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Assam Legislative Assembly Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

FIRST SESSION OF THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY ASSEMBLED AFTER THE
FOURTH GENERAL ELECTION UNDER
THE SOVEREIGN DEMOCRATIC
REPUBLICAN CONSTITUTION
OF INDIA

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**Proceedings of the First Session of the Assam Legislative
Assembly assembled after the Fourth General
Elections under the Sovereign Democratic
Republican Constitution of India**

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shilong at 9 A. M. on Friday, the 31st March, 1967.

PRESENT

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI, B.A., (Cal.), M.A. (Cantab.), Barrister-at-Law, Speaker, in the Chair, ten Ministers, five Ministers of State, two Deputy Ministers and sixty-four Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral answers were given.)

Re: Doctors in Madhukuchi and Niz-Kaurbaha Dispensaries

Shri KAMINI MOHAN SARMA (Rangiya) asked:

*3. Will the Minister-in-charge of Health be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government is aware that the Dispensaries at village Madhukuchi and Niz-Kaurbaha in Kamrup District are running without doctors?
- (b) If so, why?

Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEB (Minister, Health, etc.) replied:

3. (a)—(i) Madhukuchi is a Sub Centre of Rangiya Primary Health Centre. There is no provision of whole-time Medical Officer for any Sub-Centre. The Medical Officer, Rangiya Primary Health Centre attends his Sub-Centre.

(ii) The Dispensary at Kaurbaha (not Niz-Kaurbaha) is a Government Subsidised Dispensary and not Government Dispensary. It is not the responsibility of Government to post doctors to a Subsidised Dispensary. It is for the Committee of such Dispensary to find out a doctor. Appointment is however made with the approval of the Civil Surgeon concerned.

(b)—Does not arise.

Shri PHANI BORA (Nowgong): অসমত যিমান ডাক্তৰ লাগে যিমান ডাক্তৰ নাই নেকি? আৰু subsidised dispensary বিলাক ডাক্তৰ নোহোৱাকৈ আৰু কিমান দিন চলোৱাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে?

Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEB: There is dearth of doctors.

Mr. SPEAKER: আপোনাৰ প্ৰশ্নটো আকৌ কৰক।

REFERENCE

(Not for issue)

Reference Library

Shri PHANI BORA : মোৰ প্ৰশ্নটো হৈছে যে আৰু কিমান বছৰ subsidised dispensary বোৰ ডাক্তৰ নোহোৱাকৈ চৰকাৰে চলাবৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে ?

Mr. SPEAKER : The question does not arise from this question.

Shri Md. MATLEBUDDIN (Mangaldoi) : What is the number of dispensaries without doctors ?

Mr. SPEAKER : That question does not arise.

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Minister; Revenue) : চৰকাৰৰ আৰ্থিক অৱস্থাৰ উন্নয়নৰ ওপৰত কথাটো নিৰ্ভৰ কৰিছে ।

Shri KAMINI MOHAN SARMA : মাননীয় স্বাস্থ্যমন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ে যি উত্তৰ দিলে সেইটো বুজি নাপালো ; অসমীয়াতে উত্তৰ দিলেহে ভাল পাম ।

Mr. SPEAKER : প্ৰশ্নটো ইংৰাজীতে আছে, সেই কাৰণে উত্তৰটোও ইংৰাজীতে পাব ।

Jonab RAHIMUDDIN AHMED (Hojai) : যদি এই subsidised dispensary বিলাকক গৰ্বৰ্ণমেণ্টে সাহায্য দি স্বীকৃতি দিছে তেনেহলে এই বিলাক অবহেলিত হৈ থকাটোকে চৰকাৰে বিচাৰে নেকি ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY : বাইজে যিবোৰ ঠাইত নিজে যি সাজি এনে ধৰণৰ dispensary পাতি লয় তাত গৰ্বৰ্ণমেণ্টে বছৰত ৪শ টকা সাহায্য দিয়ে আৰু ডাক্তৰৰ দৰমহাৰ কাৰণে মাহে এশ টকাকৈ দিয়ে আৰু তাত যি ডাক্তৰ নিযুক্ত কৰিব লাগে সেই নিযুক্তি বাইজেই কৰে ।

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYA (Borbhag) : এইবোৰ dispensaryৰ উন্নতি সাধন কৰাৰ বিষয়ে চৰকাৰে কি বিবেচনা কৰিছে ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY : বিষয়টো বহুত দিনৰ পৰা গৰ্বৰ্ণমেণ্টেৰ বিবেচনাধীনত আছে । যেতিয়া চৰকাৰৰ আৰ্থিক অৱস্থা উন্নত হব, তেতিয়া তাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰা হব ।

Shri PITSING KONWAR [Marigaon (Reserved for Scheduled Tribes)] : ডাক্তৰক কিমান দৰমহা দিয়ে ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY : দৰমহা চৰকাৰৰ পৰা দিয়া নহয় ; মাত্ৰ সাহায্য হিচাবেহে চৰকাৰে মাহে এশ টকাকৈ দিয়ে ।

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi) : আমাৰ যিবিলাক subsidised dispensary আছে তাত বাইজেই ডাক্তৰ বিচাৰি লব লাগে, কিন্তু এইটো বাইজৰ পক্ষে সম্ভৱ নহয়, গতিকে এই dispensary বোৰৰ ডাক্তৰ চৰকাৰৰ পক্ষৰ পৰা নিয়োগ কৰাৰ বিষয়ে কিবা বিবেচনা কৰিছে নে ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY : মই আগতে কৈছো যে, চৰকাৰৰ আৰ্থিক অৱস্থা ভাল হলে এই সকলোবোৰ কথা বিবেচনা কৰা হব ।

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister) : অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, subsidised dispensary নতুনকৈ পতা বিষয়ত চৰকাৰৰ পক্ষৰ পৰা উৎসাহ দিয়া হোৱা নাই। বৰ্তমান এণ খনৰো অধিক subsidised dispensary আছে। এইবিলাক চৰকাৰী কৰি লোৱাৰ কথা চৰকাৰে বিবেচনা কৰি আছে।

ইতিমধ্যে নতুনকৈ পতা এনে ডাক্তৰ খানাৰ বাবে কোনো সাহায্য দিয়া হোৱা নাই। এতিয়া লোকেল বোৰ্ডৰ যিবিলাক dispensary চৰকাৰে লৈছে সেইবিলাকৰ যৰ সজা কাম সম্পূৰ্ণ হোৱা নাই। সেই কাৰণে সকলোবোৰ কথা বিবেচনা কৰিহে এটা সিদ্ধান্তত উপনীত হব পৰা যাব।

Shri BHUBANESWAR BARMAN (Patacharkuchi) : এই 'দিচ পেনচাৰীবিলাক' approved কৰিবলৈ কিবা ব্যৱস্থা লোৱা হৈছেনে ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY : এই সম্বন্ধে মুখ্যমী ডাঙৰীয়াই কৈছেই।

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : Subsidised dispensary বিলাকৰ ডাক্তৰ সকলৰ নিজা 'প্ৰেকটিচ'ও থাকে আৰু বহুতৰ নিজা ফাৰ্মেচীও থাকে। তেওঁলোকে আংশিক সময় কাম কৰে। এই 'দিচপেনচাৰী' বিলাকৰ উন্নতি সাধন আৰু প্ৰসাৰৰ কাৰণে চৰকাৰে তাৰ আৱশ্যকতা সম্বন্ধে চাব।

Shri RANENDRA BASUMATARI [Kokrajhar-West (Reserved for Scheled Tribes)] : চৰকাৰে ডাক্তৰ দিব পৰা নাই-এনে ক্ষেত্ৰত মই জানিব খুজিছো—যিবিলাক ডাক্তৰ বাহিৰত কাম কৰি ফুৰে তেওঁলোকক লব নোৱাৰি নে ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY : Registered ডাক্তৰ হলে দিব পাৰি।

Shri LAKSYA DHAR CHAUDHURY (Kamalpur) : এই reply বিলাক Health Minister ৰ পৰা বিচাৰো।

Mr. SPEAKER : এইটো এটা collective responsibility.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY (Panery) : 'হমিও' ডাক্তৰ বিলাক চৰকাৰে recognise কৰিছে। যদি 'হমিও' ডাক্তৰ এই কামৰ কাৰণে পোৱা যায় তেওঁলোকক লব লাগে।

Mr. SPEAKER : 'এলপেথী' ডাক্তৰ বিলাকক কি কৰিব ?

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : চৰকাৰৰ ফালৰ পৰা এই subsidised dispensary বিলাক চৰকাৰী কৰাৰ চিন্তা কৰিছে বুলি চৰকাৰে কৈছে। ইতিমধ্যে গাওঁ বিলাকৰ যি শোচনীয় অৱস্থা তালৈ লক্ষ্য কৰি ডাক্তৰ নোপোৱা-লৈকে ডাক্তৰৰ ঠাইত কম্পাউণ্ডাৰ আৰু থাই লোৱাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব নেকি ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : থাইৰ ব্যৱস্থা নাই। Registered Compounder দিয়া হৈছে।

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : চৰকাৰৰ ফালৰ পৰা এ বিলাকৰ সুব্যৱস্থা কৰিব নেকি ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : এই গোটেই কথাটো ভালকৈ বিবেচনা কৰি চাব লাগিব । অধিক আৰু বৰ্ত্তমানে কি পৰিমাণে ডাল্ডৰ পোৱা যাব পাৰে—সেইবিলাকো চিন্তা কৰিব লাগিব ।

Re: Progress in Procurement

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi) asked :

*9. Will the Minister-in-charge of Supply be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether procurement in Assam has been progressing ?
- (b) What is the target of procurement in Assam ?
- (c) What is the achievement so far made ?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH (Minister, Supply) replied :

9. (a)—Yes, but the progress is not satisfactory.

(b)—One hundred lakh maunds of paddy have been fixed as the target of procurement during the current year (Kharif year).

(c)—A quantity of 21,27,703 maunds of paddy has been procured by different agencies up to 25th March 1967.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : May I know why the progress of procurement is not satisfactory ?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH : Because the procurement had been taken over by the Food Corporation of India and they started late. Therefore, procurement is not up to the mark up till now.

