

Proceedings of the Second Session of the First Assam Legislative Assembly, assembled under the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935.

The Assembly met at the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 a.m., on Wednesday, the 25th August 1937.

Point of order raised regarding the admissibility of certain cut motions

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Order, order. Hon. members agreed yesterday to suspend questions and to allow the Advocate General to address this House on the point of order raised. Accordingly, the Advocate General is here and would presently address the House.

There was a discussion on this point of order on the 20th August and some hon. members took part in that discussion. If after the address of the Advocate General there are some points which require to be cleared up, then any hon. member may raise those points, so that the Advocate General may give his reply.

Before the Advocate General begins his address, I think it is necessary, for me to place before him the exact nature of the point of order raised by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister.

On the 17th August last, when Grant No.9—General Administration was being discussed, Maulavi Abdur Rahman moved a cut motion which was in the following terms:

That the provision of Rs.78,446 under Grant No.9—Major Head—25.—General Administration, Minor Head—R—Commissioners—(total) at page 69 of the budget be refused.

There was a full-dressed debate on that cut motion and ultimately the House voted in favour of the cut motion and it was declared as carried. On the 19th, when demands were being discussed, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister raised a point of order and the real nature of the point of order would appear from the speech he made on that occasion. I shall read his speech so that the learned Advocate General may get an idea as to what exactly his contention was. He said:—

“ Before we carry on the discussions before the House I would like to raise a point of order on a very important matter. The point is not free from difficulty but we have gone into the matter very carefully and also consulted legal opinion, and I would like to place my point of order before you”.

In the demands for grants, we see a large number of cut motions, both symbolical and for total refusal, are being tabled on individual items of Demands for Grants. My submission to you is that such cut motions are *ultra vires* of the law. Hon. members are aware that in the Government of India Act, 1919, there was a difference as regards cut motions on demands for grants between the Central Assembly and the Provincial Councils. I place before the House the relevant section, 67A(6). “ The Legislative Assembly may assent or refuse its assent to any demand or may reduce the amount referred to in any demand by a reduction of the whole grant”. I will emphasize the word *whole*. The then Legislative Assembly was not given the power to move cut motions in each individual item of any

demand, but section which applied to the local Councils is 72D(2) which runs as follows:—"The estimated annual expenditure and revenue of the province shall be laid in the form of a statement before the Council in each year, and the proposals of the Local Government for the appropriation of provincial revenues and other moneys in any year shall be submitted to the vote of the Council in the form of Demands for Grants. The Council may assent, or refuse to assent, to a demand, or may reduce the amount therein referred to either by a reduction of the whole grant or by the omission or reduction of any of the items of expenditure of which the grant is composed".

"By that section the present procedure....."

"THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: What section is that?"

"THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Section 72D, sub-section (2). Under that section cut motions for each item of expenditure of which a grant is composed was allowed. But since then under the Government of India Act, 1935, the legislators seem to have intentionally withdrawn that power. I refer to Section 79(2) which reads as follows: "So much of the said estimates as relates to other expenditure shall be submitted, in the form of demands for grants to the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Assembly shall have power to assent, or to refuse to assent to any demand or to assent to a demand subject to a reduction of the amount specified therein". The words which were in vogue before for making a cut on items of expenditure has been withdrawn under this section. I find corroboration of this view from our Legislative Assembly Rules also. Our rule, the Assam Legislative Assembly Rules, Part II, rule 91, sub-rule (2) says that motions may be moved at this stage to refuse or reduce the total amount of any demand for grant. This clearly shows that cut motions on individual items of expenditure are not allowed according to present law. I find, Sir, that this was the procedure in the Central Assembly. There the House is allowed only to indicate its wish on particular questions of policy but the House is not allowed to attack each individual item of expenditure. For example, they cannot say whether a clerk should be retrenched here or a choukidar appointed there. I am told, Sir, that a similar procedure obtains in the House of Parliament."

"My submission, therefore, is that this question requires very careful consideration from you and also the careful consideration of the Hon'ble House. If I am correct in my contention that the cut motions as have been tabled now are not within the purview of the Government of India Act, 1935, I do not ask for a ruling at once, but I hope, Sir, you will take your time to consider and give your considered verdict. So far as the proceedings of to-day are concerned, where there is a minor cut of a small amount raised in order to bring to the pointed attention of Government any grievance, I will not object. If there is a cut motion for the total abolition of any particular item, then I will request for a ruling on the point."

"MR. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Then, Sir, what is the meaning of all these specifications here, in the cut motion form. Major Heads, Minor Heads, Sub-heads and so forth? These are all misleading things then. Of course I am ready to be corrected, Sir."

"SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: If it is the intention of the Leader of the House that the matter should be discussed at length, I think, Sir, it is much better if you fix an hour when this matter may be discussed unless a ruling can be given now."

"THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have already suggested that, Sir."

"THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: If the hon. members are not ready to discuss that now, that may be done to-morrow. What I understand from the Hon'ble the Finance Minister is this. His contention is that the House is quite entitled to reduce the main demand by any amount they like. As for instance, the House agreed the other day to a reduction of Rs.78 thousand odd. His contention is that that reduction can be allowed but the House is not entitled to say that this Rs.78,000 odd should be reduced in this way or that, as in this case by abolishing the establishment of the Commissioners. His point is that this reduction will stand, but the desire of the House that this reduction is intended for the purpose of refusing the staff or abolishing the staff of the Commissioners is not to be heeded to. The procedure adopted being against sub-section (2) of section 79 of the Government of India Act the whole thing is *ultra vires*. I think that is the point raised."

"THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, Sir. We cannot raise a cut on each individual item but we can reduce the total grant by a particular motion."

"THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I think his further point is that when the House proposed to reduce the main demand by a big sum as for instance by Rs.78,000, the reduction that was effected the other day, the House was also entitled to discuss that such and such item should be reduced; but that is not binding on Government; this is the point of order he has raised. That point is a very important one and should be looked into. If the hon. House wants that it should be discussed now, then the House may do so. If the House wants time, I think to-morrow morning may be given for the purpose. I shall also think over the matter and give my ruling."

"KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI KERAMAT ALI: I think we shall take it to-morrow afternoon."

"THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Yes, to-morrow is Friday and we shall take it up after questions."

"RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTT: It seems that the Government have realised their position now. We would like to have some time to discuss this question. All these days we have been discussing the motions. But all of a sudden as soon as we have effected a big cut, Government have thought that they must have power in their hands."

"THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: That is the instinct of self-preservation and Government must be prepared to protect their own clerks from extinction."

"THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I quite admit that this point did not strike me so forcibly originally. But when a major cut was made the other day, although I was doubtful about the legal position, I had no time to give my full consideration to it and refer to the relevant sections. Luckily the Auditor General also was here yesterday and we discussed the point, as I thought it was a very important matter which needs looking into and we consulted the Government of India. Therefore, my hon. friend who once occupied a place in the Cabinet and who knows well that we have to consult various matters before coming to a decision, is not justified in saying that it is because of an instinct of self-preservation that we have risen to-day to draw the attention of the House to this important question."

"RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTT: That remark has fallen from you, Sir, not from me. However, it comes to this. We can make a lump reduction within a demand but we cannot point out what that reduction should be. That seems to be *reductio ad absurdum*."

That was the point of order raised.
Therefore, I now call upon the Advocate General to address this House on it.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: 'On a point of order, Sir, I presume that the Advocate General of Bengal under the last Government was also the *ex-officio* Advocate General of Assam. Under the new Act the Advocate General has got to be appointed for each province by the Governor. And the relevant section in that connection is section 55 which I may read:

"The Governor of each province shall appoint a person to be Advocate General for the province.

(2) It shall be the duty of the Advocate General to give advice to the Provincial Government upon such legal matters, and to perform such other duties of a legal character as may from time to time be referred or assigned to him".

It is, therefore, clear that before the Advocate General exercises the right of speech in the House, I think he has to be appointed under the law. We find, that no such appointment has been made—at any rate I am not aware of any notification appointing the Advocate General. As the matter stands, therefore, my respectful submission is that he is not entitled to address the House.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: For the information of the hon. members I may read the notification, a copy of which has been sent to me by the Government; and that notification is Notification No.3694-G. J. It runs as follows:

"In exercise of the power conferred by sub-section (1) of section 55 of the Government of India Act 1935, the Governor is pleased to appoint Sir Asoka Kumar Roy, Kt., Advocate General, Bengal, to be Advocate General for the province of Assam for a period of three months with effect from the date of notification".

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: What is the date, Sir?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: 23rd August 1937.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: On a point of information, Sir, was the Advocate General appointed before the Hon'ble Chief Minister sought his legal advice?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The correspondence was going on with the Government of Bengal but final orders were not issued.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: My question has not been replied. Was the Advocate General appointed before his legal advice was sought by the Hon'ble the Chief Minister on this matter?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: We never consulted the Advocate General on this point of order.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY (Advocate General): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very much obliged to you for having read out to me the speech of the Hon'ble the Chief Minister which gives an indication of the contentions which have been put forward by him.

Sir, at the outset, I may tell you that, although there is considerable force in the contentions put forward by the Hon'ble the Finance Minister I am not prepared to say that the motion which was tabled by the hon. member Mr. Abdul Rahman and which you, Sir, admitted was *ultra vires* (*hear, hear*). Nor am I prepared to say that the proceedings of the legislature consequent on that motion being admitted are null and void. I think I ought to make that position quite clear and that is why I started by telling you that that is my view.

With regard to the Hon'ble Finance Minister's contention I am bound to say that there is considerable force in it. The hon. members had been told that there was a distinction between the language of the old Act with regard to the Government of India with the Imperial legislature and with regard to the provincial legislature. He quite rightly pointed out to you that under the old Government of India Act, section 67A sub-section (6) it is provided that the Legislative Assembly may assent or refuse its assent to any demand or may reduce the amount referred to in any demand by a reduction of the whole grant. That I take it is by means of reduction out of the whole or from the whole grant. Therefore, the Legislative Assembly can either assent to a grant or refuse its assent to a grant or could reduce the amount of the demand by a reduction of a certain sum of money. When you compare that with section 72D of the Act which governs provincial legislatures you will find the provision to this effect. I am not reading the whole section but I will read a part of it. "The Council may assent, or refuse its assent, to a demand, or may reduce the amount therein referred to" stopping there for a minute, you will find that the language of section 67A (6) was more or less the same up to that point,—“may reduce the amount therein referred to” there and “may reduce the amount referred to in any demand by a reduction of the whole grant” here. This proviso was to the effect that it may reduce the amount therein referred to either by a reduction of the whole amount or reduction of any of the items of expenditure of which the grant is composed. Now the rules which govern the legislature under the old Act also made it clear that you could when the old Act was in force introduce a motion which may be either to reduce any grant or omit a grant or reduce any item in a grant. I will read that portion. Rule 91, sub-rule (2): “Motions may be moved at this stage to reduce any grant or to omit or reduce any item in a grant but not to increase or alter the destination of a grant”. The present Act is rather differently worded and you will find that the rules which have been adopted to the present time are also differently worded. The present Act 79(2) says this—“So much of the said estimates as relates to other expenditure shall be submitted, in the form of demands for grants, to the Legislative Assembly, and the Legislative Assembly shall have power to assent, or to refuse to assent, to any demand, or to assent to a demand subject to a reduction of the amount specified therein”. That indicates what the Assembly should do. It should either assent to the grant, refuse the grant or say “we will assent to the grant subject to a particular reduction”. That reduction may be of a general sum of money without any reference to any of the items composing the grant. For instance you may have motion to the effect that a grant be reduced by one rupee, or by Rs.100; and that one rupee or one hundred rupees may not be an item which can be identified. You may also have a motion that the grant be reduced or the demand for grants be refused by say Rs.78,000 or whatever the figure is, I find in regard to this matter it is Rs.78,446: that would be a perfectly good motion. My view is that the motion of the hon. mover should have been differently framed. The form of the motion is not right having regard to the Act and the present rules. I will just refer you to the rules for a minute. The rule says that motions may be moved at this stage to refuse or reduce the total amount of any demand for a grant. Having regard to the existing rules under the present Act my view is that this cut motion should have been framed differently—(put in a different form)—and the hon. member's motion should have been put in words something like this: “that the demand under head General Administration be reduced by Rs.78,446” and if the hon. member chooses to add words explaining what that figure means he need not add that to the cut motion, he might simply

say that the total demand be reduced by that figure and in his speech he might indicate to the members of the legislature what that sum of money was that he was referring to in his motion. Well, Sir, in this case after you admitted the motion, and the hon. members of the legislature had a discussion on it, and they have unmistakably given their views on it I am not prepared to say that the proceedings can be considered to be null and void. That is all that I have to say to you, Sir.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: Sir, we are all very grateful to the learned Advocate-General for coming over and giving us the benefit of his advice. He is an acknowledged authority on legal matters and the opinion expressed by him is entitled to have our most respectful consideration. But if I have been able to follow him he admits that the motion which was tabled by my hon. friend Maulvi Abdur Rahman was perfectly in order and only the wording should have been a little different. If that is so I do not think there is any difference in the view which we took and which the learned Advocate-General supports. His contention is that Mr. Rahman should have asked for a reduction, an amount of Rs.78,446 ought to be deducted out of the total demand asked for and in doing so he could have pointed out in his speech that the amount which he wanted to be deducted was this particular item.

Now, Sir, what I want to know is whether the Government is bound to accept this cut as a matter of law, or in other words, whether the Government was bound to exclude that item having regard to the fact that our decision is final.

MAULAVI ASHRAFUDDIN MUHAMMAD CHAUDHURY: May I draw the attention of the learned Advocate-General to Section 92 of the Government of Ind'a Act?

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: I have not finished. I want a reply from the learned Advocate-General.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: Well, Sir, I have indicated that I have taken this present motion to be a motion for the reduction of a total grant, and that is why I said that in my opinion the motion is in order. What follows after the legislature has given its expression in unmistakable terms is for the decision of the Hon'ble Chief Minister, and I do not think at the present moment any question of law arises. The Legislature has expressed its views and the Chief Minister has to act in accordance with the law. If and when the question does arise as to whether he has carried out his duty according to law or not, and the matter is referred to me for my opinion, I shall then be in a position to advise. At the moment I think it is premature.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: That is not the point involved whether the Hon'ble Chief Minister is bound to give effect to the wishes of the Houses, and on this point my learned friend has said nothing.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: Has that point arisen? That is not the point of order raised. The point of order was whether these proceedings were *ultra vires* of the law, and I have expressed my view on this. There is no other question before the House at this stage.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: My point certainly deserves consideration. I want to know the legal effect of the motion.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: That is not the matter on which I was asked to advise.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The learned Advocate-General will please realise that under Section 80 of the Act the Governor has to lay before

the Legislature for every financial year an authenticated schedule specifying the grants made by the Assembly. Will the Governor be entitled to include this item as an existing item ?

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: The Schedule should be prepared by reducing the grant under General Administration by the sum of Rs. 78,446.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: I have one point to be cleared on the broad constitutional principle. My submission to this House was that whenever the House feels that it has a grievance with regard to any particular matter, the right has been given to it to refuse supplies under that head or to cut that item in any way that it likes. If that be the position the effect of the whole thing cannot be the reduction of the total merely but also of the head under which the motion has been tabled. Then, Sir, the forms of the cut motions were printed and the whole thing was arranged in a manner to show the particular item where we are going to give a cut.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The form is not a statutory form. It was one prepared by the office.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: My submission, Sir, is that the cut was quite right. We feel aggrieved in a certain matter. We are entitled to give a cut on that particular item—we are entitled to reduce or to refuse it. That is a particular proposition. When the schedule of authenticated expenditure is presented, it should be shown that that item has been particularly cut. Then with reference to Rule 91(2) of the Assembly Rules, I submit, Sir, the mention of the words "total amount" is also *ultra vires*. These rules also have not been adopted by the House.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The rules are binding, till they are altered by the House.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: My submission is that the rule at any rate is not really in accordance with the spirit of Section 79(2) of the Act.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: Now, Sir, under section 55(2) of the Act "it shall be the duty of the Advocate-General to give advice to the Provincial Government upon such legal matters, and to perform such other duties of a legal character, as may from time to time be referred or assigned to him by the Governor." May I ask the Hon'ble Chief Minister to refer this matter to the Advocate-General and let us have his opinion. The whole point is whether we can cut this amount out. As regards this he is perfectly silent. What will be the effect of the interpretation that he has given ? He has not answered that.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: If you will look into section 55(2), Sir, you will find that the terms of my appointment provide for my giving advice upon legal matters to the Provincial Government. It does not provide for my giving advice on the floor of the House. I have no doubt a right under section 64 to address the House and to take part in the debates of the House. But on this particular occasion I was asked to come over here, and out of deference to the hon. members of the House I have complied with their wish at considerable sacrifice and inconvenience.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: We thank you for that.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: The hon. member is not aware of what I was referring to. I was not thinking of any pecuniary sacrifice. I was thinking of the inconvenience this would cause me, as I was due to leave for England next Thursday. I cannot do it now.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: Then I must thank your friends there.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: The duty which is cast on me to advise takes effect only after I have been appointed Advocate-General. My appointment as such only took effect the day before yesterday. That duty I am always willing to carry out when papers are placed before me on a specific question. To-day I am only here for the purpose of addressing you on a point of order that was raised. I have given my views. They may be acceptable to the members of the House or they may not. But those are my considered views.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I want to know from the learned Advocate-General as to what is actually meant by the word "demands" in section 79 of the Government of India Act, 1935, and whether "demands" include all proposals for appropriation or not. If so, whether the demand for the Commissioners' establishment is a proposal for appropriation or not. Secondly, is it not clear from paragraph 149 of the report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, Volume I, Part I on which the section 79 of the Government of India Act, 1935 is based, that the Legislatures have the power to reduce or refuse assent to any of the proposals contained in demands. Thirdly, is it also not apparent from a reading of the said paragraph that the legislature has been given absolute power in the matter of specific supply for the purpose of exercising a real control over the executive. Is it not, therefore, evident that the interpretation put by the Hon'ble Chief Minister is *ultra vires* of section 79 of the Government of India Act, 1935, read with the said paragraph 149 of the Joint Committee's report?

