities imposed upon me in advising the Cabinet in the manner I did? As you might know, Sir, this was a scheme which was launched not entirely on my own responsibility but on the sanction of the Cabinet and also of this House.

Another charge that my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, has brought against the Government is that Government allowed the sale of the certain products of this scheme at a price much lower than the market price.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: 60 times lower, Sir.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Sir, Shri Bhattacharyya seems to have come prepared to attack me with certain facts and figures about which I make bold to say that these have no bearing on the actual state of affairs. He only wanted to raise a general discussion while moving this Cut Motion. Sir, he cannot therefore expect me to give all the details on the points that he has raised in this question of Rosin Factory. But I can, however, throw a challenge to him and boldly say that his charge that Government had sold certain products of this rosin scheme at Ans. 12 per gallon which was sold at the market at that time at Rs. 60 per gallon is to say the least is entirely baseless. That could simply never be.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD UMARUDDIN: On a point of information, Sir. Was any tender called from outside the State at the time this commodity was put in the market with a view to attract purchaser from outside?

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): I am coming to that point. Sir, tenders were called for. But what I want to say is that I challenge the statement of Mr. Bhattacharyya that Government sold certain commodity at the price quoted by him when the market price was Rs.60 per gallon.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: At annas 15/6 pics per pound to Messrs. Kanoria of Calcutta.

I accept your challenge.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): The statement he has made I repeat, is entirely baseless.

Before selling our things, we called for tenders not only in Assam but from outside too. Now after calling for tenders if we could not get the price as stated by my good Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, to-day here in this House, what was the proper course for us to follow? Does he want us to wait and wait for years until the stuff had gone completely waste and would not have fetched even the price at which they were sold then?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: May I know from the hon. Minister.....

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): I am not giving way to you Mr. Bhattacharyya. You were very unreasonable to-day while criticising me.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Das, you should address the Chair.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Sir, the way in which he has criticised the Government and me, it has created a very bad feeling not only in me but many Members of the House also have felt it very badly. Any way, Sir, my point is whether or not I was justified in drawing the attention of the Cabinet to the great loss sustained by this new venture which had no prospect of being a paying proposition even in future and in deciding to close it down altogether? And secondly whether or not I was justified in allowing the sale of the commodity in the open market at competitive rates when it became known to the Government after calling for tenders not only from this State but from the outside also that the commodity would not fetch any higher price than what is received in tenders? I feel Sir, I was quite justified in my action.

Therefore, I hope the hon. Members of the House will not be misguided by the wrong statement given by Mr. Bhattacharyya on this score.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think you may not be able to say all the facts just now.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): But I can definitely say this much that we have not sold any turpentine at $15\frac{1}{2}$ annas per gallon against the alleged available price of Rs.60 per gallon.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : On the next day of the sitting you can come prepared to give a reply.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister) : For giving details of course, I can wait for my reply. But for the other matters, I think, I have given sufficient reply in order to contradict the statement of Mr. Bhattacharyya that we have sold any turpentine at annas $15\frac{1}{2}$ against the market price of Rs.60 per gallon as alleged by him.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The rest of the business can stand over. I now adjourn the House.

ADJOURNMENT

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A.M. on Tuesday the 27th March, 1956.

Shillong,
The 7th February, 1957.

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

AGENTS IN INDIA

1. Messrs. Thacker Spink & Co., Calcutta.
2. Messrs. W. Newman & Co., Calcutta.
3. Messrs. S. K. Lahiri & Co., Calcutta.
4. Messrs. R. Cambray & Co., 6 and 8/2, Hastings Street, Calcutta.
5. Messrs. D. B. Taraporevala Sons and Co., 103, Meadow Street, Fort, Post Box No.187, Bombay.
6. The Indian School Supply Depot, 309, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta.
7. The City Book Company, Post Box No.283 Madras.
8. The Director, The Book Company, Limited, Book Sellers and Stationers 4/4A, College Square, Calcutta.
9. The Manager, The Imperial Publishing Co., 99, Ry. Road, Lahore.
10. Messrs. Chapala Book Stall, Shillong.
11. Messrs. Sirbhumi Publishing Co., Calcutta.
12. The Proprietor, 'Graduates Union,' Gauhati.
13. Mr. Banwarilal Jain (Book Seller), 1719/2002, Mati Katra, Agra (India).
14. Messrs. Low Book Society, 65/3, Harrison Road, Calcutta.
15. The Director, Benares Corporation, University Road, P.O. Lanka.
16. Messrs. Law Book Society, 4A, Wellington Square, Calcutta.
17. Messrs. Bodh Raj Marwah, Booksellers, Shop No.63, Pusa Colony Market, Delhi-Karol Bagh, New Delhi.
18. The Oxford Book and Stationery Co., Scindia House, New Delhi/17, Park Street, Calcutta-16.
19. Messrs Mokshada Pustakalaya, Publishers and Book Sellers, Gauhati.
20. Messrs Popular Book Depot (Regd.), Book-sellers, Publishers, etc., Lamington Road, Bombay-7.