Shri GAURI SANKAR BHATTACHARYYA (Barbhag) : Is it a fact that while the prevailing market price of paddy is anything between Rs.32 to Rs.35 per maund, the procurement authorities offer to the cultivators only about Rs.19 per maund and, therefore, the peasants are not prepared to give their paddy ?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH : That is the Government fixed rate.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Is it not a fact that because the procurement price is much lower than the prevailing market price, the peasants are not offering paddy to the Government procuring agency ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister) : I think the hon. Member is correct. High prices are one of the reasons for which procurement has been slow.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Do Government propose to revise the prices to be offered to the producers ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : As the hon. Members are aware, a conference is going to be held in Delhi on the 8th and 9th of April in which an assessment of the whole situation would be made. We would like to wait for the decision there.

Shri ROTHINDRA NATH SEN (Karinganj-North) : When we get the reply from the Government that procurement is not satisfactory, can we know from the Government what arrangements they propose to make to tide over the crying situation which is developing very fast?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : This is a matter which is engaging our very serious attention.

Shri PHANI BORA (Nowgong) : Is it a fact that in the district of Nowgong more paddy has been procured by the black-marketeers and hoarders than the procuring agency sponsored by Government?

(No reply)

Shri MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY (Sonai) : May I know what is the performance of the Food Corporation which has replaced the Co-operative?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : The Food Corporation has not replaced the Co-operative. According to the Goswami Committee's recommendations, certain areas of the State, particularly the surplus districts, were made exclusively co-operative areas and in the remaining areas other agencies were also recommended for operation. The Food Corporation is now performing the task which used to be performed by the Apex Society.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY (Panery) : May I know whether Government have any control over the Food Corporation?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : Yes, Sir, though we do not have any direct control, nevertheless we have control.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY : Who has got direct control over the Food Corporation of India?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : It is a corporation formed under a statute. Therefore, it is under the direct control of the particular Board under which it functions.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY : If the Food Corporation fails to procure enough foodgrain, who will be responsible for that?

Mr. SPEAKER : The Chief Minister has already said that the matter is engaging attention and there will be a conference in Delhi on the 8th and 9th April to discuss all these matters.

Shri BHUBANESWAR BARMAN (Patacharkuchi) :
গোষ্ঠীগণী কমিটিৰ পৰামৰ্শ মতে যিবিলাক সৰ্কেটিং চটাইটিত দুৰ্নীতি আছিল সেইবিলাক চটাইটিকে পুনৰ ঋণ সংগ্ৰহ কৰিবলৈ দিয়া হৈছে নেকি?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : গোস্বামী কমিটিৰ বিপৰ্ট অনুসারে যিবিলাক সমস্যাৰ সমিতি দুৰ্নীতি পৰায়ণ বা ভাল কাম কৰিব পৰা নাই সেইবিলাকক চৰকাৰে পুনৰ্গঠন কৰি কাৰ্য্য কৰিবলৈ দিব লাগে কিন্তু এই কাম একেলগে কৰিব পৰা কাম; নহয়; প্ৰত্যেকখন সমিতিকৈ ক্ৰমে ক্ৰমে ভাল কৰি আনিব লাগিব।

Mr. SPEAKER : This question does not arise from the question under discussion.

Shri ROTHINDRA NATH SEN : May I know who pays for the establishment of the Food Corporation ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : The Food Corporation.

Mr. SPEAKER : It is an autonomous body and has its own funds.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY : May I know whether the Food Corporation is considering the question of abolishing the Co-operative and engaging private traders ? In that case the whole policy will be changed.

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : The conditions under which the Food Corporation has been allowed to function are defined. As I said, the Food Corporation cannot appoint private agencies in the exclusively Co-operative areas, but for other areas the Food Corporation can appoint agents in consultation with the Deputy Commissioners.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : May I know whether it is a fact that procurement is not satisfactory only because there is no co-ordination between the Co-operative and the Food Corporation ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : No, Sir, I think the main reason, as has been stated by Mr. Bhattacharyya, is the big disparity between the prevailing market price and the procurement price.

Shri JOGEN SAIKIA (Jorhat) : Is it a fact that the Goswami Committee definitely discouraged introduction of the Food Corporation of India in Assam ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : Yes, Sir.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH (Titabar) : Then may I know what considerations led to the introduction of the Food Corporation in Assam ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : The main consideration was that procurement involves very huge funds

The Apex Bank has already invested more than 60 lakhs of rupees and that money is not going to meet the need of the entire area. If we ask the Apex Bank to make further advances, the Apex Bank may find itself in difficulty. Therefore, that part of the work which used to be done by the Apex Marketing Society—that work has been assigned to the Food Corporation of India.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, whether it is a fact that in 1965 and 1966 the State Government rejected the proposal of procuring rice by the F.C.I. ? If so under what circumstances the Government has allowed the F.C.I. to take over the procurement of paddy ?

Mr. SPEAKER : That question has just been replied.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: Sir, formerly the responsibility of supplying rice to the Railways and Tea Estates was on the Supply Department. Now after it has been taken over by the F.C.I., who will be responsible for supplying rice to such institutions ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, the F.C.I. activity is confined to the procurement only. So far the distribution is concerned, that is done by the Supply Department.

Shri MOHIDHAR PEGU (Majuli, Reserved for Scheduled Tribes): এই অনুস্থানটো সম্পূর্ণ বে-চৰকাৰী নেকি ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: এইটো সম্পূর্ণকৈ চৰকাৰী অনুস্থান ।

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: যদি সম্পূর্ণকৈ চৰকাৰী অনুস্থান হয় তেনেহলে সেই অনুস্থানৰ ওপৰত অসম চৰকাৰৰ কৰ্ত্ত্ব নোহোৱাৰ কথাটো বুজিব পৰা নাই ।

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: Sir, the Corporation is an American Type whereas the Co-operatives are Socialistic Type.

Mr. SPEAKER : কৰ্ত্ত্ব নোহোৱা নহয়— control আছে direction টো নহয় ।

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: Sir, whether the Government have given any serious consideration for keeping the price of paddy and rice in normal level and whether the F.C.I. has been given instructions to stop abnormal rise of price ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, I have not been able to follow the question of the hon. Member. If he has referred to price rise of paddy, certainly the F.C.I. is not interested in rising the prices. But the problem is now in view of the market price and the gap between the market and procurement price is so big that it is not understood what is to be done.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: Sir, whether the F. C.I. can give any guarantee that it would be able to procure the required paddy ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, I do not know how the F.C.I. can give the guarantee. F.C.I. is trying to do its best.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY : Whether it is a fact that the officers of the F.C.I. of the Gauhati zone are influencing the so-called producer.....

Mr. SPEAKER : How does that question arise ?

Shri BENOY KRISHNA GHOSE (Goalpara-East) : Sir, may I know whether the Panchayats are allowed to procure paddy in certain areas :

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : I think there is no harm in Panchayats procuring paddy. But I do not know if Panchayats are appointed as such.

Shri KABIR CHANDRA ROY PRADHANI (Golokganj) :

নই জানিব পাৰোনে ধানৰ দাম কোনে fix কৰে আৰু কি ভিত্তিত কৰে ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : অধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, এই বিষয়ে ভাত চৰকাৰৰ এটা কমিচন আছে আৰু সেই কমিচনেহে স্থিৰ কৰে চৰকাৰৰ অনুমোদন লৈ ।

Shri KABIR CHANDRA ROY PRADHANI : ভাত খেতিয়কৰ প্ৰতিনিধি আছেনে নই ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : সেই বিষয়ে সম্পূৰ্ণ খবৰ নোহা হাতত নাই ।

Shri PREMADHAR BORA (Bihpuria) : Co-operative তকৈ Food Corporation ক তুলনামূলকভাৱে বেচি লাভ দিয়া হৈছে নেকি ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : বেচি দিয়া হোৱা নাই

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰীৰ পৰা জানিব পাৰোনে এই Food Corporation ৰ বিষয়ববীয়াসকল অসমৰ খাদ্য সমস্যাৰ বিষয়ে বিশেষ জ্ঞান থকা লোকনেকি ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে Food Corporation ৰ প্ৰায়বোৰ বিষয়া অসম চৰকাৰৰে আৰু তাৰ লগতে হয়টো কিছুমান অন্যান্য বিষয়াও লোৱা হৈছে । বিজন Regional Manager সেইজন আমাৰ Director আছিল; শ্ৰীশৰদিন্দু সৰকাৰ ।

Jonab RAHIMUDDIN AHMED : (Hojai) মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰীয়ে জানে যে surplus area ত procurement এ ধান সংগ্ৰহ কৰে আৰু non-surplus area ত private agency এ কৰে । ফলত যি ঠাইত দুহেজাৰ মৌন সংগ্ৰহ কৰিছে তাত মাত্ৰ দুশ মৌনহে সংগ্ৰহ কৰা দেখুৱায় ।

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : মাত্ৰ এটা অভিযোগ পাইছিলো । মাননীয় সদস্যই অভিযোগ পালে চৰকাৰক জনাব পাৰে ।

Shri PREMADHAR BORA : মই মন্ত্ৰী মহোদয়ৰ পৰা জানিব খজিছো যে অসমত যি দৰ্ভিক আৰু আকাল হৈছে ; তাৰ কাৰণ এয়ে নেকি যে ধান সংগ্ৰহৰ কাম সমৰ্থায়ে কৰিছে আৰু বিতৰণ private agency এ কৰিছে

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : চৰকাৰে যিমান দূৰ পাৰে সমৰায়ৰ জৰিয়তেই বিতৰণ কামো কৰায়। দুপ্ৰান্তৰূপে গুৱাহাটীৰ সমৰায় consumer stores এ ভাল ভাবে কাম চলাইছে কাৰণে তাত বিতৰণৰ সুবিধা হৈছে। গতিকে সমৰায়বোৰ শক্তিশালী নোহোৱা কাৰণে গোটেই কামখিনি দিব পৰা নাই।

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : তেনেকুৱা শক্তিশালী সমৰায় কিমান আছে ?

Mr. SPEAKER : How does that question arise, Mr. Barua ?