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DATTA: I do not think, Sir, this question arises. The Advocate-General says that the form ought to have been that and not this. He never says that it is wrong. As to legal effect he says that he is not going to advise now. I would ask the Hon'ble Chief Minister to write to him on the point. In the meantime we shall go on.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: These questions do arise, Sir. We are considering a specific matter. I shall read the relevant portion of the Joint Select Committee's report.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: Sir, whether they arise or do not arise, I am not prepared to answer the hon. member. The proceedings of the Joint Committee are irrelevant. We have now to consider the Act as it stands. The debates or whatever preceded the passing of the Act are all irrelevant. The language of the section is clear. It says you can reduce the entire demand if you like. Now in this case the demand has been under a specific head. Whether it ought to be made under a specific head or generally under the demand is a matter with which I am not concerned. The demand on a total sum of money was made specific under General Administration, and I would come to the conclusion that the effect of the hon. member's motion was in substance that the whole demand should be reduced by that particular sum. The result will be, the Legislature having expressed its view on the point, that that demand will have to be reduced by that particular sum of money. As to what will follow from this is, as I have said, a matter with which I am at present not concerned.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I think it is quite sufficient.

MR. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: If it is open to the House to cut down the tree, is it not also open to it to lop off branches?

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: It is certainly open to the House to lop off some portion of the tree, without calling it one of its branches.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, we are thankful to the Hon'ble Advocate-General who has come to address this Legislature at great personal sacrifice. I know, Sir, that he has

been in poor health lately and for the purpose of improving his health he had decided to sail by tomorrow's boat to England. But unfortunately, Sir, we raised this point of order and on a hint from the Chair I had requested him to come here. Our thanks are due to him for coming to Assam and clearing the position by his able and learned speech on the floor of this House.

When I raised the point of order under discussion now, I made it perfectly clear that, although under the present section 79(2) of the Government of India Act, 1935, power has been given to the Legislature either to assent, or to refuse to assent, to a demand, or assent to a demand subject to a reduction of the amount specified therein, my contention was that, in view of the distinction between section 72D(2) of the 1919 Act and section 79(2) of the present Act, that particular power of moving cut motions on minor heads has been withdrawn. And therefore when you, Sir, put a pertinent question to me whether I assented to the contention that, if that same cut motion had been tabled as a reduction of the whole amount, I replied that it would be in order, and that such a motion would be quite correct in form.

The only point on which the hon. members and myself were at variance is when I said that the form of the demand was not correct. I find I am obliged to the learned Advocate General, that he supports me. That is not the form in which cut motions used to be tabled in the Central Assembly, *i. e.*, a cut motion should be started with a refusal of the total amount. Now the question whether Government will accept the cut or not does not arise at this moment, because the authenticated schedule has not been prepared.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE CHANDRA DUTT: Government is bound to accept.....

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I don't like to be interrupted by these running commentaries. If the hon. member has got to say anything he should have the heart to take his stand and do so, it is not parliamentary etiquette to interrupt like this while a member is sitting

Sir, even now I can tell the same thing that the motion that has been tabled or the motions that the hon. members have been tabling are not in proper form. The motion can be for the refusal or reduction of the total grant and not for an individual item under a grant, and in this view the Government have been supported by the Hon'ble Advocate General.

The next question which was raised by my hon. friend Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Dutt is whether Government is going to give effect to that demand or not. That matter was not submitted to the learned Advocate General and therefore he has very rightly refused to make a pronouncement. That matter is between the Government and this House. If the House at a later stage finds that the votes of the House are not given effect to by the Government or the Ministry they have got their own course open. I need not say anything further in the matter.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Before we say good-bye to the learned Advocate General I should like to offer my hearty thanks to him for the able way in which he has cleared the point raised by the Hon'ble Chief Minister. I am really sorry that he had to come here at great personal inconvenience and for that I hope the learned Advocate General will excuse us.

SIR ASOKA KUMAR ROY: Sir, I am very grateful to you for your kind words. Before I part with you may I just say only a word? If you, Sir, had in your discretion ruled that this motion was not admissible you

could have done so because of its wrong form. But as I told you the view that I took is that it was in substance a motion for reduction of the total grant by a specific sum of money and therefore when you entertained the motion and when the motion was discussed on the floor of the House and debated on and the Legislature has unmistakeably expressed its view on that motion, the motion is not *ultra vires*, and is binding.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Order, order. It was decided yesterday that questions would not be taken up today, but as we have got still 15 minutes I think we can go on with the questions.

SRIJIT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: When will you give your ruling, Sir?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I will give my ruling on Friday next.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

Number of houses (quarters) owned by Government of Assam at Shillong

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED asked:

*216. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) the number of houses (quarters) other than the Governor's house owned by the Government of Assam at Shillong?
- (b) the designation of Government servants who occupy those houses?
- (c) the rent realised by the Government for each of those houses and the annual expenditure incurred for their repairs, etc.?
- (d) the basis and the guiding rule of allotment of those houses to the Government servants?
- (e) who occupies now the house which used to be occupied by the European member of the old Executive Council of the Governor?
- (f) whether Government will consider the advisability of setting apart at least four of these houses for the use and occupation of the Honourable Ministers of the province?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA replied:

216. (a) (b) & (c).—A statement is laid on the table.

(d)—Residences are allotted to Government servants when it is necessary on public grounds for the officer to reside in, or near the locality in which his duties have to be performed, or when it is shown to the satisfaction of Government that suitable accommodation for officers, whose appointments are permanent in respect of locality is not available in the vicinity, or is available only under circumstances which will be likely to place such officers in an undesirable position in relation to house proprietors.

(e)—Member, Revenue Tribunal, Assam.

(f)—Government will consider the suggestion made in the question. Uptil now, no Hon'ble Minister has asked for official residence.

CORRECTION SLIP TO THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
DEBATES VOLUME II, No.11, DATED THE 23RD, 24TH AND 25TH
AUGUST 1937

Correction slip No.6

At page 1130, after the expression "216(a)(b)(c).—A statement is laid on the table", insert the following :—

LIST OF QUARTERS OTHER THAN THE GOVERNMENT HOUSE OWNED BY THE
GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM AT SHILLONG

Name of bungalow	Designation of officers who occupy the bungalow	Rent realised per month	Admissible limit of the annual cost of maintenance and repairs
		Rs.	Rs.
1. Brightwell ...	Member, Revenue Tribunal, Assam.	192	1,991
2. Beauchamp House	Secretary, Local Self-Government and Education Departments.	82	838
3. Beauchamp Cottage.	Under-Secretary to the Government of Assam.	59	1,076
4. Lumpyangad ...	Chief Secretary to the Government of Assam.	166	1,473
5. Lake side ...	Finance and Revenue Secretary to the Government of Assam.	123	1,002
6. Taraghar ...	Deputy Commissioner, Khasi and Jaintia Hills District.	196	1,352
7. Falls View ..	Director of Public Instruction, Assam.	64	805
8. Forest Lodge ...	Conservator of Forests, Assam.	126	858
9. Staggar Holme...	Executive Engineer, Khasi and Jaintia Hills Division.	81	739
10. Goodwood ...	Chief Engineer, Assam	177	993

Statement showing number of appeals filed before the Assam Revenue Tribunal—
month by month—since its creation (from April 1937). 1

Month	No. of cases filed			Total	Number of cases summarily rejected upto 28th July	Number of cases disposed of on merit upto 28th July	Number of cases pending on 28th July	Remarks
	Revenue	Excise	Miscellaneous					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
April	68	16	1	85	..	..	..	*This includes 50 cases transferred from the Secretariat (Revenue Department). †This includes 7 cases transferred from the Secretariat (Local Self-Government Department).
May	20	6	1	27	15	79	74	‡(1) awaiting judgment—1. (2) awaiting hearing—6. (3) awaiting reports from Commissioners and other officers—67.
June	17	4	..	21	..	..	..
July Upto 28th July.	33	1	1	35	..	..	..
Total	138	27	3	168	15	79	74	

SHILLONG :

the 15th January 1938.

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Am I to understand that the Hon'ble Finance Minister on behalf of himself and other Ministers will ask for residential quarters?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: for myself do not want nor have I got any such request from my Hon'ble colleagues.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Is it not necessary for convenience sake that Ministers should be near the Secretariat building and near the house of the Governor?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: It is not necessary.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: On what grounds Secretaries are given Government quarters?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The Secretaries are to be very near the Secretariat.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Is it not necessary for the Ministers to be very near the Secretariat?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: No.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Does the Hon'ble Minister know that the Ministers in many other provinces have got Government quarters?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I am not aware of any other provinces except Bihar where the Ministers have been given residential quarters by the Government.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: May I tell the Hon'ble Minister that in the United Provinces this is so?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: In the United Provinces the condition may be different.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Also in the Punjab?

MAULAVI MD. AMJAD ALI: Is he going to provide the Ministers with Motor cars also?

(No reply.)

Rydanguri Forest Reserve in the Jorhat Subdivision

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMA asked:

*217. (a) Will Government be pleased to state—

The area of Rydanguri Forest Reserve in the Jorhat Subdivision that is opened out to villagers for cultivation?

(b) Do Government propose to open out the centre Reserve for dry lands in the neighbouring villages where people suffer from annual floods?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied:

217. (a)—There is no reserved forest of this name, but the hon. member probably means the Kakodanga Reserve in the Golaghat Subdivision which is nearby. An area of 4,840 acres of this Reserve was disforested in 1960 owing to an urgent demand for land for cultivation.

(b)—Government have no intention of disforested the remainder of the Reserve, but if in fact the neighbouring villages suffer from annual floods, they may apply to the Development Officer, Barpathar, for settlement in the Nambor Colonisation area where many thousands of acres have recently been disforested and are being thrown open to cultivation.

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Will the Hon'ble Minister enlighten us as regards the area which the members of families of villagers occupy within that portion of the Forest Reserve and if there is a demand for more lands within the reserve?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I am not acquainted with that. If the demand exists in the neighbouring villages, the villagers may apply to the Development Officer, Barpathar.

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Is the Hon'ble Minister prepared to disforest the whole reserve for cultivation?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I have already replied in (b). The matter will be considered after the report from the Development Officer, Barpathar.

Appointment of cooks in all the Civil Hospitals

MAULAVI SYED ABDUR ROUF asked:

*218. Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Medical be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether there is any Muhammadan cook in the Civil Hospital of Barpeta in the district of Kamrup?
- (b) Whether there are Muhammadan cooks in all other Civil Hospitals of the Province?
- (c) If the answers to (a) and (b) are in the negative, will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to consider the desirability of appointing Muhammadan cooks in Hospitals where there are no such cooks?

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied:

218. (a)—No.

(b)—No.

(c)—It is for Local Bodies to consider the matter in the case of hospitals maintained by them. In the case of Government hospitals the matter receives consideration according to local needs.

MAULAVI SYED ABDUR ROUF: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the cook of the Hospital does not wash the plates of Muhammadan patients when they take their meals therefrom?

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: That hospital belongs to the Local Board.

MAULAVI SYED ABDUR ROUF: Has not the Government any duty there?

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Government cannot do anything in the matter.

DR. MAHENDRA NATH SAIKIA: Is there not a Managing Committee?

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: There is a Managing Committee for that local dispensary.

MAULAVI SYED ABDUR ROUF: Is it a fact that patients have got to wash their plates themselves?

THE HON'BLE REV. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: No, Sir, I am not aware.

Beki drift wood mahal

SRIJUT GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

*219. Will the Hon'ble the Minister in charge be pleased to state, whether there is any source of fuel wood supply in the Barpeta Subdivision except the Beki drift woods ?

*220. Is the Minister aware that the population of the southern portion of the subdivision depend on the drift woods of the Beki river free of any tax ?

*221. Is it a fact that the Beki drift wood mahal has been leased out this year ?

*222. If the answers to questions 220 and 221 are in the affirmative do Government propose to stop further sale of this drift wood mahal in order to remove the difficulty of innumerable indigent people ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied :

219.—Yes. Grazing Reserves and Unclassed State Forests exist all over the subdivision and should form sources of dead wood fuel supply.

220.—Under existing rules the collection of drift wood from the Beki river is allowed free to settlement-holders in the southern portion of the subdivision, who may collect it for their domestic and agricultural and other private purposes but not for purposes of sale or trade.

221.—A drift wood mahal has been leased out over a portion of the Beki river (from the southern boundary of the Game Sanctuary in North Kamrup to Eastern Bengal Railway bridge across the river) in the northern part of the subdivision.

SRIJUT GHANASHYAM DAS : Will the Hon'ble Minister state whether the present lessee has cut down some valuable trees within the forest without the permission of the Government ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED : The Government is not aware.

SRIJUT GHANASHYAM DAS : Will the Hon'ble Minister enquire ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED : Yes, I am ready to make an enquiry.

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied :

222.—In view of the answers given to the foregoing questions, Government do not propose to stop the sale of the mahal.

Forest revenue of Assam

SRIJUT BELIRAM DAS asked :

*223. (a) Is it a fact that the Forest revenue of Assam has come down to about $1/3$ rd within the last ten years ?

(b) Is it a fact that the major part of the expenditure comes under establishment, pay of officers and subordinates ?

(c) Is it a fact that new posts and divisions are being created in the Forest Department of Assam ?

*224. Will Government be pleased to lay on the table a statement showing—

(a) the total number of staff in 1929 and 1937 ?

(b) Forest revenue on 31st March 1929 and 31st March 1937 ?

(c) Total expenditure on these years ?

(d) Total expenditure on staff during these years ?

(e) Total expenditure on improvements during the period ?

(f) Other expenditure during the period ?

*225. (a) Will the Hon'ble Minister in charge be pleased to state whether any of the recommendations of the last Retrenchment Committee in respect of Forest Department has been given effect to ?

(b) If so, what reduction has been made ?

(c) What was the total expenditure on staff at the time of the report of the Retrenchment Committee and what is it at present ?

(d) Is it a fact that one of the post of the Conservator of Forests is now in abeyance on the recommendation of the said Retrenchment Committee ?

(e) If the answer is in the affirmative, why this post has been filled up by a senior Deputy Conservator of Forests with an allowance of Rs.150 per month thus allowing him almost the minimum pay of Conservator of Forests including his Oversea allowance of Rs.400 ?

(f) Is it a fact that the compensatory allowance of Forest Officers has been discontinued ?

(g) If so, why ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied :

223. (a)—From the boom years 1927 to 1930 the revenue has come down to just over.*

(b)—At present expenditure on staff is $2/3$ rd of the total expenditure.

(c)—No new posts have been created. Some appointments have been made to fill existing sanctioned posts. No new division has really been created except that the Goalpara Division has been split into two for administrative convenience.

SRIJUT RUPNATH BRAHMA: May I know what part come from forest revenue ?

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED: I want notice of that.

*Approximate figures as every item of expenditure would have to be examined to give correct figures.

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied :—

	1929	1937
224.(a)—Staff in—		
Indian Forest Service	13	15
Indian Forest Engineering Service	1	Nil.
Provincial Forest Service	17	16
Ranger	30	46
Deputy Ranger	60	71
Forester	147	187
Forest Guards	521	536
Clerks	56	61

Rs.

(b)—Forest Revenue—31st March 1919 ...	37,67,873
31st March 1937 ...	16,85,110
(c)—Total expenditure—31st March 1929 ...	21,32,472
31st March 1937 ...	11,92,885
(d)—Total expenditure on staff—31st March 1929 ...	5,66,692
31st March 1937 ...	6,53,328
(e)—Total expenditure on improvements—31st March 1929 ...	*4,14,000
31st March 1937 ...	*2,25,300
(f)—Other expenditure—31st March 1929 ...	*11,51,780
31st March 1937 ...	*3,14,257

KUMAR AJIT NARAYAN DEV: On a point of order, Sir. You ruled the other day that these statements should be laid on the table.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Perhaps Government have not been able to arrange matters yet.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: This is a short statement.

THE HON'BLE SHAMS-UL-ULAMA MAULANA ABU NASR MD. WAHEED replied :—

225. (a)—Yes.

(b)—(a) One post of Conservator has been held in abeyance.

(b) The post of Forest Engineer has been abolished and that of the Silviculturist held in abeyance.

(c)—Recruitment to the Indian Forest Service and Provincial Forest Service was stopped until the time has now come for new recruitment.

(d)—Proposals for a new Service to replace the Indian Forest Service and Provincial Forest Service are under consideration of Government.

(e)—Compensatory allowance to Indian Forest Service and Provincial Forest Service Officers has been discontinued.

(f)—A new scale of pay was sanctioned for the Provincial Forest Service from 1st January 1932.

	Rs.
(c)—1931	6,34,700
1937	6,53,328

(d)—Yes.

(e)—To enable Government to have a responsible officer always in Shillong for advice on forest matters and to assist the Conservator in every way possible in his very heavy charge.

(f) & (g)—The hon. member is referred to the reply given to 252(b).

* Approximate figures as every item of expenditure would have to be examined to give correct figure.

Damage by floods in the Assam Valley

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMAH: On a point of information, before we go to demands, Sir, I have received these two telegrams from Jorhat: The first telegram is:—"Titabar-Anguri Mauzas badly affected by flood. Houses under water crops destroyed villagers starving Titabar public forms Titabar Flood Relief Committee. Requests immediately relief".

The Second telegram is:—

"Rungur Mauza overflowed relief badly wanted. Kindly do the needful".

I want to know, Sir, if the Government have any information.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Yes, the other day, the hon. member Srijut Debeswar Sarma handed two telegrams to me about Bhogdoi breaches. I do not know whether the hon. member is referring to the same.

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMAH: These are different, Sir.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I have not received any further information. On those telegrams from Srijut Debeswar Sarma, I have asked the Public Works Department to send a wire and ascertain information. I will send these telegrams to Chief Engineer for necessary action, if handed over to me.

SRIJUT RAJENDRA NATH BARUA: I have also received a telegram which reads as follows:

"Crops in great parts of Ghiladhari Kacharihat Athgaon mouza damaged by floods solicit action".

May I know whether Government have any information?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I the hon. members will hand over the telegrams to me, I will ask the local officers for a report.

SRIJUT SANKAR CHANDRA BARUA: I have also received the following telegram:

"Kachnihat mouza overflowed relief badly wanted. Kindly do needful".

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: It would be far better if all these telegrams are handed over to the Hon'ble Minister so that he may make enquiries.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

GRANT No. 19.

40.—AGRICULTURE

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MD. ALI HYDER KHAN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs.6,18,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department."

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: There are many cut motions under this grant and the hon. member Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan may now move his motion.

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN: সভাপতি ডাক্তারীয়া, মোৰ ছাটনী প্ৰস্তাব হৈছে এইটো—That the provision of Rs.32,742 under Grant No.19, Major head—40.—Agriculture, Minor head—A.—Agricultural Department, Sub-head (b).—Superintendence, Detailed head—1.—Pay of Officers (total), at page 143 of the Budget, be refused.

এই ছাটনী প্ৰস্তাবটো দাঙ্গি ধৰোতে মই সম্পূৰ্ণৰূপে সজাগ হৈ আঁতি গঠনৰ নিমিত্তে কৃষি, শিল্প, বানিজ্য আৰু শিক্ষা এই কেইটা ডিপাৰ্টমেণ্ট অতি আৱশ্যক। কিন্তু আগৰ দেশত যি বকমে এই ডিপাৰ্টমেণ্ট বিলাক পৰিচালিত হৈছে, যোৱা কেইদিনৰ cut motionৰ পৰা আৰু বাজেট আলোচনাৰ পৰা দেখা গৈছে যে প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে এই ডিপাৰ্টমেণ্ট বিলাক সঠিক যিভাবে পৰিচালনা কৰিব লাগে সেইবকমে কৰা হোৱা নাই। এনেকুৱাই হৈছে যে এজন মানুহক খুব পোচাক পিন্ধোৱা হৈছে অথচ খাবলৈ দিয়া হোৱা নাই। এই কৃষি বিভাগৰ স্থিতি হৈছে বাৰ্হজৰ নিমিত্তে—খেতিয়কৰ নিমিত্তে। খেতিয়ক হৈছে আমাৰ দেশৰ শতকৰা ৮৩ জন মানুহ—৮৩ জন কিয় বোধকৰোঁ শতকৰা ২৫ জনেই খেতিব ওপৰত নিৰ্ভৰ কৰে। এই খেতিয়ক সকলেই দেশৰ মেৰুদণ্ড স্বৰূপ। প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে তেওঁবিলাকৰ উন্নতি কৰিলেই কি চৰকাৰ, কি ব্যবসায়, কি বানিজ্য সকলোৰেই উন্নতি কৰিব পাৰিব। কিন্তু এই ডিপাৰ্টমেণ্টৰ যি বকমে পদ (Post) বঢ়োৱা হৈছে সেইবকমে প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে বাৰ্হজৰ ভাল কৰিবলৈ যোৱা হোৱা নাই। যেনেকৈ এজন মানুহক খাবলৈ নিদি পোচাক পিন্ধালে সেই মানুহজন শুকাই গৈ গৈ পিচত তেওঁৰ প্ৰাণ নষ্ট হব, ঠিক সেইবকমে কৃষি বিভাগত কেবল হাটীৰ হাজাৰ দৰমহা পোৱা বিবৰা বিলাককে বঢ়োৱা হৈছে কিন্তু প্ৰকৃত পক্ষে বাৰ্হজৰ একো কাম হোৱা নাই। এতিয়া মই এই বে ছাটনী প্ৰস্তাব দাঙ্গি ধৰিছোঁ সেইটো হৈছে কৃষিবিভাগৰ তিনিজন ডেপুটী ডিবেক্টৰ আৰু এজন চুপাৰিণ্টেণ্ডেণ্টৰ সম্বন্ধে—এই কেইটা পোষ্টৰ একো দৰকাৰ নাই। তেওঁলোকে কোনো গাঁৱলৈ গৈ পথাৰত কি বকমে খেতি হব বা মাটি পৰীক্ষা কৰি কোন জাগাত কি খেতি হব সেইটো কেতিয়াও দেখুৱোৱা নাই। এনেকুৱা জাগা আছে যত আগেয়ে সবিসহ খেতি হৈছিল কিন্তু এতিয়া তাত সবিসহ খেতি হোৱা নাই। তেওঁবিলাকৰ কৰ্তব্য আছিল সেইবিলাক ঠাইলৈ গৈ কোন গাৱঁত, কোন জাগাত কি খেতি হব আৰু খেতিৰ মাটি পৰীক্ষা কৰি আগেয়ে হোৱা খেতি কিয় হোৱা নাই, নহলে সেই জাগাত সেই খেতিৰ পৰিবৰ্ত্তে আন কি খেতি হব পাৰে ইত্যাদি চোৱা। এওঁবিলাকক প্ৰমোচন দি হাজাৰ হাজাৰ টকা দিয়াৰ ফল হৈছে মটবগাৰী কিনোৱা আৰু লাইফ ইন্সিওৰ কৰোৱা। আগেয়ে আমাৰ দেশত আমাৰ বজাই কি কৰিছিল? নতুন খেতি বা নতুন বিদ্যা শিক্ষা কৰিবলৈ হলে অন্য দেশত যদি কোনো expert থাকে তেনেহলে সেই দেশৰপৰা তেনে expert তুলি লৈ আহে। ইয়াত যিবিলাক বৈদিক ব্ৰাহ্মণ আছিল তেওঁবিলাকক কনৌজৰ পৰা আনিছিল। দেশত ভাল মিস্ত্ৰ না নাথাকিলে অন্তৰ দেশৰ পৰা মিস্ত্ৰ অনাইছিল আৰু সেই বকমে খেতিয়কো আনিছিল। মৈমনসিংহিয়া মানুহে মৰাপাটৰ খেতি ভালকৈ কৰিব জানে; তেওঁবিলাকে মৰাপাটৰ খেতি কৰাৰ নিমিত্তে অসমীয়া মানুহেও মৰাপাটৰ খেতি কৰিবলৈ শিকিছে। সেইবকমে ডেপুটী

ডিবেক্টব আক চুপারিটেমেণ্টৰ ঠাইত যদি আমাৰ গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে যি জাগাত গম খেতি হোৱা সম্ভব সেই জাগাত গম খেতিয়ক আনি বহুৱালে হেতেন আক প্রকৃত খেতিয়ক আনি জাগায় জাগায় শিক্ষা দিওৱা হেঁতেন এনেকুৱা হাজাৰ হাজাৰ টকা খৰচ কৰিবৰ দৰকাৰ নহল হেঁতেন। আক সেয়েহে প্রকৃত পক্ষে মানুহৰ উপকাৰ হল হেঁতেন। আগেয়ে আমাৰ আমাৰ বজাৰ দিনত ঠিক তেনেকুৱাই কৰা হৈছিল অথচ খৰচো কম আছিল আক দেশৰ উপকাৰো হৈছিল। এতিয়াও গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে এই হাজাৰ হাজাৰ টকা পোৱা কৰ্মচাৰী বিলাক গুচাই আন আন জাগাৰ প্রকৃত খেতিয়ক আনি শিক্ষা দিলে বেচি উপকাৰ হব। এতিয়া যি বিলাক fruit garden বা cattle farm কৰিছে সেই বিলাকৰ পৰাও বাইজৰ খৰচৰ বাহিৰে একো উপকাৰ হোৱা নাই। কোনো কোনো মানুহে তাৰ পৰা সামান্য উপকাৰ পাব পাৰে কিন্তু বাইজৰ তাৰ পৰা একো ভাল হোৱা নাই। সেই কাৰণেই মই মাননীয় পৰিষদৰ আগত এই প্ৰস্তাব দাঙ্গি ধৰিছো; আপোনালোকে এই বিষয়ে বিবেচনা কৰি চায় যেন। এই পদ কেইটা উঠাই দিলে ডিপাৰ্টমেণ্টৰ একো হানি নহয়। কাৰণ ২২ জন ইন্সপেক্টৰ আক ৭৪ জন ডিমনষ্ট্ৰেটৰ ধৰা আছে। এই বিলাক পদকে বেচিকৈ বঢ়াব পাৰি নহলে আন দেশৰ পৰাও practical demonstration কৰিবৰ কাৰণে (হাতে-কাম দেখুৱাবলৈ) মানুহ আনিব পাৰি। যি দেশত সম্ভানে উপায়েই ৬৫ টকা ধাৰৰ বোজা লবলগাত পৰে সেই দেশত এনেকুণা সবহীয়া দৰমহা দি কৰ্মচাৰী ৰাখিব খোজেনে? এই ৩২,০০০ টকাৰে বাঁড় গক কিনিব পাৰে; তাৰ পৰাও বাইজৰ বহুত উপকাৰ হব। নহলে তাৰে বাণ পানী নিৰাৰণ কৰিবলৈ খাল খান্দি দিলেও বাইজৰ উপকাৰ হব। বাইজৰ উপকাৰৰ নিমিত্তে এই টকা খিনি বহুত ৰকমে খটুৱাব পাৰে। এই কেইটা কথা কৈয়েই মই এই প্ৰস্তাব দাঙ্গি ধৰিলো।

(The Hon'ble the Speaker then read the motion again)

MAULAVI ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURI: Sir, the cut motion relates to the Agricultural Department, and as such will the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Agriculture please explain the situation?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Let the Hon'ble Minister first hear the details and then he will reply.

MAULANA ABDUL HAMID KHAN: Sir, দেশেৰ অবস্থা পৰিবৰ্তন কৰিতে হইলে কৃষকগণেৰ অবস্থাৰ পৰিবৰ্তন হওৱা সৰ্ব্ব প্রথম দরকাৰ এবং কৃষিৰ অবস্থা পৰিবৰ্তন কৰিতে হইলে শুধু কৃষি বিভাগেৰ অফিসাৰেৰ দ্বাৰাই তাহা সম্ভব পৰ হইবে না। খাল, নালা ইত্যাদি সংস্কাৰ কৰিয়া যাহাতে জমিৰ উৰ্দ্ধৰা শক্তি বৃদ্ধি হইতে পারে তাহাৰ চেষ্টা কৰা উচিত। আমাদেৰ গোৱালপাড়া জেলায় বৈশাখ-ভৈষ্ঠ মাসে খাল, বিল, নদী ইত্যাদি সংস্কাৰ কৰাৰ ব্যবস্থা নাথকাৰ জন্ত জল জমিয়া ধান পাকিবাৰ পূৰ্বেই ডুবিয়া গিয়া অন্যান্য ২৩ লক্ষ বিঘা জমিৰ ফসল নষ্ট হয়। সে জন্ত ছোট ছোট খাল গুলি সংস্কাৰ কৰিয়া দেওৱা একান্ত আবশ্যক। যদি ঐ সমস্যা নিচু জমিৰ জল উত্ত খাল দিয়া বাহিৰ হইয়া ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ ও জিজিৰাম নদীতে যাইতে পারে তাহা হইলে ২৩ লক্ষ বিঘা জমিৰ ফসল ৰক্ষা হইতে পারে।

আমরা এ সম্বন্ধে অনেক আবেদন করিয়াছিলাম কিন্তু সে সব আবেদন নিবেদন সমূলে বিনাশ হইয়াছে অর্থাৎ অরক্তে রোদনই সার হইল। যখন লোকে খাইতে নাপাইয়া মরিতে বসে তখন যদি তাহাদের জীবন রক্ষার উপায় না করিয়া কেবল সেখানে বড় বড় অফিসার দিগকে পাঠানো হয় এবং তাহারা গিয়া ডাক বাংলায় বসিয়া বড় বড় লোকের সঙ্গে দেখা করে তাহা হইলে তাহাদের জীবন রক্ষা হইতে পারে না। কৃষি বিভাগের ডিরেক্টর এবং ডেপুটী ডিরেক্টরদেরও অবস্থা ঠিক সেরকম হইয়াছে। তাহারা ডাকবাংলায় গিয়া বসেন এবং সেখানে দুই একদিন wait করিয়া দুই একজন ভুল্লোক বা মণ্ডলের সঙ্গে দেখা করিয়া তাহাদের কর্তব্য শেষ করেন এবং তারপরে শিলংএর দিকে রওনা হইয়া আসেন। কৃষকদের যে হাজার হাজার বিঘা জমির ফসল পোকায় নষ্ট করিয়া ফেলে তাহার জন্য আজ পর্য্যন্তও তাহারা একটুকুও প্রতিকার করিতে পারেন নাই। তারপর তাহারা এমন কোন বীজ দিতে পারেন নাই যাহার দ্বারা ফসলের উন্নতি হইতে পারে। পূর্বে যে রকম মাস কলাই, মগুর, গম ইত্যাদি বুনা হইত আজও তাহাই হইতেছে। কৃষি বিভাগের দ্বারা আসামে কৃষির কত উন্নতি হইয়াছে তাহা আমরা ভাল ভাবেই আমরা জানি। ১০০ বৎসর পূর্বে যে লাঙ্গল দিয়া চাষ করিত আজও সেই লাঙ্গলই আছে। ১০০ বৎসর পূর্বে যে process এ কৃষকেরা কৃষিজাত ফসল বিক্রি করিত এখনও সেই processই আছে। ব্যবসায়ীরা বে শোন প্রকারে ফাকি দিয়া ফসল নিয়া বাইতেছে। ৫০ বৎসর পূর্বে কৃষকেবা যে ভাবে পরিশ্রম করিতে পারিত পারিত বর্তমানে অন্নবস্ত্র অভাবে এবং ঋণের চিন্তায় সে ভাবে পরিশ্রম করিতে পারে না তজ্জন্যই ক্রমাগত কৃষির অবনতি হইতেছে। যদি শুধু কৃষি ডিপার্টমেন্টের কর্মচারী দিগকে মোটা বেতন দিয়া রাখা হয় তাহা হইলে কৃষকদের অবস্থা পরিবর্তন হইবে না জমির উর্বরতা শক্তি বৃদ্ধি হইবে না এবং যে কৃষকেরা ফাকিতে পড়িয়া কৃষিজাত ফসল অল্পমূল্যে বিক্রি করিতেছে তাহারও প্রতিকার হইবে না। যদি কৃষকদিগকে রক্ষা করিতে ইচ্ছা করেন—যদি গরীব কৃষকদিগকে ঋণ হইতে মুক্ত করিতে ইচ্ছা করেন তাহা হইলে অন্যান্য দেশ হইতে উন্নত ফসলের বীজ আনিয়া প্রত্যেক জেলায় এক একটি কৃষি ফার্ম খুলিয়া দেখানো হউক যে শিক্ষিত লোকেরা কৃষি করিলে এইরকম উন্নত ধরণের ফসল হইতে পারে। যেখানে কোন কৃষি ফার্ম নাই, কোন আদর্শ মূলক বাগান নাই, কোন Demonstrator রাখা হয় নাই, শুধু দুই একজন কর্মচারী বিলাত হইতে বা অন্য কোন জায়গা হইতে আনিয়া যদি কৃষি বিভাগের কর্তব্য শেষ করেন তাহা হইলে ৫,০০০ বৎসরেও আসামের কৃষির কোন উন্নতি হইবে না। যখন দেশের হাজার হাজার বিঘা জমির ফসল পোকায় খাইয়া নষ্ট করিয়া ফেলে তখন Demonstratorকে তাহার প্রতিকার করিতে বলিলে তাহারা বলেন “আমরা ইহার প্রতিকার জানি না”। আমাদের সেখানে একবার ধানের জমিতে ফরিং পোকা ধরিয়া ধান নষ্ট করিতেছিল তখন Inspectorকে তাহার প্রতিকার করিতে বলা হইল। Inspector বলিলেন—“একটা লম্বা রসি নেও এবং একদিক থেকে ধানের উপর দিয়া সেই রসি ব্রহ্মপুত্রের দিকে টেনে নাও; টানতে টানতে পোকাগুলি গিয়ে যখন ব্রহ্মপুত্র নদীতে পড়িবে তখন সব মাছে খেয়ে ফেলবে এবং সব পোকা নিশ্চল হইবে”