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : Sir, it is a broad-based question.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY : চৰকাৰে যি অৰু দিলে তাৰ পৰা বুজা যায় যে অসমত সংগ্ৰহৰ কাম সূচাৰূপে চলা নাই।

মই চৰকাৰৰ পৰা জানিব পাৰোনে যে জুন মাহৰ পৰা ধানৰ যি অভাৱ পৰিব তাক উপশম কৰিবলৈ কিবা দিহা কৰিছে নে ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : Sir, as I said before, this is engaging our attention very seriously.

Shri JOGEN SAIKIA : May I know, Sir, whether the officer referred to by the hon. Chief Minister who has been appointed as the Regional Manager of F.C.I is a rejected officer?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : I suppose not. He is Mr. Sarkar.

M. SHAMSUL HUDA (Dhing) : মাননীয় মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰীৰ পৰা মই জানিব বিচাৰিছোঁ যে নগাঁৱত ৫০০০ মোন ধানৰ permit জব্দ কৰা হৈছে—বদি সেয়ে হয় কি নীতিত ভিত্তি কৰি এই permit বিলাক দিছিল ?

Mr. SPEAKER : সংগ্ৰহৰ প্ৰশ্নত জব্দ কৰাৰ প্ৰশ্ন নুঠে।

Shri DULAL CHADRA BURUA : Sir, may we know from the hon. Chief Minister the terms and conditions under which the Government of Assam has given the power of procurement to the F.C.I.?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : Sir, in this connection I have given some indication previously. One of conditions is that in the excessive co-operative areas the F.C.I. is to procure through the co-operatives and in the areas which are not so, they may appoint other agencies also, and if there by any good co-operative they can be appointed and they whould procure paddy, get it milled and make allotment according to the direction of the Government in the Supply Department.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : May I know, Sir, what are the functions of the Supply Department in respect of procurement ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : The Supply Department is in the vigilant side and it is their responsibility for distribution.

Shri PRABHAT NARAYAN CHOUDHURY (Nalbari-East): Sir, is it not a fact that our present procurement policy is confined to only the surplus areas and if so what is the target ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, our policy is to procure as much as possible and our target is fixed at 1 crore maunds of paddy

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, it is understood that F.C.I. is meant for procurement only. Then who are the distributing agencies— for equitable distribution ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Distribution is made through the co-operatives where there are co-operatives, otherwise it is done through wholesalers and retailers.

Re: Rising of Price of Commodities in the State

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi) asked:

*10. Will the Minister-in-charge of Supply be pleased to state—

- (a) What are the reasons of rising of prices of commodities in the State ?
- (b) Whether any steps have been taken by the Government to control the rising of prices ?
- (c) If so, what are the steps ?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH (Minister, Supply) replied:

10. (a)—The rise in prices is an All-India phenomenon. Most of the commodities, like wheat, sugar, pulses, mustard oil, etc., are brought to the State from outside. The prices of these articles have gone up at the sources for which the resultant prices in Assam have also gone up.

Since there is a general tendency of rise in prices, this has also affected the price of rice.

(b)—Yes, Government is quite alive to the situation and some steps have been taken in this regard.

(c)—(i) All the Deputy Commissioners and Subdivisional Officers are delegated with powers under D. I. Rules for fixation of whole-sale and retail prices of essential commodities.

(ii) All Supply Department Officers up to the rank of Sub-Inspector of Supply have been directed to check the price of essential commodities and verify the same fortnightly and submit report to Government.

(iii) Price Vigilance Committees have been set up in the Sub-divisional, Block and Gaon Panchayat levels. Under this Scheme, a Committee of Government Officials, Consumers and Traders voluntarily fix prices of essential commodities at which the traders are required to sell the commodities and keep vigilance on the activities of the traders and ensure that they may not resort to profiteering and hoarding of essential commodities.

(iv) All Magistrates, Sub-Deputy Collectors, Block Development Officers, Co-operative Officers not below the rank of Assistant Co-operative Officer, Supply Officers not below the rank of Sub-Inspector of Supply, Police Officers not below the rank of Sub-Inspector, Anchalik Panchayat Presidents, Gaon Sabha Presidents have been empowered under D. I. Rules for enforcement of the prices fixed.

(v) As a result of the measures taken, 1,041 cases under the E. C. Act and D. I. Rules have been launched.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, is it a fact that the findings of the Price Vigilance Committees which are appointed by the Government different Districts and Subdivisions for checking the prices of essential commodities are not accepted by the District and Subdivisional authorities?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: I have no such information, Sir.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, price level of essential commodities at Jorhat is very high. May I know what action is taken by the Government in this respect?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: I will have to check up.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, is it a fact that the prices of essential commodities have gone up due to scarcity and short supply?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: That may be one of the reasons.

Shri SADHAN RANJAN SARKAR (Lumding): Almost all controlled led.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Almost all controlled commodities are available in the market at a higher price and they are actually not scarce. That is his point.

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: I do not think that sweeping remark is justified.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, whether it is a fact that the Jorhat Price Vigilance Committee has submitted in their report to the Government that the essential commodities are available in the black market, but not in the open market, for which there is rise in price. If so, what action Government has taken against those hoarders?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: This report of the Jorhat Vigilance committee has not reached me.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY (Panery): Sir, is it a fact that since January 1964 to 1967, Government has kept huge quantities of foodstuffs in their godowns and thereby an artificial crisis leading to rise in prices has been created by the Government ?

Mr. SPEAKER: You mean by the buffer stock ? The buffer stock has not been released and, therefore, the scarcity.

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: Sir, that was done during the emergency. The buffer stock was kept under the instruction from the Central Government.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: Sir, is it not a fact that 80 percent of the foods stuff have been damaged ?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROOAH: I have no information.

Shri PRABHAT NARAYAN CHOUDHURY: May I know from the questioner.....

Mr. SPEAKER: You cannot put a question to the questioner.

Shri PRABHAT NARAYAN CHOUDHURY: May I know what are those commodities which are meant in this question ?

Mr. SPEAKER: It has been replied by Minister, *vide* his reply at 10 (a). They are wheat, sugar, pulses, mustard oil, etc.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: Sir, is it a fact that the Deputy Commissioner, Nowgong, seized certain foodstuffs in the Government godown ?

Mr. SPEAKER: That does not arise from this question. The question is about rise in prices.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARY: It is a proof that Government has damaged huge quantities of foodstuffs in their godowns and thereby created the rise in prices.

Shri BISWADEV SARMA (Balipara): May I know, Sir, from the Minister, Supply under what kind of emergency this buffer stock is released ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister): Sir, particularly at the time of the Pakistani aggression as well as Chinese aggression it was considered advisable that we should have stock for about three months of the commodities which we imported from outside, so that in case of any interference of the communication, we can tide over the situation. Since then the Government has been maintaining a buffer stock. It is of course correct that in the buffer stock there has been loss and some of these commodities are damaged during storage.

Shri BISWADEV SARMA: Sir, I wanted to know, if there is no aggression from any country, then for what emergencies this buffer stock is kept ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, if the market price goes high, the buffer stock will be released for bringing down the price.

Mr. SPEAKER: What the hon. Member wants to know is how long you will keep it as buffer ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, that has to be kept going.

Shri ATUL CHANDRA GOSWAMI (Kaliabar): Buffer stock ব বস্তবোৰ বেয়া হোৱাৰ কাৰণে বজাৰত বস্তৰ দাম বঢ়াব এটা কাৰণ নহয় নে ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Buffer stock ব সকলো-বোৰ বস্ত খাদ্যৰ অনুপযুক্ত হোৱা নাই ।

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Buffer stock ব যিবিলাক বস্ত নষ্ট হৈ গৈছে সেইবোৰ বস্ত চৰকাৰৰ পৰা বেপাৰীয়ে কম দামত কিনি নি বাহিৰত বেচি দামত বিক্ৰী কৰিছে, এইটো হয় নে ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Buffer stock ব যিবিলাক বিক্ৰী কৰিবলগীয়া হয় সেইবিলাক খাদ্যৰ অনুপযোগী নহয় আৰু যিবিলাক একেবাৰে অনুপযোগী সেইবিলাক নষ্ট কৰিবলৈ দিয়া হয় । তাৰ ভিতৰত কোনো ব্যৱসায়ীয়ে কোনো ঠাইত বেচি দামত বিক্ৰী কৰিব পাৰে হয়তো ।

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTA CHARYYA (Barbhag): Sir, is there no machinery to check the buffer stock before it deteriorated to the position of inedible or unfit for human consumption?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: I would say that we do not have any efficient machinery for that purpose. Because the first problem is that we have to keep them in godowns and the other is that it is not running in a commercial way. For these reasons, I am not incorrect to say that we do not have an efficient machinery.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: মুখ্য মন্ত্ৰী নহোৱাৰে এইটো জনাব নে যে আমাৰ ৰাজ্যত খাদ্য পৰীক্ষাৰ আহিলা নথকাৰ কাৰণে বস্তবিলাক ভালদৰে পৰীক্ষা কৰিব পৰা নাই আৰু সেই কাৰণে বেয়া বস্ত মানুহে খাই slow poisoned হৈ মানুহৰ স্বাস্থ্য নষ্ট কৰা হোৱা নাই নে ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: আগতে কোৱা হৈছে যে যিবিলাক বস্ত unfit for human consumption সেইবিলাক নষ্ট কৰি পেলোৱা হয় আৰু যিবিলাক বস্ত বিক্ৰী কৰিবলৈ দিয়া হয় সেইবিলাক slow poison নহয় ।

Re: Effect of Non-construction of Railway Culvert in the Jorhat Subdivision

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi) asked:

*11 Will the Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department (Embankment and Drainage) be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Government is aware that due to non-construction of Railway culvert in between Patiyagaon and Gohaingaoon

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vast area of cultivable land had become useless since the construction of Borali Dyke in the year 1966 in Jorhat Subdivision ?