(laughter) । তখন একজন বৃদ্ধ কৃষক বলিল “হুজুর এ কেমন কথা—রসি টানলে যে ধানের সব ফুল পড়ে যাবে এবং ফুল পড়িয়া গেলে সমস্ত ধানাই নষ্ট হইয়া যাইবে । Inspector বললেন “ধানেরও আবার ফুল আছে নাকি ? এই অভিজ্ঞতা আমার নাই” (renewed laughter) ।

আমাদের গোয়ালপাড়া জেলার কোন কোন জায়গায় কুশিয়ারের চাষ যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে বৃদ্ধি পাইতেছে । যাহারা রস জাল দেয় তাহাদের টেনিক ৫ মের গুড় এবং দৈনিক ১২—১০ শিকা পয়সাও দিতে হয় । গুড় খারাপ হইলে তাহাদের বিশ্বাস যে যাহুস্ত্র দিয়া গুড় খারাপ করিয়াছে । আমি Inspectorকে বলিলাম যে একজন demonstrator দেওয়া হউক, গুড় প্রস্তুত শিক্ষার জন্য তিনি কৃষক দিগকে শিক্ষাইয়া দিবেন যে কিরূপে রস জাল দিয়া গুড় তৈয়ারী করিলে গুড় ভাল হইবে । Inspector বলিলেন ।—“এসবে আমাদের অভিজ্ঞতা নাই” যে কথাই বলা যায় তাহাতেই কৃষি অফিসারগণ বলে থাকেন তাহাদের অভিজ্ঞতা নাই (laughter) । যখন আমাদের সাউথ ব্যাঙ্ক জেলায় বরো খেত আরম্ভ হইয়াছিল তখন সেখানে Inspector গিয়া কার্তিক মাসে বিছন ফলাইতে বলিলেন ; ফলে একটাও বিছন ফলিল না । প্রকৃত পক্ষে শাত কম হইলে বিছন ফেলানো দরকার । কিন্তু কৃষি বিভাগের কন্স্ট্রাক্টরদের উপদেশ মত বিছন ফলানোর জন্য অনেক বিছন নষ্ট হইয়া গেল । আসামে কতকগুলি ভাল নীচু জমি আছে । সে জাইগায় নদী নালা তৈয়ার করিয়া জল বাধির করিয়া দিতে পারিলে যথেষ্ট পরিমাণে ভাল ফল জন্মাইতে পারা যাইবে । সে জন্য এসব ডেপুটী ডিরেক্টর বাদ দিয়া খাল, নালা এবং নদী সংস্কার করিবার জন্য চেষ্টা করা হউক । বড় বড় অফিসারদের মোটা মোটা বেতন এবং ভাতা দিবার আবশ্যক আছে বলিয়া আমি বিশ্বাস করি না । এজন্য বিশেষ ভাবে আমি এই প্রস্তাব সমর্থন করিলাম ।

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MAHMUD ALI: Sir, I should like to speak a few words.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Let the hon. member finish.

MR. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, I intend to speak something about agriculture in Garo Hills regarding agriculture.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Very well, the hon. member may speak.

MR. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, in Garo Hills, we have got only one Demonstrator who is practically doing nothing. I remember, some years ago one Inspector went to Garo Hills and visited our gardens. Potato experiment was going on that year. The Inspector found that there was nothing in the demonstration garden.

As regards the retrenchment of officers, I am not in a position to say anything now as I do not have the sound knowledge what they have done and what is their duty to do. Of course, we have not been benefited by such officers though I am sure they have been appointed for the good of the people. In Garo Hills we do not get any service from these officers.

I do not say that I do not want demonstrators because the present demonstrator is not doing good work, but I want to say that we want good demonstrators, so that we may be benefited from them. Sir, we the people in the Garo Hills are ignored and neglected in agriculture and everything. My point is that we should have two or three more demonstrators for the whole district, and one Inspector we want.

MR. C. GOLDSMITH: Sir, the motion is for refusal of grant for the superintending officers of Agriculture. Looking at all the cut motions for different demands for grants we find that in every case officers are to be cut off. The policy that has been adopted here looks as though Assam will not need its officers for different departments. The hon. mover has admitted that there is a lot of work to be done in the Agriculture Department, by the agricultural heads; demonstrations should be given, and expert knowledge is also needed, but he said at the same time that the officers should be sacked. The motion ought to have been a censure motion on the officers, if they are not doing proper work. But to say that Assam does not need agricultural experts only shows that there is a bankruptcy of good sense.

Sir, the plough has been referred to. I am of opinion that the plough of Assam which is centuries old, will go on for another century. For economic reasons Indian ploughs will be necessary for a certain length of time. The hon. member has not realised the economic condition of the agriculturists of India when he says that no improvement has been made by these agricultural experts in Indian plough. The ploughs that are used in India have been used for a long time, and our people will not take to improved ploughs, and they have good reasons for it. We have to see the economic condition of our people.

The hon. member also said that farms are needed, but in the cut motions we see that the farms are to be abolished. It is not relevant. Therefore, Sir, I press the hon. mover to withdraw his motion. We are to go into these things very carefully and we must see that we do not cut our own legs on which we stand.

RAI BAHADUR PROMODE GHANDRA DATTA: Sir, I do not like to interrupt the hon. member when he says that there has been a bankruptcy of good sense in the opposition. I only rise to point out that there is bankruptcy on the other side as well.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI KERAMAT ALI: Yourself also.

REV. L. GATPHOH: Sir, I could not follow the hon. mover and also the other hon. member who spoke in Bengali, but I wish to speak a few words on the motion for the abolition of the posts of the Superintendents. I have got a few facts, which I shall place before the House, and which may be taken as arguments for and against the motion, and that is a short history of what we have been trying to get for our subdivision.

In 1907 it was I who wrote to the then Director of Land Records and Agriculture requesting him to open small experimental farms in the British portion of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills. I might mention that the Shillong Experimental Farm is too far away from the agriculturists of the Jaintia Hills. So if an agricultural farm is opened in Jowai it will really do good to the country. The result was that a Demonstrator was appointed for the subdivision, and an Inspector was sent from time to time to pay occasional visits. As I mentioned in my budget speech that as a result of the introduction of bone-meals and other manures, there has been an increase in the revenue of the country to some extent. Since then we have been pressing for more Inspectors. The work has increased, and it is impossible for the Inspectors, who are now being utilised for provincial work in Shillong to pay regular visits. Their visits have now been few and far between, and we need really more men, more Inspectors to cope with the work.

We also want Superintendent of Agriculture to supervise the work of the staff. If the district is too small to have a Superintendent, he should also be made Superintendent of the Garo Hills, because the Inspectors in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills used to visit the Garo Hills also in the past. People in the

Khasi and Jaintia Hills appreciate their work, they like to take up new work, new experiment, new Demonstrations; so if there are more Inspectors to carry on these experiments and more Demonstrators to give demonstrations, the agriculturists of this district will be benefited beyond degrees. We also want one Superintendent to supervise the work of Inspectors and Demonstrators, and he should also be in charge of the Garo Hills.

Sir, I do not know the condition of the plains. It may be that the people there have not benefited much from the Superintendents of Agriculture. They may have reasons for that contention. But as my hon. friend says, the persons responsible should be taken to task for not doing their duty properly, instead of abolishing the post. If they do not want Superintendents of Agriculture in the plains, we want them in these hills.

Lastly, I want to say, Sir, that if the hon. members from the plains do not want to have the Superintendents of Agriculture let them say so. But in these hills there is enough work for them, because the possibilities are great.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: I rise to oppose the motion. The Agricultural Department is the only department that exists to ameliorate the conditions of the agricultural classes. This department needs every help and more money from the Government. The other day during the budget discussions, I said that this department is going on without proper nourishment. If we, the representatives of the people, cut down the root of the department, I think we shall be doing a disservice to the cause of the agriculturists. My point is this. If we want to do any good to the agriculturists, we should see that more money is procured for this department. Only abolishing the posts won't do any good, neither to the Government nor to the people. We may abolish this post or that; but this will not at all improve the condition of the people. If you go to the villages, you will find that our illiterate cultivators require advice on agricultural matters in various ways. If these officers who are supposed to be experts in agriculture are to be removed from service, I think we the laymen who simply live on the labours of the agriculturists cannot guide them to proper path. I, therefore, oppose the motion.

SRIJUT OMEMO KUMAR DAS: I rise to say that we have had sufficient discussion on this and we may now close the debate.

SRIJUT RABI CHANDRA KACHARI: Sir, আসন্ন এখন কৃষি প্রধান দেশ। অল্পে আমাৰ দেশত খেতি উন্নতি কৰিবৰ কাৰণে যে এই বিভাগৰ নিতান্ত প্রয়োজন তাক কোনেও নুই কৰিব নোৱাৰে। প্রকৃত কথা হৈছে আমাৰ ইয়াত এজন ডেপুটী ডিবেক্টৰ বা চুপ বিষ্টেণ্ডেণ্টৰ প্রয়োজন নাই এইটোহে এই cut motion ৰ আলোচনাৰ বিষয়। আমি এই বিভাগত চোৱা ছয় লক্ষ টকা খৰচ কৰো; কিন্তু এই চোৱা ছয় লক্ষ টকা খৰচ কৰি এই ডিপাৰ্টমেন্টৰ এজন অফিচাৰকো সাধাৰণ প্রজাই চোৱা দিনো গাৰত দেখেনে নেদেখে সন্দেহ। প্রকৃত পক্ষে মই ভাবোঁ যে উপযুক্ত মানুহ বখা নিতান্ত প্রয়োজন। কিন্তু যি বিলাক উচ্চ কৰ্মচাৰি আমাৰ ইয়াত আছে তেওঁ বিলাকে পথাৰত বালি আৰু ধূলি আছে বুলি তেওঁ বিলাকৰ shoe and suit বেয়া হব বুলি যাবলৈ ভয় কৰে আৰু cement দিয়া বাস্তাৰ ওপৰত মটৰ গাড়া দৌবাই ফুৰে। সেই বিলাক অফিচাৰে আমাৰ কি উপকাৰ কৰিব? সেই কাৰণে মই ভাবোঁ যে এনেকুৱা অফিচাৰ বখাৰ কোনো প্রয়োজন নাই। গতিকে মই এই cut motion টো সন্দৰ্ভন কৰোঁ।

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Srijut Omeo Kumar Das may speak now.

SRIJUT OMEO KUMAR DAS: No, Sir, I only moved for closure of the debate. The motion appears to have been sufficiently discussed.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Government may now reply.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, I will reply as my Hon'ble Colleague does not know Assamese and the mover spoke in Assamese.

Sir, my quondam colleague, Rai Bahadur Promode Chandra Datta, rose with an interjection about bankruptcy of ideas prevailing on one side of this House. I do really believe that there is bankruptcy of ideas in this House permeating every group excluding the group led by my hon. friend the Rai Bahadur and his allies the Congress party. I hope my hon. friends in the Planting group will excuse me for including them in this group of those who are suffering from want of ideas. The hon. mover from the Congress party went further, and said that there was bankruptcy of ideas even amongst our agriculturists. Sir, a glance at the cut motion tabled will clearly show what a particular section in this House wants to do away with the Agricultural Department. They want to keep the Director of Agriculture at the head, as he has not been touched; they want the Inspectors to remain. But barring those two groups, they want to remove the rest of the lot. We have got the Deputy Directors of Agriculture, they would scrape them. We have Superintendents of Agriculture, scrape them. Then comes the Inspectors, you keep them as the centre, spinal cord. Below them there are the Demonstrators and the fieldmen, remove them. Then what remains of the Agriculture Department, Sir? If we look at Motion No. 17, the same hon. member has proposed that the provision of Rs.51,000 should be refused and that is meant for Demonstrators.

MR. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Are we considering No. 1 or No. 17, Sir?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: We are discussing No. 1. But I am developing my point, how there is a section in this House who wants to do away with the entire Agricultural Department. If we cut away the Demonstrators.....

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN: এই হৈছে demonstratorৰ কথা কোৱা নাই।

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: আপোনাৰ সেইটো ভুল হৈছে। বাজেট চাওক—Lac cultivationৰ নিমিত্তে এটা প্ৰচাৰ নাই। I suppose, Sir, that I can reply to him in Assamese. I wish to point out that at page 147 under head C—Agricultural Experiments item No. 1.—Other Experiments, Detailed head 1—Contingencies, first is Lac cultivation and demonstration, there is no provision. Next Agricultural Demonstration Rs. 51,000.

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN: সেইটো Lac cultivation আৰু demonstratorৰ নিমিত্তে বুলিছে এই কেছ। তাত demonstratorৰ সংখ্যা দিয়া নাই।

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA; I think it is clear from the budget that there is no amount mentioned against that particular item. It is not clear what this cut motion comes to.

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN : মই কৈছো যে pay of officers at page 143 of the Budget be refused. ইয়াত Demonstrator বিলাকৰ কোনো কথা নাই। At page 147 it relates to Lac demonstration only and there is no mention of number of Demonstrators in that page.

Pay of Demonstrators 74 in number has been shown at page 143. তেওঁহলে অ নি কেনেকৈ বুজিম যে এইবোৰ Demonstrators' pay ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, that particular group assert that they are the custodians of the good qualities of improving the lot of the agriculturists. One hon. member has just pointed out that if there is any department whose ostensible aim is to improve the lot of the agriculturists, it is the Agricultural Department.

If we want that these people should benefit, it is, as one of my hon. friends from behind remarked, that we should have these officers with technical knowledge and we should very closely watch their activities so that their technical knowledge is widely disseminated in the countryside, and in order to draw attention to that a cut motion, a critical motion, would have been more appropriate.

Sir, the hon. mover in his speech said that there is no need of having these highly paid officers, but at the same time he admitted that our local cultivators are suffering from a bankruptcy of agricultural ideas and therefore he proposed that we should adopt the policy of inviting cultivators from outside, settle them in Assam in order to teach our people. Sir, if we invite these people and settle them in Assam to teach us, then there will be another wrangle about line system.....(Mr. Hockenull : hear ! hear !)

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN : সেই বিলাক contract system তা আনিব পাৰে।

SRIJUT DEBESWAR SARMA : I meant that these people should be brought here on a contract system.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, can anyone believe that if we bring these people here on a contract system, they will be so charitable as to impart to us the secrets of their trade ? If my hon. friend admits that our local cultivators need to be taught about rotation of crops, or manuring, or the advantage of using improved seeds, I think it is better to have a service of our own with trained experts who will go about in the interior and instruct the agriculturists. It has been said that these Agriculture Officers will not go to the villages with their nice clothes and polished boots, but I am not speaking from official reports or hearsay—I was myself for 5 years in charge of this Department and for the purpose of seeing to what extent the villagers had benefited by these demonstrations I went through slush and mud to several villages along with these officers.

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN : এদিনৰ নিমিত্ত হ হবলা ? সেই এদিনহে হবলা ?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : Sir, my hon. friend says that they simply accompanied the Hon'ble Minister. My enquiries were not confined to headquarters stations. I went into the heart of the villages, and they all said that they had derived great benefit from these agricultural officers.

Sir, I think my hon. friends have heard of the Agricultural Farm near Karimganj. Anyone who visits the Karimganj locality will find that the neighbourhood has been fully benefited by the improved seeds that have been

evolved by the Karimganj Farm. There are 3 hon. members in this House in the Muslim group coming from that locality and there are others also on the opposite side ; let them say whether it is a fact or not. Similarly, we have got a Farm at Jorhat. That Farm specialises in sugarcane, and I asked several hon. gentlemen who take an interest in sugarcane to say sincerely whether our cultivators have been benefited by the sugarcane setts issued by the Farm at Jorhat.....

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN: Sir, তেনেহলে ইয়াত আমি এইবোৰ মিছাই কৈছোঁ।

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL: And jute.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MAHUMMAD SAADULLA: I am coming to jute. Sir, anyone who has been interested in jute knows that the indigenous variety of jute grows to a height of only 6 or 7 feet, and thereafter it branches ; the stem is very thin and the fibre is reddish brown and therefore fetches a very poor price, as against the Chinsura green variety introduced.

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN: এপ্তিকালচাৰেল বিভাগ নালাগে বুলি কোৱা নাই। Deputy Director of Agricultureৰ post লৈহে কথা হৈছে। তেখেতে যি বোৰ কথা কৈছে সেইবিলাক Houseক mislead কৰিবৰ নিমিত্তেহে কৈছে। কাৰণ Deputy Directorৰ post নহলেও কুঁহিয়াবৰ আগ কেইটা বা মৰাপাটৰ গুটিকৈটা আনেও আনি দিব পাৰে।

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I do not understand what the hon. member says.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: He says that even if there be no Demonstrators people can get the seed from the Farm. Sir, it presupposes that it is these officers with technical knowledge, and not untrained people from outside Assam, who have introduced these improved varieties in the province. These officers have undergone a scientific course of agricultural training, and it is these officers who know what improved varieties should be introduced in the province, then these varieties are distributed in the country through the agency of the lower grade workers.....

SRIJUT HALADHAR BHUYAN: এই কাম Agriculture Inspectors বিলাকঃ দ্বাৰাই হব পাৰে—তেওঁবিলাকৰ Seed গুদাম আছে তাৰে indent কৰি Demonstrators বিলাকৰ হতুৱাই বিলাই দিয়াব পাৰে। সেই কামৰ নিমিত্তে Deputy Director of Agriculture নহলেও হব।

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I hope, Sir, you will not mind if I answer the hon. member in Assamese.

ইঙ্গ.পত্ৰবতকৈ ডিপুটী ড.ইবেক্টৰৰ Scientific knowledge বেশী। The Chinsura green variety of jute grows up to about 15 or 16 feet; the stalk is very thick and about double the size of the local variety; the fibre is silvery white and it fetches a very high price. Only the other day my hon. friend Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan, M.L.A., was telling me that this kind of jute is extensively grown at a place called Sarisabari, and he told me that the local produce from the neighbouring districts is transported beyond the borders to Sarisabari so that it may be taken as grown in Sarisabari, and such jute fetches better price.

From all these facts I say that we require some people who have got high technical knowledge of scientific agriculture and improved methods of agriculture, and if we accept this motion it would be cutting down the Agriculture Department to its roots. I hope hon. members will consider these points when voting on the motion.

MAULAVI SYED ABDUR ROUF : Sir, the Hon'ble Minister was telling us that there are better varieties of jute and sugarcane in Jorhat and in Karimganj. I do not know much of geography. Are these places in the Barpeta subdivision?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA : My hon. friends know that the last speaker has been domiciled in Assam for the last 6 or 7 years. If he has not read the geography of Assam, it is not my fault. (*laughter.*)

The motion was put and lost.

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.1,000 under Grant No. 19, Major head—10.—Agriculture, Minor head—A.—Agriculture Department, Sub-head—(a).—Director of Agriculture, Detailed head—3.—Allowance and Honoraria (total), at page 143 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1.

The object of this motion is to criticise the general policy of the Agriculture Department, and its action.

Agriculture is a Department which the people of the Province want, 90 per cent. of the population of the province are Agriculturists and their daily bread wholly depends on this. We are not therefore making any criticism with any spirit of hostility. We desire that the Department should do, and should have done, at least some tangible good to the masses. But judging from the results of the many years' administration during which it has been in existence, we must say that the department has proved to be a total failure. The same defect of top-heaviness of the administration which characterises every other department is there. We spend comparatively a very small amount on field work than on superintendence and supervision. I am not going to comment on the work of any particular officer or staff, as it is a matter of detail of administration. But I feel that the whole outlook of the administration till now is completely unsatisfactory. The spirit of service to the meanest, villagers which should be the characteristic outlook of the department, is altogether absent. We find, Sir, that while the officers of the department are anxious to please the men at the top and those who can criticize their action within the Assembly chamber, they pay very little heed to the needs of the villagers. The inspecting officers undoubtedly tour a lot in motors and draw large sums in salaries and allowances. We also find interesting reports about their work in the annual administration reports. In the name of bringing experts into the department they are excluding the children of the soil from services and yet what is the verdict of the people on the department. They say that the sooner the department is abolished the better. I have not met a single villager who is prepared to give any certificate to the department. Sir, a department of this kind should, in our opinion, be judged by what the villagers say about it. It is for that reason that we say that the department comes in for severe condemnation.

Coming to the department itself, I first propose to make a few observations regarding the Livestock Department. It is a happy feature that His Excellency the Viceroy is taking great interest in the subject. We are no less anxious about the improvement of our cattle kingdom. What has the great expert sitting at the head of this department done for us? Cattle worth about a lakh of rupees was purchased by this department during the past few years. But what has happened to these? The report of the

administration for 1935-36 says—"A serious check to the progress of this section occurred during the year due to the spread of Johne's disease amongst cattle in the Government farm and the dairies. In building up this herds, cattle have been either transferred occasionally for some years and unfortunately all herds are infected. Since no direct preventive or curative treatment is yet known, the control of this disease will be a long business extending possibly over some years; meanwhile the issue and sale of cattle from the farms have been stopped. (Page 55. Agricultural Report 1935-36)

The Hon'ble Minister is not aware that all herds of cattle in Government farms and dairies are infected with Johne's disease, and they are subjected to musketry practice by the head of the department. Johne's disease, Sir, is not a local disease at all. It was unknown in the province, but it has been introduced into the province by the expert. And what is his salary? He is probably drawing a salary of Rs. 900 with allowances. Sir, if such a department does not come in for condemnation and such a public servant continues as an expert, what will be the fate of our cattle kingdom? But I do not like to take the time of the House.

One word more, Sir, about the Agricultural schools and colleges. This province becomes an autonomous province. The province must have had by this time an agricultural school or college. But I see no attempt in this direction. With these words, Sir, I commend the motion for the acceptance of the House.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The motion moved is that the provision of the Rs.1,000 under Grant No. 19, Major head—40.—Agriculture, Minor head—A.—Agricultural Department, Sub-head—(a).—Director of Agriculture, Detailed head—3.—Allowances and Honoraria (total), at page 148 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1.

The House is adjourned for lunch till 2 p.m.

(After lunch)

MAULANA ABDUL HAMID KHAN: Sir, কৃষকদের শুধু কৃষি বাত ফসলের দ্বারা তাহদের জীবন নির্বাহ হওয়া কোন ক্রমেই সম্ভবপর নহে। গোয়ালপাড়া জেলার দক্ষিণ সালমারা ও লক্ষিপুর এবং গারো হিলের ফুলবাড়ী এবং মহেন্দ্রগঞ্জ থানার ২,৩০,৩৬৬ জন প্রজার শিল্প শিক্ষার জন্য আমি পুনঃ পুনঃ Industry ডিপার্টমেন্টের ডিরেক্টর সাহাবের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করিয়া ব্যর্থ হইয়াছি—একজন demonstrator বা অন্য কোন রকম ব্যবস্থাও পাই নাই। বাংলা দেশে প্রজাদিগকে পাটের সূতা দিয়া সাইকেলের ব্যাগ, বিছানা চাদর এবং সতর্ক তৈয়ার করিতে শিক্ষা দেওয়া হইতেছে এবং তাহার দ্বারা প্রজারা যথেষ্ট লাভবান হইয়াছেন। গোয়ালপাড়া জেলার South Bank এর প্রজাদের কি অপরাধ জানিনা; তাহার পুনঃ পুনঃ গবর্ণমেন্টের দৃষ্টি আকর্ষণ করা স্বত্ত্বেও সে সব স্থানের জন্য একজন demonstrator ও দেওয়া হয় নাই এবং কোন প্রকার শিল্প শিক্ষা দিবার কোন ব্যবস্থাও করা হয় নাই। যদি প্রজাদের দারনের উপকারার্থ Industry ডিপার্টমেন্ট খোলা হইয়া থাকে তাহা হইলে প্রজাদের আর্থিক অবস্থা দিন দিন খারাপের দিকে যাওয়ার জন্য যাহারা অতি কষ্টে অল্প বস্ত্র অভাবে কালাতিপাত করিতেছে, তাহাদের প্রতি দৃষ্টি রাখিয়া Weaving School বা অন্যান্য প্রকারে যাহাতে কিছু পরমা রোজগার করিতে পারে তাহার ব্যবস্থা করা। কিন্তু হুংস ও পারতাপর বিষয় এই যে এদিকে গবর্ণমেন্টের দৃষ্টিপাত হইবে কিনা সন্দেহ। ইহার পূর্বে প্রত্যেকবার জবাব পাইয়াছি যে Fund এ টাকা নাই। ইহা বলিয়াই আমি এই প্রস্তাবের সমর্থন করিলাম।

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Sir, I think, there would be no more betrayal of ignorance of the Congress programme than to say that Congress Party can ever be opposed to any motion regarding the improvement of agriculture in the province. Sir, we exist for the agriculturist brethren of the province and we want to die for them. Sir, when we bring in this motion it is clear that we bring it as a motion of censure on the Government for the inadequate provision for agricultural training of the people of the province or for inadequacy of the provision for training them to improve agriculture. When we read about the countries like Italy and Russia where agriculture has been improved at the initiative of the Government, we feel constrained to call this Government as the betrayer of the interest of the masses. We want on our side of the House that agriculture should be improved till it reaches the economic point of the Law of Diminishing returns. These agriculturists are the backbone of the nation and they should be helped in a manner which will help them to improve their economic condition and also to give adequate revenues to the Government coffers for the management of all departments of administration. We are arguing here for the reduction of 50 per cent. reduction of revenue, because we find that the economic condition of the agriculturists is very bad. If their condition is improved there will be no more cry for reduction of revenue. Therefore we want that adequate provisions ought to have been made for giving our boys agricultural education in all the institutions of Government as well as local bodies so that every boy of the soil can come out of the institution with some knowledge of improved agriculture. Sir, we do not want topheaviness, we want that the number of demonstrators should be so much swelled that there might be an agricultural demonstrator in every village so that they can work with the agriculturists in the field and show them the improved methods. It is for the matter of that alone that Government having failed to make adequate provision for agricultural improvement, that we have brought this censure on the Government. The other day the Hon'ble Chief Minister in a meeting declared his intention to improve the agricultural condition of the country, but from the persual of the budget we do not find any provision for that purpose. It is for that reason Government stands condemned. Sir, much has been spent in other departments which are not productive, but Government is reluctant to utilise any money for the improvement of agriculture which will benefit every body—the agriculturists as well as the Government itself. Therefore I rise to support the motion which has been moved by my hon. friend Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma and I hope the whole House will agree with me when I say that Government deserves censure for not taking adequate measure in this direction.

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL: Sir, I beg to thank the hon. member who has brought this cut motion for the constructive and moderate way in which he has directed attention to the problem of agriculture to which I personally have given much thought over a period of years. I feel sure, as I have said before, that all sections of the House are at one regarding the desire to improve the condition of the masses through the medium of the Agriculture Department, and this motion is well-timed and moderately stated and it affords the House an opportunity of gaining that information from the Department which, I am sorry to say, is lacking in many respects. It does further furnish the Minister in charge with an opportunity and a very necessary opportunity as the occasion demands, of vindicating the policy of the Department which works under him.

Now, Sir, the real trouble with the Agriculture Department is inadequacy of its staff. Let me remind those members of this House who are using these weaknesses as a political weapon, of the old saying—"you can

fool some of the people all the time : you can fool all the people for some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time". Those who are playing with this Department in that spirit will find in the long run that it will not pay.

The Public Health, Agriculture, Veterinary Service and Animal Husbandry are all new, young, poorly developed and half starved agencies of this province. It fills me with disgust to read the motions which are tabled and they imply such a tremendous lack of thought and want of appreciation of the circumstances of the situation when we hear people arguing that the whole branch of this service should be discarded, merely because it is topheavy. Well, Sir, every service is topheavy at the start. If I open a tea garden to-morrow as Manager I alone am topheavy. What I want to do is to develop that property so that in time it can afford the means of livelihood to hundreds and thousands of labourers with only a few Managers still directing the whole affair. The trouble with this Department is that at start we have not spent enough to give benefit to the agriculturists themselves. This is, I think, the essence of the complaint against the Department with which we agree. Our idea is to focus attention on lack of funds and by our recommendation we want to impress upon the Government the necessity of giving more and more to this Department.

Sir, I shall not be satisfied until I see that as much is spent on this Service as is now spent on general education. I am certainly convinced that it will give a far more fruitful return. I personally am as disappointed as any member of this House that the progress is not faster. I have moved time and again, but I am not discouraged. I will continue to move until something better is done.

One thing which this House is required to recognise and that is that the Head of the Department is almost entirely immobile owing to the tremendous amount of departmental work that is required of him. It is one of the unfortunate happenings in any Government department that a man who is at the top is able to give probably much less of his time than any other member of the Department to the actual professional work which he is directing. Therefore, if I may say so, the necessity for having adequate assistance is the only solution. This Department can never flourish until it has more workers in touch with the people and these workers require teaching—a duty for the technical expert.

One point which I should like to stress and stress to the utmost of my power is the necessity for reorganization within the Department itself. There are two separate and distinct Departments in Assam under one head, namely, Agriculture and Veterinary and Live-stock. If you find that the head of the Department is an Agriculturist, naturally his instinct tends towards the better development of agriculture, and if he happens to be a Veterinary man, then Agriculture suffers.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER : The hon. member has exceeded his time limit.

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL : It is a very very important subject, Sir.

Regarding another question, namely, John's Disease, I would remind the hon. members that in 1918 we had a world wide epidemic known as Influenza. It disseminated the whole world. In our own province whole villages were wiped out and when that epidemic subsided did we say that we did not want the medical department because they had failed in the particular emergency. On the contrary they directed their attention to the necessity for greater and more research work. This disease is a world wide disease, very difficult to diagnose. There is no known inoculation against the disease. Let us not under-estimate the importance of this and

at the same time make wild and vague statement decrying the Department. The number of animals lost from the disease is very small, 500 in all against a regular loss by other epidemics of 25,000 annually, and very fortunately they have been confined to Government Farms. These animals were imported when better stock was wanted, and brought the disease with them.

One thing which I should like to put before the Department is that when epidemics of this kind break out the public should be taken into their confidence for little is gained by a secretive attitude.

In conclusion I would ask those hon. members who have not been to the Government Farm at Shillong to go there and see what is possible and let their constituents know what is being done.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHOUDHURY:
 Sir, I rise to support the motion. I have got some grievance, not personal of course, against the administration of this Department. Sir, it is the general impression of the people that the Head of the Department is so weak that he cannot take proper steps against the officers under him when they act against the orders and instructions of the Department. Sir, the other day I said that the Manager of the Sylhet Farm sold out bulls affected by Johne's disease to outsiders contrary to the orders of Government, which the Hon'ble Minister could not deny. But what is the result? The Manager is tight there, but on the contrary, the Department have transferred the two Muhammadan officers from the Farm. Again the action of the Department has given the public to understand that the Head of the Department has taken a communal view of the thing. If this be true, I think it is not, then it is no doubt unfortunate. Yesterday we have been told by the Hon'ble Minister that 480 heads of cattle had been killed owing to the effect of the Johne's disease and still there are many heads of cattle affected by this wasting disease. I am told by an Expert that germs of this wasting disease remain for three years in the soil where a diseased cattle lays its dung. And in view of the seriousness of the disease Government ought to have declared the Sylhet Farm as "condemned" and taken serious measure against the Manager who sold affected cattle to outsiders and helped in spreading of the disease in villages. The Departmental Head relieved the Farm of all Muhammadan officers and allowed the Manager to enjoy the good wishes of the Department. It shows, Sir, that the Department is not well managed and is unable to grasp the seriousness of the situation. If things are allowed to go on in this way and the Department is not thoroughly overhauled, I am afraid, the public, for whom the Department is meant, will lose all faith in the Agricultural Department.

Sir, there is a Deputy Director of Agriculture for Livestock in the person of Mr. R. C. Woodford. I do not know whether he is an expert in rearing of cattle or in killing of cattle. Because only some years back this Livestock Department came into existence and during this short period it had to sacrifice 480 heads of cattle causing a huge loss to Government. I do not know, Sir, whether it will justify his appointment.

We also do not know what marketing staff is doing. It is making no arrangement for the sale of agricultural produce. Outside purchasers known as "Beparis" come, make combination and purchase rice, jute and mustard seeds, etc., at a very cheap rate from our cultivators. For want of selling facilities, Sir, the pineapple growers have been greatly discouraged. If the staff do not show more activities, then I say, there is no necessity of maintaining them.

Government do not propose to take practical steps for improving the productivity of land and protection of crops. This alone I think, Sir, will be a sufficient reason for censuring Government. With these few words, Sir, I beg to support the motion.

KHAN BAHADUR MAULAVI MAHMUD ALI: May I know, Sir, whether the cattle were purchased before the appointment of Mr. Woodford or after his appointment?

MR. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: This gentleman once saved one of my valuable cattle, Sir.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I will point out that in course of my speech.

Sir, John's disease has loomed large in to-day's discussion and unfortunately, for this disease, the Agriculture Department is going to be censured. I will just give a short history how this disease came to be diagnosed in this province. Microscopic examination of the scrapping from the intestine of a bull which died at the Khanapara Farm on the 3rd June 1933 carried at the Imperial Institute of Veterinary Research, Mukteswar, at the instance of the Superintendent of the Civil Veterinary Department showed the presence of organism much indistinguishable from that of John's disease. This case was followed up by five more cases during 1933 in the same Farm. Sir, the fact that intestine of a bull which died was sent to Mukteswar Research Laboratory clearly shows that the Department of Agriculture was alive to the danger of introduction of a new disease (*hear, hear*). It appears, Sir, that there is some misapprehension in the minds of many hon. members that this disease was introduced on account of negligence either of the Live-stock Expert Mr. Woodford or of our Agriculture and Veterinary departments but the facts are not so. Before the appointment of Mr. Woodford we started buying cattle from outside. We used to send our own Deputy Directors of Agriculture to different provinces to purchase cattle with the help of the Imperial Dairy Expert. While I was Minister in charge, I deputed one of our Deputy Directors of Agriculture, Mr. Lakeswar Barthakur, for purchase of cattle from outside the province. This disease, which we have now been able to trace was introduced into our farm by a herd of cattle that was bought from Sindh and another place called Karnal near Delhi. All the animals were selected by no less an authority than Mr. Smith, the Imperial Dairy Expert to the Government of India. This would alone show what meticulous care this department took in buying their cattle. It is very unfortunate that the disease spread in this province but we are doing our level best to stop further issue of diseased animals from the farm and all those animals that could be traced have been killed. In this respect, I must congratulate some hon. members of this House especially my friend Maulavi Namwar Ali Barbhuiya from Cachar who has helped the department in tracing the animals that were issued from the Sylhet Cattle Farm. Eleven of these animals have been killed in Cachar through such help and the remaining two would be killed as soon as they could be traced so that the disease may not spread. If the hon. members of this House lend their whole-hearted co-operation we hope to be able to stop this disease from spreading further. (*A voice.—Certainly*).