- (b) If so, whether Government have taken up the matter with Railway authority for immediate construction of the same ?
 (c) If not, why ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Minister, P. W. D., F. C. & I. Wing) replied :

11. (a)—Some areas were affected due to back flow of river Brahmaputra through eroded embankment.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Does not arise.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, may I know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that due to the construction of the Borali bund a big area of paddy field has been inundated for which the cultivators are not in a position to sow seed?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY: That is so, Sir, and therefore it has been decided to construct a culvert so that the back water may go out.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Whether it is a fact that the Chief Engineer, Railways assured the Chief Minister in 1965 that the construction of culvert would be taken up within a year? What is the reason for not constructing the culvert ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY: It was taken up with the Railway authorities and ultimately the Railways agreed to construct the culvert at a work deficit system. Accordingly they sent a plan and estimate for the work. That estimate was approved by the Assam Government. The Government of Assam sent repeated reminders to the Railway authorities to construct the culvert before the monsoon.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Can we take it that this construction will be completed before the monsoon this year ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY: We shall try our best so that this is completed before the monsoon.

Re: Declaration of Choudang Community as a Specially Backward Class

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi) asked :

*12. Will the Minister-in-charge of Tribal Areas and Welfare of Backward Classes Department be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that Government has recently issued a notification for treating Choudang community of Assam as a Specially Backward Class ?

- (b) If so, what special facilities are going to be offered to them for their all-round development ?

Shri CHATRA SING TERON (Minister, T. A. & W. B. C. Department) replied :

12. (a)—Choudang community is treated as other Backward Classes of the State.

(b)—Choudangs are entitled to all such facilities and concessions as are admissible to other Backward Classes of the State.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : Whether it is a fact that under letter No.GA. Pt. I—76/66—67/179, dated 4th February 1967, Government issued a directive, which has been handed over to the local leader of the Choudang community of Jorhat by the Congress candidate of Charai-bahi Constituency before the election, by stating that the Choudang community has been treated as a specially backward class and Government is going to give special facilities or advantage to them ?

Shri CHATRASING TERON : What was done during the election I have no information. I want to know the number of the circular.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : I have already quoted the number and date of the circular, Sir.

Mr. SPEAKER : The hon. Minister will note down the number etc.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : Letter No.G. A. (Part I)/76/66-67/178 dated 4th February 1967, issued by the Chief Secretary. Now, Sir are we to understand, as the hon. Minister has stated just now, that this community is treated as a backward community, that is the circular was issued to misguide the people ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister) : Sir, if the circular mentioned the community as special backward, they are treated as special backward classes.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA : Sir the Chowdang community has already been treated as backward as other special backward classes before the election.

Shri CHATRASING TERON : Sir, I would like to explain the matter. By a circular in 1961 a Notification dated the 12th September 1961 was issued to treat the Chowdang community as other Backward Class. But, subsequently in 1966 Government decided that there are communities even among the Other Backward Classes who are educationally and in other respects more backward even among the Other Backward Classes. I would like to mention those communities—Moran, Matak, Tea-Garden labourers, Chowdang, Tea-garden Tribes, Ex-tea-garden labourers, etc. So, a distinction was sought to be drawn and in the Fourth

Five Year Plan we proposed to take up a scheme of giving special benefits to the students belonging to the Other Backward Classes by awarding special scholarship and treating them as Special Backward, as comparatively they are more backward than Other Backward Classes. So, students from these communities who pass in the Third Division are awarded scholarship though in respect of students from Backward Classes in general only First Division and Second Division passed are entitled to receive scholarship. Considering the acute backwardness of these communities in respect of education, Government decided to do this in that way.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA (Barbhag): May I know whether the Circular mentions "Special Backward Class"? What is the exact word?

Shri CHATRASING TERON: Special Backward Class because they are more backward for the purpose of educational facilities.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Sir, may I know under what provision of the Constitution of India this subdivision has been made?

Shri CHATRASING TERON: Sir, I cannot explain that; I shall have to see the Constitution.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, while this involves a question of the Constitution, why the Government did not place the matter before the House?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, the hon. Members are aware that there was a Commission—called Kalelkar Commission and that Commission submitted a Report to the Government of India wherein they made elaborate suggestions. The Government of India referred to these recommendations to the State Government and the State Government accepted some of the recommendations.

Rani MANJULA DEVI (Kokrajhar-East): May I know, Sir, whether the Rajbangshis are treated as a most Backward Class?

Shri CHATRASING TERON: Yes, Sir.

Rani MANJULA DEVI: If so, they must be entitled to certain scholarships.

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, if they pass even in Third Division.

Rani MANJULA DEVI: But, I am sorry, Sir, that scholarships have been stopped to this more Backward Class.

Shri CHATRASING TERON: Sir, the reason is this—previously the Government of India used to allocate certain amount for the Other Backward Classes students and distributed it amongst them on caste basis. But subsequently in 1963, Government of India advised the State Government to convert the same amount to be awarded on the basis of economic backwardness instead of on caste consideration as scholarship. So, on the

advice of the Government of India the State Government also contributed a substantial amount towards the benefit to cover that amount. The State Government decided to fall in line and according to the advice that was given by the Government of India. This will also naturally benefit the students belonging to Other Backward Classes on caste basis. On examination subsequently it was found that this did not benefit the students belonging to the Other Backward Classes communities and therefore Government at the time of preparation of the Fourth Five Year Plan decided that in order to treat these people as Other Backward Classes on community basis the whole thing should be revised.

Shri GAURI SANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Sir, do the Government consider that the Garos and Mikirs who are living in the Plains and are called Other Backward Classes deserve to be more backward of all the Backward Classes ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA : Sir, so far as the Hill tribes in the plains districts and the plains tribes in the hill districts are concerned, they are entitled to all the economic benefits ; similarly the Scheduled tribes of the plains, living in the Hills are not termed as Hill tribes, they are entitled to economic and other benefits enjoyed by the Hill tribes living in the plains districts.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table).

Re: Embankment of the Puthimari river

Shri KAMINI MOHAN SARMA (Rangiya) asked :

5. Will the Minister-in-charge P. W. D. (Flood Control) be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government is aware that the embankment of Puthimari river in the District of Kamrup was breached on 23rd of August, 1966 causing huge damage and loss to about 60 villages of Rangiya, Kamalpur and Hajo Circles ?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that the breach has not been repaired yet ?
- (c) What is the expenditure incurred so far in this connection and what is the total estimated amount ?
- (d) Whether it is a fact that one Bharat Chandra Chaudhury, a member of the Rangiya Anchalik Panchayat, submitted a memorandum to the Chief Minister, Assam, that due to apathy and indifference of some local officials this breach took place ?
- (e) Whether Government will be pleased to make an enquiry about the cause of the breach ?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY [Minister, P. W. D. (F. C. and I. Wing)] replied:

5. (a)—Yes, at Madhukuchi village.

(b)—The work of restoration is in hand and is nearing completion.

(c)—Up-to-date expenditure figure has been called for from the Division. The total cost of repairs to this breach is estimated to be Rs.4,43,824.

(d)—Yes, a memorandum has been received.

(e)—The cause of this breach was found to be foundation failure by piping and sand boiling, which resulted in slumping and overtopping of the newly constructed retired embankment.

Re: Flood caused by Pakhalagi river to Jhawbari and Odlaguri areas

Shri GOLAK CHANDRA PATGIRI (Bijni) asked:

6. Will the Minister, P. W. D. (E. & D.) be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Government is aware that the Pakhalagi river by its flood is causing damage to Jhawbari and Odlaguri area for the last 27 years?

(b) Whether Government propose to construct any embankment along the bank of the river?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY [Minister, P. W. D. (F. C. and I Wing)] replied:

6. (a)—Yes, to some extent.

(b)—No.

Re: Quantity of food-stuff required per year in the State

Shri UTTAM CHANDRA BRAHMA (Sidli Reserved for Scheduled Tribes) asked:

7. Will the Minister-in-charge, Supply be pleased to state—

(a) The total quantity of food-stuff (rice, atta, wheat) required for the State in a year?

(b) The present position of stock of food, *i. e.*, rice, atta and wheat?

Shri RAMESH CHANDRA BAROAH (Minister, Supply) replied :

7. (a)—Annual requirement of food-stuff in the State are as follows:—

(1) Rice	...	...	18,37,525 tonnes.
(2) Atta	...	...	2,36,000 ,,
(3) Flour	...	...	33,600 ,,
(4) Suji	...	...	6,000 ,,

(b)—The present position of stock are as follows:—

(1) With the Food Corporation of India.	...	...	About 6,04,474 maunds paddy or 3,77,796 maunds in term of rice.
(2) With Government	...	...	About 1,00,000 maunds paddy or 62,500 maunds in term of rice.
Wheat	...	...	5,152 tonnes or 1,37,558 maunds.
Atta	...	...	1,192 tonnes or 31,826 maunds.
Flour	...	...	302 tonnes or 8,063 maunds.
Suji	...	...	134 tonnes or 3,577 maunds.

Re: Irrigation projects in Sidli-Chirang Anchalik Panchayat area

Shri UTTAM CHANDRA BRAHMA (Sidli, Reserved for Scheduled Tribes) asked :

8. Will the Minister-in-charge of P. W. D. (F. C. and I. Wing) be pleased to state—

(a) Number of irrigation projects completed in Sidli-Chirang Anchalik Panchayat areas?

(b) Number of irrigation projects proposed to be taken up in the same area?

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Minister, P.W.D. (Flood Control and Irrigation Wing)) replied :

8. (a)—One Irrigation scheme has been partly completed.

(b)—One.

Re: **Additional Doctor and Lady Compounder in the Rangiya Primary Health Centre**

Shri KAMINI MOHAN SARMA (Rangiya) asked :

9. Will the Minister-in-charge of Health be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that the people of Rangiya met the Health Minister and the Directorate of Health Services for more than once to allot one additional doctor and one additional Lady Compounder in the Primary Health Centre at Rangiya ?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that the people were assured of the same but nothing has yet been done in that regard ?
- (c) Whether it is a fact that the only doctor of Rangiya Public Health Unit, Dr. B. K. Sarmah, M. B. B. S., has been transferred to Sonapur recently and there is no substitute ?
- (d) If so, why ?
- (e) What steps Government has taken in this regard ?

Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEB (Minister, Health) replied :

9. (a) & (b)—No information. But there is a proposal for creation of an Additional post of Medical Officer for the Rangiya Primary Health Centre which is under consideration. A post of Lady Doctor is admissible for a Primary Health Centre under Family Planning but due to dearth of Lady doctors it is very difficult to post one. There is no proposal for a Lady additional Pharmacist. No additional Pharmacist is admissible according to the present staff position of a Primary Health Centre.

(c)—Yes, the doctor has been transferred and a substitute is also posted.

(d)—The doctor concerned was posted there from 11th July, 1962 and transfer was due.

(e)—Does not arise.

Re: **Number of persons died in Small-pox during 1966-67**

Shri KAMINI MOHAN SARMA (Rangiya) asked :

10. Will the Minister-in-charge of Health be pleased to state—

- (a) What is the total number of persons that died of small-pox in the State during the year 1966-67 ?
- (b) What is the total number of persons that died during that period in Rangiya Circle ?

- (c) What is the total number of such deaths in the District of Kamrup ?
- (d) What measures were undertaken to fight small-pox during that period ?
- (e) Whether there is any long and permanent programme to eradicate small-pox from our State ?
- (f) If so, what is it ?

Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEB (Minister, Health) replied :

10. (a)—Total number of deaths due to small-pox in the year 1966-67 (upto 4th March) were 236.

(b)—Total number of death during that period in Rangiya (including adjacent areas, *i.e.*, Tamulpur, Borigog, Borkhetri, Darrengipara)—28.

(c)—Total number of deaths in Kamrup district during that period—39.

(d)—Measures taken were vaccination of contacts and all the people of affected localities which was undertaken immediately on receipt of reports of the outbreak. Advice regarding home isolation of the cases, and distribution of medicine to the cases was also given. Additional staff was withdrawn from other area of the district and deputed to the affected areas to help the local staff there. As some people of affected localities still refused to accept vaccination persistently some such areas were declared as small-pox affected areas, under the Epidemic Diseases Act, to enforce vaccination of such people.

(e)—National Small-pox Eradication Programme is functioning in the State from August, 1960. It was a short programme for undertaking mass vaccination campaign during the Third Plan. Only a reduced staff is now functioning from the N.S.E.P. to supplement the normal health staff of the district.

(f)—It is a National Programme taken up simultaneously by all the States of the country. It aims at attaining a nearly 100 per cent vaccination coverage of all sections of the population. In Assam, 4 district Units according to the pattern given by Government of India were functioning from 1961. The campaign was conducted in 2 phases and in each phase 3 Plains districts and 2 Hills districts were taken up by these 4 district Units. Kamrup district was taken up under a Pilot Project in 1960-61. Then the teams were shifted to Nowgong district. Entrusting vaccination work of the newborn babies, left-overs, new-comers, etc., to the normal staff of the Civil Surgeon concerned.

Above 80 per cent of the population of the State was vaccinated by February 1966, and 1 district Unit and some of the staff was retrenched with effect from 1st March, 1966. The three district Units with reduced staff are continuing to work in 1966-67 jointly with the staff under Civil Surgeon.

Above 90 per cent of the total population of the State has since been vaccinated.

**Adjournment Motion—Strike resorted to by the Students
of the Assam Agricultural College, Jorhat**

Mr. SPEAKER : Order, order, please. The Question Hour is over.

I have received a notice of an Adjournment Motion from Shri Dulal Chandra Barua with regard to a strike resorted to by the students of the Assam Agricultural College.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir. The matter which I have placed before you for discussion through an adjournment motion has fulfilled all the conditions of Rules 56 and 57 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Assam Legislative Assembly. Sir, according to Rule 56—"A motion for adjournment of the business of the Assembly for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance—this matter to be discussed is a definite matter and of urgent importance, because it is the result of a recent incident where the students of the Assam Agricultural College resorted to continuous strike since 29th March, 1967. Since students are involved so it is of public importance.

Sir, according to Rule 57—"not more than one such motion shall be made at the same sitting." Sir, this is the only motion I have put forward during this sitting.

"Not more than one matter can be discussed on the same motion, and the motion must be restricted to a specific matter of recent occurrence."—Sir, as I have already said it is a specific matter and strictly of recent occurrence. This matter was not discussed before and restricted to only the specific matter *viz.*, the continuous strike resorted to by the students of the Assam Agricultural College.

"The motion must not revive discussion on a matter which has been discussed in the same session." Sir, this matter was not discussed in this Session before and there is possibility of reviving discussion on the same matter during this Session.

"The motion must not anticipate a matter which has been previously appointed for consideration, or with reference to which a notice of motion has been previously given, regard being had to the probability of the matter anticipated being brought before the House within a reasonable time." Sir, we have not anticipated this matter previously and there is not possibility of discussing this matter again in this House, because tomorrow, the last day of the programme, we are going to discuss the Governor's address. So, the question of the matter being brought before this House within a reasonable time does not arise.

"The motion must not deal with a matter on which a resolution cannot be moved." As you know, Sir, this is a matter on which we cannot move a resolution.

"The motion shall not deal with any matter which is under adjudication by a Court of Law having jurisdiction in any part of India." Sir, this matter is also free from this obligation.

“The motion shall not raise a question of privilege.” Sir, this matter is free from such restriction.

Lastly, “It must not relate to a matter which is not primarily the concern of the Government of the State.” It is, Sir, the primary concern of the State Government, because Government totally failed to fulfil the long-felt grievances of the students studying in the Assam Agricultural College. Sir, these grievances were brought to the notice of the then Agriculture Minister and the Director of the Agriculture Department. But these were not fulfilled. Then a delegation of students waited upon the Chief Minister and presented their demands and waited till the 28th March, 1967. Getting no response from the Government they had to resort to indefinite strike. It clearly shows that it is a failure on the part of the Government for looking after the interest of the people who are directly concerned with the production of food.

Mr. SPEAKER: Please do not speak on merit.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, I want to submit that this is only the institution of its kind in Assam. The grievances put forward by the students of this College are genuine and legitimate. Their grievances are pending from a long time. It needs special attention of the State Government. The strike is continuing since 29th March 1967. I consider it to be a fit matter to be discussed in an adjournment motion.

***Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Minister, Revenue):** Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is distressing to know that the students of the Agricultural College resorted to strike. There is a deputation from the students to the Chief Minister and as the honourable member has said in his speech, their grievances are pending for a long time and awaiting redress. As such, we feel extremely sorry for them. But I do not consider that it is a fit matter for discussion in an adjournment motion. Because the honourable member has said that he has represented the matter on several occasions to the Minister in charge of Agriculture and has brought it to the notice of the Chief Minister also on several occasions, and the students have also represented their grievances to the Chief Minister. As such the honourable member has ample opportunities to bring this matter by some other methods to this House. The honourable Chief Minister is going to visit the College in the month of April and the Minister in charge of Agriculture is also going to visit the College on the 5th April, 1967, and he will see how best the grievances of the students can be redressed. Therefore, taking all these things into consideration, I do not consider that this matter should be allowed to discuss in an adjournment motion. Therefore, it should be ruled out.

Shri LAKSHMI PRASAD GOSWAMI (Minister, Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have not much to add. This matter cannot be considered as extraordinary and of recent occurrence. Sir, grievances of the students are there, but in the meantime Government has taken steps to meet almost all the grievances of the students. A deputation of students who earlier waited upon the Chief Minister, presented their demands on the 25th March, 1967. They gave the ultimatum that unless their grievances are redressed before 28th of this month, they would go on strike. Immediately after returning to Jorhat the students resorted to strike from the

29th of March and the Principal sent a telegram message to the Chief Minister. The Chief Minister after getting the full information from the department informed the students about our stand. The Chief Minister on receipt of a telegram from the Principal of the College, requested the students to withdraw their strike. He assured the students that he would visit the College in April next. I myself am also going to visit the College on the 5th of April, 1967. Now, this is the matter and the problems of the students are also there.

Sir, the matter on which the students have resorted to strike is not of recent occurrence. Because it is not a result of recent incident. This is not of extraordinary nature. Under the circumstances, I do not find any reason why the hon. Member Shri Dulal Chandra Barua wants to bring this matter in an adjournment motion. It would have been better if the hon. Member would have tabled a Calling Attention Notice when it could have been explained properly.

Sir, I have explained the entire position and admissibility of the motion was also clearly explained. So, I feel that it is not fit for discussion in an adjournment motion.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, I have heard the arguments put forward by the Minister in charge of Agriculture and the Minister in charge of Parliamentary Affairs. They have overlapped the issue. They are trying to drag the matter to show that it is not of recent occurrence.

But there are two parts of the matter—one part relates to the long-felt grievances and the other relates to the strike. Therefore, in the adjournment motion we have given stress to the strike part. What are the reasons for which strike has been resorted to is a different matter. We have specifically mentioned in the adjournment motion that we want to discuss the situation arising out of the continuous strike by the students of the Assam Agriculture College since March 28. We are not at all concerned with the visit to the college by the Chief Minister or Agriculture Minister. We only want to know under what circumstances these students have resorted to strike. There may be various reasons and there may be a background. But we are concerned with the strike. Whether the students had negotiations with the Chief Minister and whether the Chief Minister is going down there, is not the matter of adjournment motion. Accumulations of grievances are there. But, Sir, strike is not a continuous one, and it is a matter of recent occurrence. Therefore, I submit that by considering this matter you will please admit the adjournment motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: In view of the statement made by the Agriculture Minister, are you pressing the motion?

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: He has not made any statement and he did not explain the position fully.

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA, (Chief Minister):** Sir, about 3 or 4 student representatives of the Assam Agriculture College met me on the 25th of this month and they submitted a letter in which they referred to the following grievances. I am mentioning them briefly:

1. Shortage of Hostel accommodation.

2. Inadequate Laboratory facilities.
3. Insufficiency of the teaching staff.
4. Absence of an Auditorium.
5. Desirability of converting this institute to a Rural University.
6. About eligibility of the Agricultural graduates for A.C.S. and I.A.S. examinations.
7. About the pay scales of the agricultural graduates, which, according to their opinion, should be higher than what it is to-day.