Sir, another matter on which I must congratulate the speaker and the supporters is for the adoption of this moderate method of censuring the Government. Sir, we are ourselves alive to the fact that the Agriculture Department has not yet come up to its standard we would like it to reach. It is not on account of any want of enthusiasm on the part of the officers but on account of paucity in the number of field workers but we hope soon to be able to increase the number of field workers and carry the benefit of this department to the masses,

Sir, with your permission, I would like to say a few words more. There is a motion for cutting off supplies for starting fruit culture. I like to take this opportunity of showing that the department has been able to introduce various fruits in particular localities. I would like to produce before the House a sample of two pineapples which have been grown in this province, one weighing 11 lbs. and the other 10 lbs. These two pineapples have been sent to me by the Director of Agriculture with a forwarding letter which I like to read before the House—"Sir, I am sending herewith two pineapples grown by Nowab Abdul Aziz in the Daisy Pineapple Garden at Tezpur". He is an Assamese gentleman from Jorhat. "This shows, Sir, what Assam can do in the way of growing pineapples even under ordinary conditions". I know that this gentleman sends his consignments to Calcutta and there is a regular competition to get his custom. One of the fruit sellers of the College Street market in Calcutta came to me to intercede on his behalf so that the grower may continue sending him the pineapples which were sold at annas 12/- to Re.1/ per fruit. This shows, Sir, that with the help of the Department of Agriculture even under such ordinary circumstances such big and lucrative pineapples can be grown.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHOUDHURY: Sir, is the Hon'ble Minister in order to produce these two pineapples before the House?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Producing of two pineapples has not caused any disorder (*laughter*).

BABU DAKSHINARANJAN GUPTA CHAUDHURI: May I know from the Hon'ble Chief Minister whether he will have a monopoly of these pineapples?

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, I simply wanted to demonstrate how fruits can be improved in Assam.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: If the House agrees then we may go on and put the motion to vote, but when the time limit is fixed, I think the Hon'ble Minister will please take his seat.

[The motion was put and lost without division.]

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The original motion is that a sum not exceeding Rs.6,18,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the "Agriculture Department".

[The motion was carried.]

GRANT NO. 22.

43.—INDUSTRIES

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI MUHAMMAD ALI HAIDAR KHAN: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg to move, Sir, that a sum not exceeding Rs.2,36,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the "Industries Department".

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The motion moved is that a sum not exceeding Rs.2,36,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the "Industries Department".

SRIJUT SIDDHI NATH SARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.1,200 under Grant No. 22, Major Head—43.—Industries, Minor head—A—Director of Industries, Sub-head—3.—Allowances and honoraria (total), at page 161 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 2.

Sir, the object of this cut motion is to criticise the policy of Government hitherto followed by this Department. Although we are in the dawn of a new era, the budget speech of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Industries did not reveal any new policy or programme of work for his department. It pains me to see the meagre estimate budgeted on this head. Practically the whole sum of Rs.2,36,800 will be spent for the pay of officers, their establishment, allowances and honoraria, except the very small sum which has been set apart for scholarships to students for training in industrial schools.

Sir, in Assam there is the greatest possibility for development in industries. Assam is by nature endowed to be a province which can, properly developed, produce almost everything that humanity can possibly require. She has raw materials enough for her own requirements in every department of human wants. The old cottage industries in Assam have become anæmiac for want of proper nourishment, criminal negligence on the part of Government, and want of statesmanship in the department. I cannot but sympathise with the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Department for his frank admission that unfortunately little money was available for his department; so what can he do. Sir, this sort of apology will neither develop nor increase the industrial resources of the country. A suitable industrial policy, a well thought-out scheme can alone increase the productivity and industrial resources of the country. It may not be possible within this limited time that was given to him to offer many constructive suggestions, but apart from the major industries such as Tea, Sugar, Leather, etc., which should be encouraged and aided by the Government, it is the bounden duty of the department to see that the cottage industries of the province, which go for the benefit of the masses, should be sufficiently aided and encouraged.

Sir, the production of silk and silk weaving are very common industries of the province, but for want of proper aid the whole benefit is going to the capitalists. The Mahajans generally advance either money or cocoons to the poor weavers, some of whom come from the tribal classes; practically the whole benefit goes to these Mahajans, leaving so little to the weavers that the proper value is not obtained, even for their labour. If the place of these Mahajans could be taken up by the State, then not only those weavers will be sufficiently benefited but also some profit might come to the Government.

In this connection I want to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Department to what the All-India Spinners' Association are doing in regard to Silk Industry in other provinces. Then, Sir, there are the bell metal industry, the brass industry and the ivory work industry, all of which would have highly flourished in this province but for the same reason, viz., the encroachment of the Mahajans in these industries also, these industries are dying out. Mat making, wicker work, *sitalpati* making and pottery making are also in the same state of decay. All these industries require modernization, and if Government have come to their aid not only could these industries be revived but could successfully compete with any other products of the same kind of other places. Then, Sir, washing and toilet soaps, perfumery and scents take away several lakhs from the province every year. It is a happy sign that some of the enterprising men have taken up these industries of late; they should be aided and encouraged by the Government. There are other industries in the province which under proper guidance and help may successfully compete with similar products of other countries. But Government instead of encouraging these industries are not making any provision in the budget. We feel, Sir, while we may

afford to neglect many things, we cannot afford to overlook these nation-building activities and should not the Government which do not pay much heed for these come for criticism ?

With these few words I commend the motion to the acceptance of the House.

MAULAVI MUHAMMADAN MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHOUDHURY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support this motion. I shall be very brief and won't keep the House for a long time. I am only drawing the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to two matters. In the Surma Valley Technical School there is no provision for silk weaving. I think this should be introduced there, and if silk weaving is introduced in the Surma Valley Technical School, this industry will spread in the Surma Valley and it will help in the growth of cottage industries.

Another point is higher training in weaving. Students from the Surma Valley Technical School are to go to Gauhati for this. I think this practice should be stopped and provision should be made for it in the Surma Valley Technical School for higher training in weaving.

With these few words I beg to support the motion.

SRIJUT JOGENDRA NATH BARUA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with regard to the question of industries in this province, the Government has not done its bit considering the finance of the province. I leave aside the question of major industries of the provinces : with regard to the smaller cottage industries in this province the Government has not given real attention to this problem. The rural indebtedness of the raiyats can only be removed if these cottage industries are properly fostered and encouraged. In the first place my hon. friend Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma has told the House that Government has not paid the slightest attention to the main cottage industries of the province such as bell-metal, brass, silk-rearing, mat making, wicker work, etc. On one occasion I approached the Director of Industries to organise a co-operative institution with a view to help the brass and bell-metal industries, but the reply was that there was no fund available and, therefore, the matter could not be taken up. If the Government thinks that it has no finance to finance all the cottage industries, all at once at least some of the industries which are very valuable to the local people, which I have already mentioned, should be taken up by Government in a systematic and sympathetic way, and in that way the people will be much benefited and the Government also will earn the gratitude of the people. But, Sir, the way in which this Department has been proceeding will be revealed to you, if you look at the Industrial Report of the Assam Government for 1935-36. You will find from it that only Rs. 500 has been advanced as industrial loan in that year. And therefore I submit that this is a very sad thing, and no prosperity can attend the province if the Department goes on like this. I therefore support the motion of my hon. friend Srijut Siddhi Nath Sarma.

SRIJUT GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in supporting this motion I simply want to mention one industry which has been neglected by the Department. I mean the spinning industry, which is a most important industry of the province. Of course the Government have paid some attention and spent some money for encouraging weaving, but we do not find that any systematic attempt has been made for the sake of encouraging spinning. The other day the Hon'ble Chief Minister told us that spinning has been introduced in the weaving schools of the province but we have not been able to see these schools doing any thing tangible in that direction. I want to draw the pointed attention of the Government to the fact that they should do something for the spread of spinning. They can spread the industry by lending cotton and cheap spinning wheels to poor

men and women and by purchasing the products for the Government Emporiums. They can also very well encourage it by opening spinning classes in Jails and in the lower classes of vernacular schools. In my opinion this cottage industry should be encouraged by the Government by all possible means.

With these few words, Sir, I beg to support the motion.

SRIJUT LAKHESVAR BAROOAH: Sir, I want to speak a few words on this cut motion. Sir, the uplift of the masses is the cry of the day. We cannot think of upliftment of the masses without improving the agricultural condition of the people and without reviving the cottage industries. I hope hon. members will agree with me that the only important cottage industry of India is spinning and weaving, and it can be revived also by minimum expenditure. It is for this reason that Mahatma Gandhi has insisted on the revival of this Industry throughout the whole country. Many hon. members who are conversant with the economic history of the country know that 60 crores of rupees is sent out of this country annually to the foreign countries, in cloth only and that amount was retained in India only, when the cottage industry was in vogue, in the country. The moment foreign cloth reached the shores of India economic bondage of her millions began. So, Sir, every endeavour should be made by all who have the welfare of the country in their hearts to revive this industry. This spinning and weaving industry was universally followed by all and it can be revived at a minimum cost. Much has been made by the Agricultural Department of their giving some stipends to students for training in soap manufacture. I submit, Sir, that soap-making was never and never is a cottage industry in this country. We Assamese are a race of weavers, and as such we are in a most advantageous position to revive the industry at the minimum of expense. Therefore every effort should have been made by the department to revive this industry in the country.

Besides spinning, Sir, there are other cottage industry in our countries which have died. Assam was self-contained unit in the matter of our daily requirements. The importation of cutlery and other things is only a recent introduction. We had our potters, metal workers, etc. Through the advent of foreign goods these cottage industries are dying out. An attempt should have been made by the department to revive this industries in the villages. The budget which has been presented is, for the reasons, has been rightly characterised a dry bureaucratic one, lacking in orientation and lacking in life. I therefore with these words support this motion.

BABU RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Sir, days in, days out, we are carrying on our discussions on various motions and our discussions are meeting with the same fate; the ministerial boat has three harbours to take shelter, namely 'consideration', 'enquiry' and 'Retrenchment Committee.' These are the three words which sum up the policy of ministerial defence. I was astounded to hear from the Hon'ble Chief Minister yesterday that he was lacking in information regarding industrial banks. He was speaking of the Tata Industrial Banks, and other industrial banks but he did not know the significance of a real industrial bank. Sir, the ordinary banking concerns feed on deposits of their clients and are generally disposed to the grant of short-term loans, whereas the object of the industrial banks is different. The capital expenditure of industrial enterprises requires some money, to be repaid in the course of 25 or 30 years. And for that a bank cannot depend upon the deposits from ordinary depositors. This is why an industrial bank is necessary; its capital must be raised by the issue of long-term debentures, so that long-term credit can be given to industrial enterprises. Short-term deposits and long-term credit are inconsistent. This is why an ordinary

banking concern cannot give these facilities to industrial enterprises which require money on long-term credit. This is why I asked the Hon'ble Minister to establish an industrial bank in this province. Sir, I would refer the Hon'ble Minister to a book named 'Recovery plan of Bengal' written by the Director of Industries, Bengal, Mr. S. C. Mitra, perhaps much light can be had from that book about such banks. In Bengal they have started land mortgage banks on a similar plan. It does not cost anything from the Government coffers. All that is required of Government is that they should be ready to guarantee the payment of interest on these debentures. That is all that is necessary. So in order to finance our small industries a liberal policy of granting loans should be adopted, and for this purpose industrial banks would be absolutely necessary, in order that our cottage industries may be resuscitated.

Sir, in our country there is scope for a fruit canning industry, there are also others like the decaying mat-making industry and so on, which are languishing for want of proper encouragement. You will be surprised to hear, Sir, that even the earthen wares in this province are imported from Dacca. Although mother earth is gracious enough to give all her resources for our use, yet we require earthenware to be imported from Bengal! If proper training were given to the Kumhar class, thousands and thousands of rupees would have been saved and this exploitation by others would have been avoided. So what I say is that there is no scheme or idea behind our industries policy. There should be systematic well planned policy and at the same time a financial backing. And if we proceed on a plan just as other countries are doing, with, as I said yesterday, a five year or a ten-year plan, I think we will be able to make some advance in our industrial enterprises. With these words, Sir, I support the motion moved by my hon. friend.

MAULAVI DEWAN MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Sir, in my budget speech I said that we want more food and more cloths to put on. Industry and Agriculture are the two pillars upon which the welfare of the country depends. The Hon'ble Minister of Industry is fortunate that the portfolio of Industry and Agriculture has been conferred upon him. These are the really true nation-building departments by which he can do real good to the people and can capture the imagination of the public, but, Sir, it is a matter of regret that we find no sign of activity. I hope the department will come forward with some programme and push its programme of work among the masses.

Sir, 80 per cent. of the agriculturists belong to the Muslim community and it is an urgent need that Government should give more attention and give more facilities to the needs of the community. Sir, cottage industry is the only industry by which we can solve the unemployment problem. Again, Sir, in industrial department I draw the pointed attention of the Government towards the paucity of Moslems in the department and the lack of facility for Moslems in the matter of industrial department. Sir, in the Sylhet Technical School the Moslems are ill-represented in the teaching staff. So I urge upon the Government to find out ways and means to redress the grievances of the Moslem community. With these few words, Sir, I resume my seat.

MR. KEDARMAL BRAHMIN: Sir, I am not going to criticise Government for not encouraging the industries of the province: What is mainly required is that the people should come forward and find new enterprises and then force the Government to encourage those industrial enterprises. Sir, we find that in Assam the bamboos are grown in plenty but nothing has been done for the improvement of paper industry or for starting any paper mill in Assam. Assam requires a great deal of papers and all those papers are imported from outside the province and a good deal of money is

going out of the province. So it is necessary that some public men should come forward to take the initiative and Government is bound to encourage the industry. Of course capital is required for all those purposes and capitalists are the necessary part of the society to start big industries.

Again there are some manufacturers and there should be salesman to sell those products. Simply to criticise that *mahajans* take the whole share of the manufacture is not true. We find that the price of *endi* at Soalkuchi is Rs. 10, it is sold at Gauhati at Rs. 12 and at Calcutta it brings Rs. 14. So we see that the middle man did not take all the share of those manufacturers. These people are connected with each other. So if the manufacturers be the salesmen that will not develop the industry but will check the same.

As regards glass industry I find there is ample scope of this industry in Assam. Glass can be easily prepared, it requires only some sort of sand which can be found in plenty in some parts of Shillong and other places. It requires sand of the rivers which flow from hills and Government can make an experiment on this in their chemical laboratory at Shillong.

For the development of commerce and industry good communication is immediately needed. We find there are abundant minerals in our hills but due to lack of communication no body can go there to explore those minerals. We cannot utilise them for our purpose though they are in abundance in our own country.

Again there is great demand for white silk in other provinces. We know that *muga* is prepared in Assam at a cheaper price, but for its golden colour it not liked by the people of other provinces. If it can be changed into white, I think, it will bring better price. Our Industry Department has done nothing to improve that fibre. My hon. friend Mr. Siddhi Nath Sarma has given a good list of those industries which can be introduced in Assam and I think Government should follow the example of Mysore Government. Mysore has developed commerce and industry in such a way that this should be followed by our Government too.

MAULAVI MUNAWWAR ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sorry I cannot support this cut motion. The hon. mover of the motion has criticised the general policy of the Government as if there were a Government policy in it. I would say that perhaps he should have done better if his motive was to criticise the absence of any policy in this Department in Assam.

What do we see here in Assam? Bits of it here, bits there, and we are no where. There are things sporadic here and there and that does not make a policy. If it is a policy, it is certainly perfunctory. A policy must be well knit.

On many occasions, Mr. Speaker, I tried, to bring to the notice of the Government the wonderful industrial resources of this province and even in this Assembly I gave notice of a resolution recommending an industrial survey of the province. This is a subject which has absorbed much of my time and attention, and I have been of opinion that Assam offers wonderful opportunities for industrial regeneration. I pointed out to this Government the wonderful possibilities of the lime industry in the district of Sylhet. In the district of Sylhet they once supplied lime to the whole of India. But Government did not care to see what it was and what it is. I now lay before the Minister for Industry—it is my request to him, to get the position examined, along with others.

Sir, has the Hon'ble Minister's attention been drawn to the possibilities of turpentine and resins that may be produced in Assam. There are huge clusters of pine trees in the Khasi Hills, but I do not know if anybody cared to examine this aspect of the Industry from the pines.

What about the soap industry? Everybody knows that there is a kind of tree called 'Nageswar' which provides seeds which give a great proportion of oil which may be utilised in soap making. I understand this question drew the attention of the Government and for a little while; some samples of oil were examined in the Technological Institute at Cawnpore. What stood in the way of this oil being accepted as a soap-making oil, was that it give a yellow colour? Now, it remains to be examined whether this yellow colour can be done away with. As soon as we are able to do away with this, it will not be necessary for this province to import oil for soap making in this province from other provinces. Sir, this is a very important matter. This Nageswar seeds offer a great possibility for soap industry in this province, and perhaps if it is taken seriously we shall be able to export our oils to different provinces.

As regards the cement industry, I understand various companies and bodies have been in negotiation with this Government, and I hope cement industry will bring about a revolution in this province, provided the Government pays a little heed.