After I met the students I immediately wanted full information from our department with regard to all grievances, and I assured the students that I am taking up these matters and all that is possible would be done. Sir, you will appreciate that some of the demands are not possible to implement straightaway. For example, to increase the Hostel accommodation and to put up an auditorium will naturally take time. I told them that so far as Assam Civil Service Examination is concerned, agricultural graduates are eligible to appear. Then they referred to the subject of agronomy which is not included in the syllabus, and that is why it is not possible for them to appear. I said that I will take up the matter with the Public Service Commission. So, Sir, I felt that I could impress upon them about our desire to look into their grievances carefully. But unfortunately somehow the last paragraph of their petition in which they mentioned about a target date that by 28th March, 1967 they hoped to receive an assured reply, failing which all the students would not remain passive onlookers any longer was missed. In any case I asked for a detailed report on these matters from the Department and I have received it. Then I got another telegram from the students which is dated 29th but actually it was received on the 30th, to inform me that they have gone on strike. On receipt of this telegram I sent the following message to the Principal:

Please convey the following message to the students with reference to their telegram dated 29th. Distressed to learn about your strike. Please give up. I am considering your grievances. Whatever possible will be done. Minister Agriculture will visit your college 5th April. I will visit sometime April. Good wishes to you all.

This is what we have done. I may assure the House that so far as these grievances are concerned, whatever possible would be done, and I hope that the students of the Agriculture College will also give up their strike.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: Sir, yesterday I got a telegram from the General Secretary of the Students' Union of that College. They consider the letter which was issued by the Chief Minister to be vague. Therefore, I would request the Chief Minister to give a clear indication that the Government is seriously considering the matter and their demand will be considered.

Mr. SPEAKER: Are you pressing your motion ?

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: No,

Result of Elections to Financial Committees

Mr. SPEAKER: I have to announce the results of election to the Committee on Public Accounts and Committee on Estimates. The number of candidates being equal to the number of seats vacant the following have been elected unanimously :

(i) PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE :

1. Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya.
2. Shri Dulal Chandra Barua.
3. Shri Shamsul Huda.
4. Shri Molia Tanti.
5. Shri Tilok Gogoi.
6. Shri Surendra Chandra Baruah.
7. Shri Durgeswar Saikia.

(ii) COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES

1. Shri Prabhat Narayan Choudhury.
2. Shrimati Lily Sen Gupta.
3. Shri Phani Bora.
4. Shri Narendra Nath Sarma.
5. Shri Sadhan Ranjan Sarkar.
6. Shri Bahadur Basumatari.
7. Shri Hiralal Patwary.
8. Shri Bhubaneswar Barman.
9. Shri Sailen Medhi.
10. Shri Sarat Chandra Goswami.

Under Rule 198(1) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly, I appoint Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee and Shri Prabhat Narayan Choudhury as the Chairman of the Estimates Committee. (*Applause*)

Now, next item—Shri Dulal Chandra Barua :

**Calling attention to a matter of urgent public importance—
“Laldenga escapes to U. K. via Pakistan”**

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA (Charaibahi): Sir, under Rule 54 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Assam Legislative Assembly, I beg to draw the attention of the Chief Minister to an urgent matter of public importance and of recent occurrence and that is a news-item published in the Assam Tribune, dated 16th March, 1967 under the caption, “Laldenga escapes to U. K. via Pakistan” where it is stated that the President of the outlawed Mizo National Front, Mr. Laldenga, escaped to U. K. via Pakistan a few days ago. This is a matter of great concern in respect of law and order situation, not only in that particular hill area but as a State and country as a whole.

Sir, we have seen how the hostile Naga leader, Phizo, had managed to escape to the U. K. and what role he has been playing since then in respect of the situation in Naga Land. Therefore, I want to know whether there were enough security forces and security officers to look after the movements of the rebels and whether Government were fully aware of the fact that this gentleman, Mizo hostile leader Laldenga, was contemplating to leave Mizo Hill, and if so why precautionary measures could not be taken to prevent him from going out of the State. Are we to understand, therefore, that these Police and Security officers, and as a matter of that, the administration there are remaining only as passive spectators? I have already said, Sir, that this is matter of gravest concern not for that particular area alone but for the State and the country as a whole. You know, Sir, how some foreign powers, particularly China and Pakistan are playing mischievous roles in a number of India's internal matters, and therefore this escape of Mizo hostile leader Laldenga should not be played down as a matter of no significance. It is a matter fraught with grave consequence because those of us who are following the manner and methods of action of the Mizo rebels know how they are conducting their rebel activities from inside Pakistan in collusion with the Government of that country and also China. I, therefore, say that it was improper on the part of the Government in not keeping an extremely watchful and vigilant eye on the movement of this particular Mizo leader. So far as we can see, this hostile Mizo leader is in all probability likely to pursue the same tactics as has been done by his predecessor Naga hostile leader Mr. Phizo, he will try to get some foreign help by means of which try to create fresh trouble and disorder thereby setting at naught all the efforts of our Government to restore peace and order to that troubled spot. He is likely to create confusion in the minds of the people in the Mizo Hills as also mislead the world public opinion by mischievous propaganda and publications with the help of foreign countries like China and Pakistan, and may be of the United Kingdom. Therefore, I want to know whether this Government tried to keep track on this particular gentleman and even if it did try, whether it has not totally failed to act up to its responsibility in maintaining law and order in the Mizo Hills and also in detecting timely the movement of this underground Mizo leader. Therefore, I want to know what steps this Government took in respect of this matter and whether this matter has been taken up in the Government of India, I mean, this question of escape of the Mizo rebel Laldenga. I want to know the details of the escape, whether the movement of this rebel leader was duly reported to Government by our security forces, and if they did, how and why this hostile could make good of his escape to a foreign country.

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** Mr. Speaker Sir, reports about the rumour of Laldenga, President of the outlawed Mizo National Front having set out for U. K. from East Pakistan during the middle part of March, 1967 have been received by Government, but no details of his reported escape could be collected as yet to confirm the information. According to another report of very recent origin Laldenga is to attend a meeting of the Mizo National Front leaders in the first week of April somewhere in the border of Burma. We have not been able yet to obtain confirmation of Laldenga's departure through East Pakistan.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: May I know from the hon. Chief Minister whether this outlawed Mizo leader has escaped from Indian territory?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Shri Laldenga was in Mizo district, and therefore, if he had escaped, it must be from the Mizo district.

Shri DULAL CHANDRA BARUA: May I know whether Government got any scent of Laldenga's plan to escape before he actually left the country, and whether Government has tried to collect information about that?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: We have not been able to obtain information about that.

Election of Deputy Speaker

Mr. SPEAKER: Now item No. 3. The House has to elect a Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. I have received two nomination papers of two candidates—one is for Shri Mohi Kanta Das proposed by Shri Nakul Chandra Das and seconded by Shri Surendra Chandra Barua. The other paper is also proposing Shri Mohi Kanta Das's name. I have also received another nomination paper proposing the name of Shri Rothindra Nath Sen by Shri Lakshyadhar Chaudhury and duly amended by Md. Abdul Mosawwir.

Now, for this purpose, according to Rule 8, sub-rule (5) "On the date fixed for elections the Speaker or the person presiding shall read out to the Assembly the names of the members who have been duly proposed together with the names of their proposers and seconders, and if only one member has been so proposed for election, shall declare that person duly elected. If more than one person has been so proposed, the Assembly shall proceed to elect a Deputy Speaker by ballot, and in case of two candidates the candidate obtaining the larger number of votes shall be declared elected".

Now, the ballot box and the papers have been made ready, and election will take place.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA (Barbhag): Mr Speaker, Sir, before we proceed on the election, I on behalf of the entire opposition beg to make one statement. Sir, with regard to the question of election of the Speaker we tried to come to an understanding of the entire

House. But as the proposal came at the last moment, for some reasons this could not be effective, and therefore, we had to face the unfortunate situation of electing the Speaker by votes. We wanted to avoid that situation in the case of the election of the Deputy Speaker, and therefore, since several days past we from the side of the Opposition were trying utmost to see that some unanimity and understanding may be arrived at between the Government and the Opposition and some talks were going on about this. But at the last moment when the Congress Party decided to put up a candidate for the Deputy Speakership, they then or thereafter did not consider it necessary to hold any consultation with us or even to invite us to sit round the table to discuss about the matter as to whether the election of the Deputy Speaker could be made unanimous. While we from the side of the House were very keen about having a person from the Opposition as the Deputy Speaker it would have been befitting if in a House like this where the two sides are almost evenly balanced, at least the Deputy Speaker should have been selected from the side of the Opposition. But the ruling party is so obstinate that it did not consider it worthwhile even to observe the most elementary rule or courtesy of passing a slip of paper to let us know about their decision. This is the courtesy shown by the ruling party to the Opposition. So, Sir, we do not want to take part in the election of the Deputy Speaker and we are walking out of the House.

(Opposition Members walked out of the House).

Mr. SPEAKER: Election will proceed. The ballot box will be placed here and the hon. Members will put their respective ballot papers duly marked on the ballot box one by one and the proceedings of the House will continue in the meantime.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH (Titabor): If the proceeding of the House continues and the hon. Members have to cross the floor to cast their votes it will not be convenient.

Mr. SPEAKER: We can proceed in another way which will save time and the voting will be completed within 10 minutes. We need not proceed now with the proceedings of the House. Each hon. Member will be supplied with a ballot paper on which he will put his mark and come to the ballot box and put it there.

(After Voting)

Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order. The result of the election:—

Shri Mohi Kanta Das: Sixty-three valid votes polled.

Shri Rothindra Nath Sen: Nil.

I declare Shri Mohi Kanta Das duly elected to the office of the Deputy Speaker.

Felicitation to the Deputy Speaker

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** Mr. Speaker Sir, we are very happy that one of the veteran parliamentarians of the House has been elected to the office of the Deputy Speaker. We are

*Speech not corrected.

long associated with Shri Das and we have seen his performance in parliamentary activities as well as outside. We are aware of the sacrifice made by him and the suffering he has undergone during the freedom movement. I feel this is a very deserving honour given by this august House to Shri Mohi Kanta Das. Sir, we assure him through you our full co-operation and we have no doubt that Shri Das will be able to discharge this heavy responsibility to the satisfaction of everybody and protect the rights and privileges of the members and dignity of the House.

Shri MOHI KANTA DAS (Deputy Speaker designate): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members who have elected me to the high office of this august House. It will be my endeavour to secure co-operation of the hon. Members of this House in discharging the onerous responsibility that would be cast on me. I will surely try to maintain with the co-operation of the hon. Members to vindicate the prestige and dignity of the House. It would also be my earnest endeavour to protect the rights and privileges of the hon. Members.

Thank you, Sir.

Laying out copy of the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 1961 and the Audit Report, 1962 of the Assam State Electricity Board

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 4.

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister)**: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to lay the Annual Accounts for the year ended 31st March, 1961 and the Audit Report, 1962 of the Assam State Electricity Board.

The Assam State Legislature Members' (Removal of Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill, 1967

Mr. SPEAKER: Item No. 5.

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister): Sir, I beg to move that the Assam State Legislature Members' (Removal of Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill, 1967 be taken into consideration.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the Assam State Legislature Members' (Removal of Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill, 1967 be taken into consideration.

(The motion was put as a question and adopted).

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is:

The long and short title and the preamble do form part of the Bill.

(The motion was adopted)

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Sir, I beg to move that the Assam State Legislature Members' (Removal of Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill, 1967 be passed.

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the Assam State Legislature Members' (Removal of Disqualifications) (Amendment) Bill, 1967 be passed.
(The motion was put as a question and adopted).

Resumption of debate on Governor's Address

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH (Titabar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the most important, burning problems of the State today, to my mind, are food, security and the question of re-organization of the State. As regards food we had enough of information today during the question hour including the price of paddy which was said to vary from Rs. 32 to Rs. 35 in different places. If this is so in the month of March, God knows what position it will assume during the hard months of July/August. Sir, I would suggest to Government that before the Chief Minister goes to Delhi to attend the conference on food, it would be advisable to have discussion with the leaders of the different parties and also one or two eminent trades people, if that is feasible, so that we have a co-ordinated and consolidated policy of procurement and distribution because the food problem is one which concerns all of us. It should not be made a party question.

As regards the second item I mentioned—security of the State, of which infiltration of Pakistanis, particularly the Pakistani Muslim infiltrator is a serious one, I would confine myself to quoting a small paragraph of Assam Information and I hope I shall have an opportunity to address this House on this important matter on a future date. Sir, I read from Assam Information issue 8, November 1966, at page 38.—“of late a fresh wave of infiltration of Pak-nationals into Assam has posed a serious security problem. Information so far received by the Government gives a clear indication that this fresh wave of infiltration is the outcome of a deliberate plan of the Pakistan authorities. The decision in lunching this move appears to create a serious situation in this frontier State. Pakistan's purpose in selecting infiltrators mostly from among those earlier deported from Assam obviously is to utilise their previous links and local knowledge for subversive and other activities for which many of them might have been imparted necessary training.

Large number of infiltrators are reported to have been brought to camps in Pakistan near the border, for sending them across in batches by convenient routes. This has been particularly noticed in the Goalpara district sector and the riverine routes through the Char areas are being used. Other border districts are certainly not immune. The modus operandi commonly adopted by the infiltrators so far has been to come with women and children in families obviously to ward off suspicion. In some cases they also pose themselves as Hindu refugees with women putting on vermilion.”

News reports show it that there are camps inside Pakistan for training hostile Nagas and Mizos in guerilla warfare and then send them to this frontier region. This is a serious matter. As I said, I will discuss this matter on a future occasion.

I now take up the question of reorganisation. We have a communique from the Home Ministry of Government of India dated 13th January, 1967 issued at the conclusion of the discussion with the A. P. H. L. C. delegation. This communique reads like this : The first part is :

“The Prime Minister and the Home Minister have held detailed discussion with the leaders of the APHLC. The Government of India appreciate the political aspirations of the people of the hill areas of Assam and have decided to reorganise the State of Assam.” The second part reads like this :

“Bearing in mind the geography and the imperative needs of security and coordinated development of this region as a whole the Home Minister discussed with the APHLC leaders the proposal that a federal structure composed of federating units having equal status, not subordinate to one another, should provide the basis for this reorganisation. Under this arrangement a limited number of essential subjects of common interest would be assigned to the regional federation leaving the rest of the State functions to the federating units which will have their own Legislative Assemblies, Councils of Ministers, etc”.

The third paragraph is :

“Details of the scheme including the subjects to be allocated to the regional federation would be worked out within six months by a committee on which all concerned interests would be represented. At a later stage other administrative units in the eastern region may also join this regional federation”.

I submit, Sir, that the federal structure is composed of federating units, which will have equal status not subordinate to one another, should provide the basis for this reorganisation and a number of essential subjects of common interest would be dealt with by the federation. This proposal is unacceptable to us. I am obliged to say that I have a clear mandate from my constituency to say that this proposal is not acceptable to the people of Assam. And why? Do we not appreciate the political aspirations of our brethren of the hills? We do appreciate them. Those of us who fought for freedom for over three decades understand them better. We are in full sympathy with them and we will co-operate with our hill brethren to achieve their legitimate aspirations. What we oppose is the scheme of federation and that on the ground that both politically and economically it will be disastrous. The State will not be viable politically and it will be suicidal economically. As in the British days, separation of this frontier region would make the emotional and political integration with people of this area more difficult and that is why we oppose the scheme of federation. Now, Sir, I want to discuss the subject in three aspects, or rather four aspects : geographically, historically, economically and politically. Geographically the plains and hills of Assam are so put together by Providence that there is no escape for one from getting away from other. Either we chose to quarrel with each other to our mutual detriment, or we come to an understanding for our mutual harmony and co-operation and prosperity.

As regards geographical situation I cannot do better than to quote a passage from the Report of the States, Reorganisation Commission. In page 183, Chapter XVI, it reads :

"Indeed, a former Governor of the State during the British period described the Brahmaputra valley as a broad central corridor or hall, from which small rooms, corresponding to the hill districts, open out on both sides, with, however, no connecting doors between them." This description remains substantially true to this day. The hill districts have to-day even more intimate administrative and economic links with the plains, in which incidentally about seven lakhs of tribal people are to be found.

Truly speaking, the Brahmaputra valley with about 60 to 70 miles in breadth is like a hall in a big house and these surrounding hills are like small rooms to which one can go through this hall, there having no inter-communication. Thus the geographical situation is such that communication is difficult and there is none between the hills except by crossing over some portions of the plains. It is extremely difficult.

Sir, if there is a federation of different units, what about Cachar district? Where will Cachar go? Will Cachar join the Mizos, as was represented by the Mizo deputation to the Prime Minister sometime back? Will it suit them? If it does not suit them they cannot go. Obviously, in a scheme of federation of the hills and plains districts into units, they cannot be forgotten or neglected.

Then, Sir, the rivers. All the rivers flow from the hills and the economy of the hills and the plains are intertwined. What will be the economic condition, if the hills are separated from the plains? If the soil is not conserved properly in the hill region, the plains cannot produce food sufficient to feed the plains and the hills people. After all, the hills cannot produce enough for the hills people in a foreseeable future. After all, it is from the plains or from elsewhere they have to be fed. Therefore, in all connections, in respect of economy, the integration of plains and hills of Assam is essentially necessary. In this connection, I will read from page 31, Chapter V of the Report of the Commission on the Hill Areas of Assam. What is called as Pataskar Commission Report. "Para 74. It is an undoubted fact that economic development of the hill areas is not possible in isolation. The link of the hills with the plains of Assam constitute a factor of importance to both of them. These links are geographical, administrative and economic. We have already described the geographical and administrative links. From the economic point of view also there is a vital community of interest between the two. They hill districts are a "series of economic islands" joined only by the plains. Prosperity of both depend largely on mutual interchange, as in all major economic problems the two regions are interdependent." The hills are dependent on the plains for their food, which the latter cannot produce unless the growing intensity of soil erosion is controlled by suitable measures in the hills and there is an integrated programme of irrigation and flood control. After all, the hills are the source of rivers. In the development of water-power and industries too the two regions have to work together. On geographical considerations the hills will have to depend on the plains for any useful communications programme. There is thus the danger in the economic separation of the hills from the plains; and the development programmes of the two regions have necessarily to be integrated. That is why during all the discussions with the hill leaders, the late Prime Ministers were very emphatic that the hill areas should not deny themselves the advantage of their natural links with the plains.

Sir, I need no apology to quote from the Reports: the State's Reorganisation Commission or the Pataskar Commission. In both these Commissions some of the most illustrious sons of India served as members. The reports of the Commissions are very exhaustive and were prepared with great care and pains. Their opinions are entitled to greatest respect from all.

Now, Sir, if the geography puts us together, if the requirement of economy ordains that we should mutually work in harmony and co-operation to our mutual advantage, let us examine what has history to say on the matter. The history of the hills and plains in this frontier region is a chequered one. Let us not go to earlier times, but let us try to scan it briefly since the British advent. What did we have during the British days? The British took very good care to keep the people of the hills isolated from the plains people. I think the Leader and many of us here who were in the Jorhat Jail in 1942-45 will recollect that we found one Bengali-speaking gentleman convicted for six months for the sole fault that he crossed the inner line to Naga Hills. Sir, for this isolation, the development in the hills was greatly retarded. In the plains during those days, there was Police-Raj, maintaining law and order and collecting taxes. There was complete isolation from the Hills people. The Britishers never cared for the development of the hill areas economically or in any other way. The only people who had access and who had encouragement from the ruling power were Christian foreign missionaries. They certainly did humanitarian work, but they also took jolly good care to convert the innocent backward hill people to Christianity and in a way they alienated them from the people of the plains. In this connection, Sir, I may have your leave to read from a thought-provoking article by an enlightened brother of the North Cachar Hills. It is a long article published in the Assam Tribune, Wednesday, dated December 28, 1966. As we are hard up for time, I will read a short portion which is concerned with our present problem. This article was written by Shri S. R. Thaosen, Chief Executive Member, North Cachar Hills District Council and was captioned: 'Why The Hills and the Plains do not unite'.