Sir, it is a matter of general policy and I would ask the industry department of the province to endeavour to make the province, self-supporting, really autonomous in this respect and not dependent on any other province or outside world. This should be the first duty of the Government. Their second duty would be to see whether they can produce things which could be exported to the different provinces of India. Sir, there they should not stop. Exports into other Provinces in India will bring money from different provinces; it would not add to the Indian national wealth. Sir, Indian national wealth must be increased. It must be the Herculean imagination of a real provincial autonomous responsible Government to bring money from foreign countries. It should be the ideal that we would not be content by putting our money from one pocket into another—from one province of India to another. I shall be content when I shall be able to produce things which will be exported to different countries of the world. I suggest it to this Government for their serious consideration whether that should not be their ideal. I hope my suggestions will be acceptable to the Government and I do not think there is anything of utopia in it for Assam. There are vast resources in Assam in minerals, botanical and geological spheres for industrial development of the province and in this respect it excels not only the whole of India but perhaps of many other foreign countries. Therefore, Sir, that will be no utopia. It will be a practical proposition.

SRIJUT RAJENDRA NATH BARUA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would not take long time of the House. I would like to throw a practical suggestion to what my friend Srijut Lakheswar Barua has said just now. I want to combine our venerable heads, I mean, the Education Minister with the youngest member of the Treasury Bench, I mean, the Minister for Industry.

In the matter of spinning, I think there is great room for development in this industry. If we introduce spinning on a compulsory basis in all the primary schools, of Assam, of which, I believe, the number will not be less than 5 thousand, then I think this spinning will prove to be of great impetus. Our hand loom industry which is dying out will have a chance for revival.

I speak of another set of cottage industries of Assam, which my friend Srijut Jogendra Nath Barua has referred to, I mean, bell metal, soap making and other small industries. If these industries could be protected by some duty, they will be able to stand the competition that has been going on from outside India.

These are the two suggestions I shall make and my friend Babu Dakshina Ranjan Gupta Chaudhuri will refer to sugar industry and I think he wants to take his chance.

BABU DAKSHINA RANJAN GUPTA GHAUDHURI: Sir, I am not going to detain the House long. I shall only refer to the sugar Industry. In 1920 the Sugar Committee recommended that there should be an expert committee with an expert from the Public Works Department and expert businessmen. It was decided that that Committee should recommend on the possibility of establishing a sugar factory in the province of Assam. I find, Sir, nothing has yet been done. The provincial Government has got money up to the extent of Rs.48,000 from the Government of India for the development of sugar industry. Another aspect of the question is this that the experimental farm at Jorhat should look to the needs of the people who are cultivating sugarcane. I am reading an extract from the report of the Director of Agriculture of this province. It is reported that there were some inquiries on the open pan system of sugar industry but Government pleaded that for want of experts they could not take up the matter in hand. Again, Sir, in the annual report the Director of Agriculture says that "considering the value and need of chemical section specially in the development of the cultivation of sugarcane it is time enough to consider the reorganisation of the Chemical section by appointing a Chemist, which post has been kept in abeyance for a long time. From this, Sir, it is apparent that sugar industry could not properly develop for want of Experts and properly planned schemes. I understand, Sir, several scholarships are given by this Government and on the recommendation of this Government some students were admitted free of fees at the Cawnpore Technological Institute. Now they have come back as trained and I hope Government will now see their way to organise sugar industry with the help of those Experts who have returned after training.

MR. JOBANG. D. MARAK: Sir, I like to put before the House my grievances. There was a Weaving Institute which was established in token of the good services rendered by the 69th and 84th Garo Labour companies who went to France during the Great War. But, Sir, this Institution has been abolished long ago and nothing has been given in its place up-to-now. The late, Sir Beatson Bell, the last Chief Commissioner of Assam and the first Governor of Assam, expressed his promise. He said "I realise that it will cost much money to improve the education in Garo Hills but I do not grudge it because the Garos played very well in the Great War", Sir, he gave promise for industrial education and literary education. People thought that something were going to be done when he made a promise but Sir, nothing has yet been done in regard to his promise. So, I hope the Hon'ble Minister will please make an inquiry into this matter why the Weaving Institution was abolished which was established in view of the services rendered by the Garos to His Majesty's Government during the Great War.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Sir, we are practically coming to the end of our debates in reference to grants. We have only one more day for it. So I want to take this opportunity to speak a few words in connection with this motion which is before the House just now, in respect of certain aspersions that have been cast by the hon. leader of the group that is on my left.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I think the hon. member means Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhury but he should not make any direct attack on any hon. member.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Certainly not, Sir. We take him and his party to be a part of the opposition. I meant Sir, my hon. friend Mr. Hockenull. I found as if there was some insinuation in his speech, about the conduct of our party.

He was trying to show that in the matters of constructive work also we were trying to make it a part of party-politics. That, Sir, I unconditionally repudiate. I had made it very clear in my general speech that in all matters of constructive works particularly in reference to those affecting the welfare of the masses we will not be obstructive. But there is always difference in view points. Our view point of things is distinctly different from the view point that has been taken up by the Ministry and certain other sections of the House in regard to general matters of administration. Our view point is that we should not be top-heavy in our administration and whatever it is possible to retrench, we should retrench as much as possible and that more money should be made available for field work. Wherever the work is suffering for field work, we should lay more stress on the necessity of work in the field rather than on supervision. Secondly, Sir, the spirit of supervision, we have also tried to criticise. Our view point of things is that we must import into service a spirit of service of humanity. General criticism has been made by the members of our party. The main trend of our criticisms is that the officers do not feel as much for the men in the village as they should do. We feel, Sir, that if the spirit of service is brought into their administration, the whole tone of the administration will change. We appeal to the Hon'ble Ministers, we appeal to the Officers that are working under the Ministers to give special attention to that aspect of the question, because we believe, Sir, that if that spirit is brought into the service then we shall not have much reason to complain.

Thirdly, Sir, I feel that, I am not legally entitled to give any suggestion for appropriation of the money which we have saved by cuts, which were indeed very unpalatable to the Ministry; but if I am permitted to make any suggestion regarding the appropriation of that money, I would always say that this particular subject with which we are discussing just now should be the recipient of some portions of the money saved by the cuts.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The hon. member is making reference to cut.

SRIJUT GOPINATH BARDOLOI: No, Sir, I am referring to the total amount that we have got by cuts. What I mean is that the whole amount of money.

But if I am permitted to do so, I am suggesting that the whole amount should be utilised for the good of the masses, and can be best utilised, as I said, in furthering cottage industries, in giving money for rural water-supply, rural education, and in matters like these. I desire further that this money should also be appropriated, in matters of agriculture. I repeat again, Sir, that if the spirit of service, about which I was talking, can be brought into our administration, we feel that "the sturdy and self-respecting peasantry," which my hon. friend Mr. Hockenull, wanted to develop will be developed very soon.

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL: Sir, if any remarks that I have made...

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: Is it personal explanation?

MR. F. W. HOCKENHULL: Yes, Sir, as a personal explanation. If any remarks that I have made on the floor of this House, which may have been construed as being directed to any particular side of the House, I beg to ask the House to use its own judgment in the matter. In the remarks I made this afternoon I was very careful to include all sections of

the House. Moreover, Sir, an examination of the list of cut motions, which has been placed before us, will show conclusively that the remarks I made apply to every side of the House. I would invite notice, Sir, that this group has particularly not tabled any cut motion; but that does not imply that we are satisfied either with policy or progress. We have also in the spirit of service, which the hon. Leader of the Congress Party has just spoken of, shown time after time in our speeches that we too are not behindhand with any party in the House in our desire to get a correct focus on Government policy with a view to service of the kind which has been adumbrated in this House. We, not less than any party, desire the welfare of this province, 90 per cent. of whose population are agriculturists, by the methods we have spoken of. We are not at all out to criticise one party or the other. What we do ask is whether our policy, directed towards improvement has contributed anything to the welfare of the people better than those large cuts. If, Sir, we have focussed attention to improvements in that spirit of service, we feel that at least we have contributed something to this Budget Session.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Sir, I rise to endorse the remarks that have been made by my friend on the right, Maulavi Munawwar Ali. He has asked for a detailed survey of the cottage industries of this province. I find from the Administration Report that Government have up till now done nothing towards rejuvenation of these cottage industries. They have devoted their energies only to the furtherance of two industries, viz., handloom weaving and sericulture. The Director in his report admits that "besides these, there are various cottage industries in the province but in the absence of a detailed survey, it is not possible to give their full particulars". He is not aware of the full particulars even. Then he says "some details with regard to a few of them collected by the officers of the Department are given below". Then he gives some details about the bell-metal work, brass work, iron industries, washing soaps, manufacture of steel trunks, shoe factories, pottery, mat-making, cane baskets and wicker work, manufacture of umbrellas, carpentry workshops, gold and silver works, combs, toys, printing presses, manufacture of ink, chemical works, rice and oil mills, hosiery and sugar industry.

I find, Sir, that in many of these industries he had to admit that the industries are in a decayed condition, and they are in the hands of foreigners. Particularly he says in connection with the manufacture of steel trunks that "the workers are still mostly outsiders". Then in Shoe Industry "Assam affords a good field for tanning industry but none has so far taken to it". Even in pottery he says "the market has been captured by outsiders". I think one hon. member referred to that. In the manufacture of umbrellas he says "this business is slowly going down through to the establishment of new rival concerns". In gold and silver works, he says "those who have taken to improved methods and up-to-date designs are mostly foreigners". In the combs he says "the workers belong to Dacca". In printing presses he has to admit "there are about 23 printing presses in the province", but "most of them suffer for want of sufficient orders". Then, again, as regards Hosiery, he says "the business is mostly in the hands of foreigners and they are making socks, stockings and mufflers".

So I want to request Government that a detailed survey of these cottage industries be made and serious efforts be made to encourage the industries, so that the indigenous people may take to them.

SRIJUT BHUBAN CHANDRA GOGOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am standing to say a few words about the bell-metal industry, which has been spoken by my hon. friends.

This bell-metal work may be said to be a special feature of Assam, and the main thing that this metal is a speciality of this province. This bell-metal is nowhere to be found outside Assam. Of course there is bell-metal in other provinces, but that bell-metal does not correspond with ours. Our bell-metal has a speciality; it has a glaze like silver which cannot be found in the bell-metal of other provinces. In this respect Mr. Roberts, the then Director of Public Instruction of Assam, once paid a visit to my institution at Sibsagar. He inspected the bell-metal of my institution, and he came to the opinion that this bell-metal of Assam possesses a speciality. Now, Sir, although we have got much of the bell-metal work here, this metal is not available in the market. The bell-metal work that is now manufactured is manufactured out of the broken cups and other dishes. So I think, Sir, it is one of the most important duties of this Department to find out what is the recipe of this bell-metal and further I would like to say that there is ample field for ironwork also. Whoever has been to the town of Sibsagar has seen the cannon on the side of the Sibsagar tank, and it is admitted that these cannon are made of cast-iron, and naturally the point arises whether at that time, some hundred years ago, Assam possessed such a high power furnace like Tata's, or else how they could melt the ore. People say that there was a very simple process for it—that the iron is melted by the fire of reeds. This is a thing which the Department should enquire into, as we have ample iron in the province. Perhaps hon. members have heard of Tiru Pathar, where there is ample of iron still to be found, and during the time of the Ahom Rajas cannon and many other things were made out of this iron.

Now, there is another thing to be considered regarding the process of making bricks. These bricks were as strong as stone. It is for the Industrial Department to see how these bricks were made.

Now, Sir, we have enough of raw material in this province and yet the people of the province are starving. Although we have enough raw material we have no men to work these things. And, Sir, the solution lies in imbuing a spirit of industry in the people the mere allotment of small sum of money here and there will not do (*hear! hear!*) it will not solve the problem, unless the spirit of industry is imbibed in the minds of the people. As in Japan, every school must be combined with industrial and manual training here also, every primary school must be imparted manual and industrial training. And so I think the Education Department and the Industry Department should combine on these lines. Sir, I have seen many students from the Gauhati Weaving School and from the Jorhat Technical School and I can boldly say without fear of contradiction that most of them after receiving their training are sitting idle. Why? because they did not go to these institutions for the love of that art, but they went there in the hope of getting a job in the Government Department. They have no love for the trade, and unless a love can be created for an art or trade, one cannot have any interest in these. So the spirit of industry must be imbibed in the minds of the young men when they are young for once the moment of receiving that idea is past that interest is gone for ever. So I say that if hon. members are anxious to see the country flourish, inspire that love of art in the minds of young men, imbibe that spirit of industry, and to do these the Department of Education and the Department of Industries should combine.

SRIJUT KRISHNA NATH SARMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think it was in 1921 that a census was taken and it was found that there were more than 4 lakhs of handlooms in the province. In Assam it is a special feature

that every household has got one or more handlooms in the family, and it is a very simple and cheap device. It is a peculiar feature that all Assamese women are expert spinners and weavers in their own homes. I will here mention a statement made by Srijut Rajendra Prasad, *ex-President* of the Congress "It is a peculiar feature of Assam that almost every household, including those of gentlemen and middle class people, has a handloom of its own. There is hardly any girl or grown up female who does not know and practise the art of spinning and weaving. In well-to-do families weaving is done of silk and less frequently of cotton yarn for family use. In poorer families it is done as a source of income. This habit is inborn with Assamese women. To produce handspin and handwoven cloths on self-spinning method is no where practicable as in Assam. Distribution of cotton and a ready market for the produce will create a flow of handwoven and handspin cloths from thousands of Assamese women who are profoundly expert weavers and spinners. There is a vast possibilities of *khaddar* production in Assam. These handlooms produce annually 22½ million yards of cloths. The only question is the supply of cotton. If the Government make it a point to supply cotton to these spinners and weavers the product will be more than double or treble, and it will be a great impetus to the handloom industry and the unemployment problem of the province will be solved to a certain extent. So for the encouragement of this industry instead of having parties of peripatetic instructors which is an insult to our woman-hood who are themselves expert spinners and weavers, if that amount is spent to supply cotton to the poor spinners and weavers more benefit will be derived.

With these few words I support the motion.

MR. C. GOLDSMITH: Sir, the motion is to criticise the general policy of the department. We are thankful to the hon. mover because he has brought this motion for discussion. We would have been more thankful if it were said that the object of the motion was to raise a discussion on the general policy of the department. As it is, it is for criticising Government for not encouraging and aiding the cottage industries of the province.

Coming to the question of industries we must remember at the outset that India is an agricultural country dominantly and Assam is particularly so. Therefore if Assam has not developed in industries, it is not the fault of her sons, because if it is an agricultural country, then surely it should look up to agriculture mainly. The question of industries is only a question of the other day. A world outlook and the economic condition of the world has changed the mind of India to-day and therefore we are taking to improvement of industries. There are two currents of thought in India now. One is to advance the progress of the cottage industries and the other is to make the provincial industries compete with the world markets. One hon. member has said that we want to export materials to the outside world. We should not merely send to the outside world raw materials, but finished products. As regards cottage industries, the name of Mahatma Gandhi has been referred to. I feel it an honour to take his name now. He has advocated the policy of pushing on and improving cottage industries. I think three-fourths of the arguments advanced are in his favour. But the other section wants the development of big industries. Now, this question has to be thrashed out, namely, whether India wants to be an industrial country competing with the world markets or a self-contained country complete in itself and not trying to compete with the outside world.

Coming to the question of cottage industries, innumerable industries have been mentioned by hon. members. The ministry ought to be thankful for these suggestions. But the question is the general policy. When we

consider the very large number of cottage industries, it will be difficult for the ministry or any officer of the Government to come to a conclusion as to what industries to take up and what to give up. Therefore there must be a settled policy. Then comes the disposal of the products of these industries. Markets must be opened for these products both in Assam and outside.

Therefore I say that a general policy is necessary in this matter. But criticising the ministry for this reason is not sound, although to raise a discussion on the point is no doubt good, for they have taken over charge only recently and have not had sufficient time to formulate their plans.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: I hope there will be only one reply.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: There will be only one reply, Sir.

It appears that there are two schools of thought among the hon. speakers who have addressed this House on this cut motion. The conception of the one is titanic.

SRIJUT MAHI CHANDRA BORA: On a point of information, Sir. The other day you ruled that the particular Minister concerned with the motion should reply. The speeches have been made in English and the Hon'ble Minister in charge of this Department has, we think, been able to follow the proceedings fully. We therefore expect that he should reply.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: But the Hon'ble Chief Minister is also competent to reply.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAIYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Sir, I have not only jurisdiction to reply, but it will also be no disparagement to the Hon'ble Minister for Industries to say that I have got more experience of this department, of five years as against five months of his. One school of thought would like Assam to start big scale industries. As I said, the conception is titanic and a giant would be required to put it into action — a giant, financially and a giant industrially. I will leave aside the remarks of hon. members of this line of thought, and on account of shortness of time confine myself to the more modest one of helping cottage industries, which, I believe, was the hon. mover's intention to draw the pointed attention of this House, by his cut motion.