"It is quite correct to say that the British administration did not bring about any administrative or economic reform in the hills of the eastern India., Nor did the British take up any developmental schemes. In spite of all this, it is strange to note, no educated or patriotic hill man ever blamed the British. They do not think of blaming them even to-day."

"We find therefore that the hill tribal people of the eastern India are to-day divided into two groups depending on two different circumstances. So also is the case with their problems. In the first group, they think that they have been turned into a second class citizens and they therefore want a separate homeland. They do not feel safe in the secular state of India. Better be a king in the hell than lead a dependent's life in heaven though actually they may not sincerely believe in such a thing.

"The other group of the hill people want to grow up in the Indian oil itself. They may not give away all that they have, but they want to prosper by mutual give and take. They have realised the meaning of

what the poet has to say in these lines. (That is from Rabindranath Tagore)
 "In the shore of this great human ocean that is India, all will be given
 and taken mixed and assimilated and nothing will go back hence."

Sir, the present-day tendency, I mean to say, the separatist tendency is a hangover from the British days. And I do hope and trust that our brethren in the Hills will also pay due consideration to this aspect of the matter. Towards the close of the last Great War it was almost certain that Britain will have to part with power in India, there was still a longing lingering look behind for the Eastern Hill Region. Let us see what Mr. Reginald Coupland had said in this matter. He wrote a book—"The Constitutional Problems of India". One can discuss a conspiracy running since the beginning of the British rule till their last days to divide and rule and thus to have secured foot-hold in the Eastern Hill Areas. This effort I would say, has not ceased ; and if I may say so, has not abated even. Let us see what Mr. Coupland wrote—Constitutional Problem of India—para 3, page 164. This is very illuminating. Those who have eyes to see will see through it. But there is also a saying that unfortunately those whose sight is blurred all the suns of the Universe cannot bring them to touch with reality. Coupland writes—"There is one major area which seems to call for special treatment—the hill tracts on the Eastern Frontier of Assam. They adjoin similar hill tracts on the North-West Frontier of Burma." "The inhabitants of both areas"—Sir, I repeat—"they adjoin similar hill tracts on the North-West Frontier of Burma". He has dealt with both hill tracts on both the side of Indian frontier, *i. e.*, on our side and in Burma's side. "The inhabitants of both areas are alike in race and culture. They are not Indians or Burmans but of Mongol stock. In no sense do they belong to the Indian or Burma nation. They constitute a single problem". Here is a great Professor who says that in no sense they belong to the Indian or Burman nation. They constitute a single problem. This is very meaningful in relation to future free India. This was written in 1943, incidentally. "The relations of one area with the future free India will be similar to those of the other area with future free Burma". "These considerations have inspired a suggestion that the two areas might be united in a single territory, the administration of which would be separated in some way from the Government of India and Burma". There will be an international cockpit situated between India and Burma which will be a hunting ground for creating troubles to our detriment. "These considerations have inspired a suggestion that the two areas might be united in a single territory. Since the security and stability of this frontier zone are of the highest importance to both countries, it seems possible that India and Burma might welcome some special arrangement. It has been suggested that Government might conclude a treaty with the British Government for the provision of British assistance for the time being in the external defence of India". I skip over a few paragraphs, but in these paragraphs there is one sentence which means a lot—"It clearly could not be applied to the other 'excluded' areas. Clearly these areas must be fitted into the fabric of the Indian Constitution." Then passing over another three paragraphs he goes on to say. "If a regional system were adopted, the final responsibility for the areas could be vested in the regional Governments rather than in the Centre". He would not have the centre to do anything with the areas ; it should be vested in a regional Government. Again he says "in that case the cost would be considered in allocating sources of revenue between the regions and the provinces.

"One further point seems worth mentioning. As in the British Crown colonies, invaluable work has been done in some of these areas by Christian Missions, specially in providing health-centres and schools. No one can question that this work ought to be continued. Would not the British Government be justified in asking that all reasonable rights should be accorded to the missions?" (Christian Missions)..... "And ought not the British public to ensure that their work is not handicapped by lack of funds?"

These are in short the important sentences in this thesis. Sir, curiously enough the other day an International Press News Bulletin came to my hands. It has curiously enough, faint similarity so much so as if this Internal Press-note is an addendum to Coupland's book. It is still more sinister and more mischievous. I quote from the Agencia Internacional De Prensa (International Press Service) Agence De Presse Internationale. This is a news bulletin which was published from Berlin, West Germany. The name is very tongue-twisting—I cannot pronounce. This is marked—A 6/975 E-1, dated 7th December 1966. It says, "The turbulent East and West Pakistan, who are different races, have little in common except for their religion. The demand for autonomy for East Pakistan is not a mere political slogan advanced by the Opposition to Ayub Khan. It is a deep aspiration of the people and is historically inevitable". I read some brief portions, I do not read the whole of it. I read from the third paragraph—"The developments taking place in the Eastern States of India show that their people are also being ignored by the Delhi Government". As if our Government do not treat them well! "It is only hunger and poverty that they receive. Grenades and home-made bombs were used by the demonstrators in West Bengal when they expressed their dissatisfaction with the food situation in the State. Disorders in the State continue to this day and are being cruelly suppressed by the police and army units. In the town of Agartala crowds of demonstrators attacked the Central Intelligence Officer Headquarters, set fire to a police car and wrecked a telephone exchange—" (interruption). This is very important, and this is very serious and I should say this is a conspiracy. I would, therefore, request the hon. Members to listen attentively to it. "The national leaders of East Pakistan and West Bengal realize that the emancipation of their people from misery, hunger and lawlessness can be achieved only by uniting together in their struggle to separate from Pakistan and India in order to establish a united and independent Bengal".

It is very catchy, Sir. "The separatist are counting upon the United States and other Western powers to give them necessary assistance. They are confident that the free world is interested in establishing an independent State in South-East Asia, which should help to normalise conditions there and which would provide a shield against Chinese aggression. The separatist leaders are said to have agreed that the United and Independent Bengal, with its capital in Calcutta, should include in East Pakistan, the Indian States—West Bengal, Assam, Nagaland, neighbouring territories of Tripura and Manipur, Indian protectorates Sikkim and Bhutan."

I skip over some sentences here, then the news bulletin goes on: "This programme is considered by separatists as being the first stage in the plan to unite East Pakistan with West Bengal and other Indian territories in the near future in order to establish an independent nation. Authoritative Western commentators contend that there is no logical reason for the

Governments of India and Pakistan to oppose the creation of a United and Independent Bengal. This could facilitate the settlement of a number of critical problems caused by the partition of India in the past and the normalization of the conditions of the Indian sub-continent. The formation of this new country is of special interest to the Assam Hill Tribes of Mizo and Naga".....I repeat—"The formation of this new country is of special interest to the Assam hill tribes of Mizo and Naga. The proposed settlement of the problem of the Assam Tribes, Mizo and Naga, in the framework of a new State set up is of great significance in the attainment of stable conditions in this corner of the world".

So, Sir, while we are not being able to agree to a form of administration which will be mutually advantageous both to plains people and hill brethren, in the West, they are passing sleepless nights to solve our problems by creating an Independent State in Asia so that the International Powers, specially the Western Powers, can establish a zone here and continue control over us. Now having regard to that, let us go to the period of fight for our Independence, when the Constitution was framed. It is to the knowledge of everyone concerned that special consideration was given for the hill areas. Sir, if I remember aright, there was a Bordoloi Commission to consider what sort of set up should be provided for administration of the hill areas so that.....

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA (Borbhag): Sir, this Committee—actually a Sub-Committee was constituted by three persons—late Gopinath Bordoloi, Rev. Nichols-Roy and Sir Sayed Saadulla. Late Shri Bordoloi was the Chairman of that Committee.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: I thank Mr. Bhattacharyya for this help. I think what hon. Member Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya has said is correct to my mind. Anyhow, what the hon. Minister in-charge of Land Revenue has said, may also be correct. I will check up.

Mr. SPEAKER: Mr. Sarmah, how long you will take to finish your speech?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: Sir, I will take another half an hour. There are so many important matters to be touched.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, may we not be able to sit another one and a half hour to-day—say from 2 p.m. to 3-30 p.m.? There are so many Members who want to take part in this debate.

Shri JADUNATH BHUYAN (Digboi): Sir, since some of the Members are not willing, it is better to place the matter before the Business Advisory Committee.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: Sir, may I submit one aspect? This is an important matter which was discussed in New Delhi by the Hill Leaders. This matter has to be thrashed out by us. My point is that some sort of solution must be found out here, and New Delhi cannot give us a solution,

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHOUDHURY (Minister, Parliamentary Affairs): Sir, to-day, there is a Cabinet Meeting at 3 p.m. Ministers will not be able to attend. We may extend the agenda tomorrow by one or two hours more.

Mr. SPEAKER: The agenda may not be extended tomorrow, but for how many hours that will be decided by the Business Advisory Committee.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: It was the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution which was designed to give special consideration to the Hills areas and to safeguard the tradition, culture and interest, both economically and politically of the Hills peoples. With that end in view, the Committee which is popularly known as Bordoloi Committee—as hon. Member Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya has kindly helped me to recollect, was set up. It was formed not only for the Khasi Hills but for the whole Eastern hills area of Assam. The purpose of the Committee was to ensure that tradition, culture and interest of the Hill people may not be disturbed and that traders and business people from down below may not exploit them, and the condition of the Hill people, which may be described as simple and not many of them are educated—may not be disturbed and also that their land may not be encroached upon. On such and other various items, the Committee recommended safeguards, the provisions were enshrined in the Constitution as the Sixth Schedule; after working for some time, I do not remember the period exactly (The Speaker: 10 years) a Committee was to be constituted to assess the working so that further consideration may be bestowed on the level of the improvement that might have been achieved during the period of 10 years. Sir, in pursuance of the provisions of the Sixth Schedule the District Councils were formed. Naga Hills did not accept Sixth Schedule and District Council was not set up there. Sir, it is a controversial matter.

Adjournment

The Assembly then adjourned till 10 a.m. on Saturday, the 1st April, 1967.

Shillong;
The 21st December, 1967.

N. C. HANDIQUE,
for Secretary,
Legislative Assembly, Assam.