I agree, Sir, with those hon. speakers who have said that the main cottage industry of Assam, especially of Assam Valley, is weaving. Some of them have also added spinning with it. Sir, in 1921 when the great spinning movement was started by Mahatma Gandhi, the then Hon'ble Minister, the late Rai Bahadur Ghanashyam Barua, made a calculation of the amount that a worker on spinning only will derive daily. I remember to have read that he calculated that the daily income on spinning would be only 6 pice. (*One hon. member*: Supplementary income) We therefore concentrated our attention on weaving. My hon. friend, Sriyut Krishna Nath Sarma, has given the figures. In 1921 there were 4 lakhs of *deshi* looms. But the Assam Government introduced the fly-shuttle looms through our schools and peripatetic weaving parties. Those who are interested in the subject may be surprised to know that the fly-shuttle loom makes two and a half times more cloth than the ordinary fixed shuttle. Therefore, Sir, it will not be proper to say that the fly-shuttle loom introduced by the department is not adding to the national wealth and to that of the weavers. My hon. friend has said that, if Government would only provide the cotton, then the spinners would convert the cotton into yarn which the weavers can convert into manufactured cloth. Sir, we have tried the system of introducing yarn through the means of weavers' co-operative

associations. If my hon. friend would organise such co-operative associations of weavers or even spinners, we will see whether the suggestion can be carried into effect. Sir, it appears sometimes that great minds and also small minds think alike. I am referring, Sir, to the suggestions made by my hon. friends of the block opposite about the various lines on which cottage industries should be developed. We the smaller minds on this side also have moved on the same lines. We have already asked the Director of Industries to give us a list on which we should concentrate. And that list already contains the subjects of pottery, soap, umbrella-handle making, etc., and I have also added tanning. (*One hon. member*: Bell-metal is not included) Bell-metal, Sir, is already included. As regards tanning, Sir, the House may be surprised to know that the very crude system of curing that is now applied in Assam by dealer fetches a very small price for our skins and hides. With a little bit of preliminary tanning these are sold in Calcutta by the weight. But by the present crude method of tanning our hides are sold by pieces. Thereby our dealers and *muchis* lose a great amount. Luckily for us, the other day we got a scheme from a Sylhetti Muhammadan young man who was sent by this department to the Chrome Leather Tanning Institute, Madras.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister's time is up.

THE HON'BLE MAULAVI SAYID SIR MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I want one minute more, Sir. This is an important subject.

This gentleman has now joined a practical manufacturer in Ahmadabad. From there, as a patriotic son, he addressed me a letter stating how to introduce very economic but effective method of tanning which will give great impetus to our cottage industries. Many gentlemen have suggested that Government should start industries, but we have got the experience of bigger and richer provinces and we are fighting shy. Madras started a chrome leather factory and Madras's income is over 18 crores. They failed to run the concern successfully and this had to go to a private firm.

I thank my hon. friend the leader of the opposition for his helpful suggestion that he will co-operate with us in all nation-building schemes. I can assure him on behalf of the Council of Ministers that we are also alive to the same ideal—the ideal of service and humanity. I hope that the great services that are operating in this province will be imbued with the same spirit in the future.

The motion was not put to vote for want of time.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The motion before the House is that a sum not exceeding Rs. 2,36,800 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the "Industries Department".

The motion was carried.

GRANT No. 11

28.—JAILS AND CONVICT SETTLEMENTS

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: On the recommendation of His Excellency the Governor of Assam, I beg, Sir, to move that a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,59,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the head "28.—Jails and Convict Settlements".

SRIJUT PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 1,500 under Grant No. 11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Officers, Detailed head—Superintendents, Allowances, at page 84 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 10.

In bringing this motion my intention is to criticise the Government for their conduct in the matter of revising the jail rules which they have been continuing from the days of old. After the memorable hunger strike of Babu Jatindra Nath Das much water has flown down the Brahmaputra and much time has been wasted in revising the rules. Sir, I have had the experience of being confined in the jail for 3 years and I have had acquired some amount of knowledge as to how the administration is conducted within the jails. In spite of all the rules being there the jail staff including the Superintendent have been observing the rules more by breach than by observance. Rule 407 of the Jail Manual quite clearly lays down that the intention of the Government appears to be, at least in the face of it, to make the jails of the type we want. The main object of prison labour should be the reformation of the convicts. If that be the intention of the authorities concerned, I consider that under the changed circumstances and under the changed situation it is high time that some provisions should be included in the Jail Manual or for the matter of that it should be revised to suit the intention adumbrated in rule 407. Sir, in this connection I shall bring a few instances why the Manual requires revision. At the outset I must say that if the intention is to reform the prisoners it is highly necessary that the prisoners should be classified in divisions according to the recommendations made in the rules. As regards segregation of prisoners section 27 clearly says that prisoners of one class should be kept aloof from the prisoners of another class, but in practice this has been violated. On some previous occasions I had seen as well as I had the occasion to see the other day in the Nowgong jail when I visited it with the permission of the Hon'ble Minister that rule 27 of the present Manual has not been observed. I found that some juvenile prisoners were allowed to mix with ordinary prisoners. There are two classes of prisoners, viz, (A) and (B), and all those prisoners who have been condemned as habitual offenders are called (B) class prisoners and others are (A) class prisoners. As regards the classification for treatment there are prisoners in A, B, & C divisions and according to the conduct and antecedents of the prisoner himself he is placed in one of these divisions.

Now, Sir, my intention is that B class prisoners should be kept entirely aloof from the A class because the former are habitual offenders and considered to be dangers to the society. They should be kept absolutely separate from other prisoners.

Next, Sir, as regards juvenile offenders particularly, although the rule is clear in the Manual, still I find that all these are allowed to mix with ordinary prisoners, whether A class or B class. So, Sir, although the intention of the Act might have been to reform the prisoners this has not been observed in practice. The present Government have not cared to introduce any reform, and for the matter of that, Sir, the other day only, in answer to a question regarding the treatment of juvenile prisoners, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails told us that certain privileges were really allowed to juvenile prisoners. In fact, I do not find a single event when privilege is allowed to any of the juvenile prisoners. Games are not allowed, nor are they allowed books. In view of this I think the rules require revision as regards classification and also as regards labour. There are 9 hours of labour within the jail and there

is only one hour for lunch during midday, after which they are to go to work under all circumstances, whether the rains or the burning sun. As regards diet I would say that in a particular jail where I paid a surprise visit, I found worse qualities of diet given to prisoners. I know the real jail tactics. On that particular occasion I asked the Jailer to give me another day in which all the prisoners would be present. Accordingly the Jailer and the Superintendent were kind enough to fix a day. On that particular day I found excellent diet. Sir, that was my experience. When I was in jail when a particular visitor gave information that he would visit the jail or on a particular day when the District Magistrate or any other officer visited the jail, then the diet was excellent.

Now, Sir, as regards diet of other prisoners also I think some improvement is necessary.

There are some more privileges as regards newspapers as suggested in my question. Prisoners are given the "Times of Assam" only whether they are A Division or B Division prisoners.

Regarding holidays in jail, I want to impress upon the House that at one time we wanted permission to observe the Puja Asthami. It was obtained at great cost when some of our fellow prisoners had undergone some hunger-strikes. In this respect the Rules require revision.

As regards interview and letters more latitude should be given. The other day I found a rule in the Jail Manual that a visitor is allowed to make remarks in the visitor's book. That particular day when I visited the Nowgong Jail I was told that I was not allowed under Rules to make any remark on the book.

Regarding treatment and other things I should have liked to deal at length but for that much time is required.

There is one other thing which I want to impress upon you, and that is that there must be a separate class or division for the political prisoners in the province. In the United Provinces they have referred the whole matter to a Committee for revising the whole manual.

There is one other thing which I must request the House to consider. Personally I think, something of the sort of wages should be introduced so that those who behave properly may earn some sort of an income for their livelihood after they get out of the jail.

As regards under-trials, the other day I found a man who was in Jail for three months under section 109 of the Criminal Procedure Code. I particularly know this case. The man was hauled up for suspected murder. Subsequently the police possibly found that there was not sufficient proof against him. So they recommended his detention under section 109 of the Criminal Procedure Code. I found that this man was detained for more than three months, according to his ticket. So, Sir, it is unnecessary expenditure to detain prisoners under section 109 for such a long time.

As regards punishments to prisoners, I think Government is without any sense of humanity encouraging heavy punishments on prisoners. I think the jail remission system also requires a revision. Inhuman punishments are inflicted and that always depends on the sweet will of the Jailer and his Assistants to inflict any sort of punishment they like.

As regards religious instructors, I think it is unnecessary. If simply moral instruction should be given this might be encouraged. But I think it is absolutely unnecessary because we know what it is when we happened to be in jail. I know orthodox people are sent in as instructors. He reads some lines from the Scripture, but no one cares to hear this. I think money is wasted there.

(The motion was put by the Hon'ble Speaker.)

BABU HARENDRA NARAYAN CHAUDHURI: Sir, the other day, the Minister in charge of Jails, when replying to Budget discussion paid some complimentary remarks on the members of this side of the House, because, Sir, the Congress members did not say anything regarding jail in their budget discussion. Well, Sir, in the list of cut motions you will see that out of 16, thirteen are tabled from this side of the House. Well, Sir, we were bidding time, and I can assure the Hon'ble Minister that we did not allow any opportunity to go by unnoticed and we tabled our motions in order to criticise the jail administration.

I can assure the House that I am not one of those fortunate civil disobedience prisoners who went to jail in 1930, 1932 and were guests of His Majesty's prison. When the Congress boycotted many British things I also boycotted the British jail. I had an opportunity to go inside the Sylhet Jail on the 24th, 26th and 28th July last, being appointed a visitor by the Chief Secretary. I wish to narrate a few things that I saw there. The first thing that struck me was the use of Ghani system. I cannot conceive, Sir, that in the 20th century this great monstrous system still exists. Human beings are made tools and beasts of burden to extract oil which can well be done by beasts. Second thing is diet given to prisoners in Jails. I myself partook of the diet. The 'dal' was somewhat good, I must say, but the curry was worse than the 'pachan' of a village Kaviraj. I request the hon. members to go to any particular jail and taste the diet. As regards schools in jails I request the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails to see that the schools in Jails are transferred to Education Department. Another suggestion is to replace the iron pots by aluminium or brass utensils. There is another bad system which is very embarrassing I mean, the system of calling of prisoners by night watchmen. I think, it has been abolished in Bengal. One most important thing which I wish to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister in charge is the situation of T. B. Hospital at Sylhet. Sir, the Jail is in the heart of the town and the T. B. Hospital is there. For the welfare of the health of the town, this must be removed. Sir, when the present Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails was adorning the opposition bench in 1929, he brought a resolution perhaps on the 5th March, 1929 for the introduction of Khaddar uniform for the Jail warders. Now that he has got an opportunity, I request him to translate his words into action. With these few words, I support the cut motion, Sir.

MAULAVI ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: Of course, I confess like the hon. mover of this motion, I have not the more privilege of personal experience of the jail life but I like to make a few observations as regards the treatment meted out to the under-trial prisoners from my experience as a member of the bar. Only in one or two cases special treatment is accorded to them otherwise the under-trial prisoners are taken out of jails at 9 a. m. and they are brought back to jails at about 5 p. m., and some times even at 6 p. m. Occasionally it so happens that they do not even get their diet at night. During the whole day, they are not given any tiffin. There is another important point to which I wish to draw the pointed attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails is that the under-trial prisoners find great difficulty in giving proper instructions to their lawyers. Whenever any lawyer goes to get proper instruction from the under-trial prisoners, they are required to consult the prisoners in presence of jailers or some other warders and as a result the prisoners cannot open out their mind to

their lawyers. So, I suggest that when lawyers go there to have a consultation with the under-trial prisoners, there should not be anybody else in presence of them to hear the talk that is going on between the client and the lawyer. This consultation should be confidential and nobody should hear it.

Then I come to the question of religious instructors. I do not know what my friend means when he says that the prisoners must be given moral training than religious training. As far as I understand, moral training is a comprehensive term. Religious training will do some good to them and at the same time will improve the morality of the prisoners. Another most curious thing so far as the Government of Assam is concerned is that the retired officials are always given preference in the appointment than anybody else. I think, Sir, that if the prisoners are to be given proper training then the people who have got some knowledge of criminal psychology should be given preference than others. Persons who have the training in criminal psychology must be given preference over others. Further I find, Sir, at page 44 of the Report of the Jail Administration of 1936 that 66 per cent. of the prisoners are between the age of 20 to 30 and that per cent. of convicts come from agriculturists. Such being the case, they should, I think, be given training in agriculture, so that when they go back home they may become better agriculturists. For want of proper facilities for training in agriculture they cannot do well in their life in agriculture. So, I think, proper facilities should be given to them for having some improved idea about agriculture. Moreover, Sir, over 97 per cent. of these convicts are illiterate. As my hon. friend Mr. Chaudhuri has suggested, I think, some schools should be started in the jails so that at night time the prisoners may get some elementary training of education.

Then I come to the question of the supply of mosquito curtains to these unfortunate prisoners. I understand, Sir, that a circular was issued to the jail authorities for regular supply of mosquito curtains to the prisoners particularly in towns, but I find that it is observed more in breach than in observance. So, on this point I wish to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister specially in regard to Sylhet jail which is notorious for mosquitoes. I also find, Sir, that the number of detention of under-trial prisoners are increasing.

It should be the duty of the Government to direct the Magistrates to finish early the case of those under-trial prisoners.

Before taking my seat, Sir, I must congratulate the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails that just immediately after taking over office he has given proper facilities to certain Members of the Legislative Assembly to visit the jails.

[A voice from Congress Bench]—To all members of the Legislative Assembly.

MAULAVI ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: No, Sir, he has taken particular care to give that facility to that group. I think the introduction of this principle will bring a radical change in the jail administration. Further he is going to introduce a Bill in this session, which is placed on our table, to release those prisoners who show good conduct during their confinement in prison. These two things will be welcome and they will receive whole-hearted support from every side of the House. Of course, however skilful one may be he cannot make a total change of things which are continuing for years together.

Lastly, I only hope that certain observations that I have made will be taken into consideration.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, rising as I do to speak on the motion, I feel that jails cannot be a bed of roses. On the other hand I should say that the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Jails being for some time a jail-goer himself is thoroughly acquainted with the hardships and tribulation of jail life. One thing.....

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER:—The hon. member will please remember that the Chair has got a right to hear him (*laughter*).

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: I wish I could be louder, Sir. One thing that I want to point out to the Hon'ble Minister in charge—I do not know his religious susceptibilities—that arrangement for prayers in jails has been particularly ignored. That is a fact which I feel ought to engage the serious consideration of the Minister in charge.

The other thing that I want to say, Sir, is the inhuman labour which a prisoner has got to undergo in point of *ghani* labour, which is crude, antiquated, and for the matter of that—barbarous. As I am speaking, my friend Mr. Hockenull, who is sitting before me, questions, “what is a *Ghani* Labour”? That will give us an indication, Sir, that this barbarous method of punishment is unknown in England. We should try to advance in all possible manner in matters of prison reforms.

The other thing that I want to point out is the supply of mosquito curtains in jails. Assam is mainly a malarial place. No one can like that convicts should suffer from malaria in jails and come out with malarial germs, and spread them to their household. One thing that my hon. friend Mr. Purna Chandra Sarma wanted to point out by his cut motion is about the education of the juvenile prisoners in the jail. Juvenile prisoners ought not to be treated in the same manner as the elders. They should be properly trained so that they can be of use to society when they come back from jails.

Now, Sir, about A division and B division prisoners, a library ought to be provided and a sufficient number of good newspapers should be supplied to them, in order to keep them in touch with outside world.

With these few words I beg to draw attention of the Hon'ble Minister in charge to these points.

MR. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, I rise to speak a few words about jails. I think, Sir, that some of the jails are good, while others are bad. I learnt from one Garo convict, who had been twice in jail—once for six months' rigorous imprisonment and again for 2 years and 6 months' rigorous imprisonment—that during the last period he had been in Gauhati jail. After his return from that jail he was found to be very very useful man in making beautiful chairs, fans, bedsteads and many other things, and at the same time a very good carpenter. Now, in the jails he was taught to earn his livelihood as a carpenter. Another boy related another story. That boy was brought up by me. When I went to the Garo Hills with Mr. Josing Rynjah, Extra Assistant Commissioner, to institute an enquiry for the distribution of scarcity loans one Garo boy was brought to us, because his parents died on starvation. That boy had stolen a piece of motor tyre tube, and for that he had been convicted to 1 year 6 months' rigorous imprisonment. I thought that this punishment was a very very severe one, but after all the boy turned out to be a very useful one. He was illiterate, but came out from jail as literate, and was able to read and write.

MR. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Why not send every body to jail?

MR. JOBANG D. MARAK:—It is not the case with every body. The boy was for 6 months in the Shillong jail and for some months in the Gauhati jail. He was working half an hour every morning; some sort of work he was doing. After his return from jail he could read and write letters.

But there are bad points in jail too. One Laskar was convicted and he was in Gauhati jail for some time. His story was that the punishment was very very intolerable. The treatment he received was worse than that meted out in the Tura Jail. They were shut up in batches of 50 in very gloomy rooms, and they were not allowed to talk with each other. After the meals they were shut up there. But in Tura after the meals were finished, they could do some singing and they could also tell beautiful stories, and thereby could amuse themselves. But, Sir, there should be a Jail Manual, and the punishment in all jails should be equal. So the hon. mover has done very good in criticising the policy which is now in existence in the different jails because the punishment is not on an equal basis, and has also given some good suggestions. That reminds me that there was a Garo boy in the Gauhati jail and there he was very badly treated, because he was insubordinate. He was transferred to the Jorhat Jail, but that transfer was a blessing to him, he was not treated so badly there.

I think the hon. mover is right to criticise the policy of the Jail Department ; it should be looked into and set right.

MAULAVI MD. MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHOUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I endorse what has been said by my previous speakers. In supporting the motion, Sir, I am not going to repeat the arguments put forward by my friends. I want only to add a few words to what they have said. The Jail Manual lays down that convicts can be engaged as sweepers.....

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, may I interrupt for a moment ? The object of the motion was to point out defects in the Jail Manual. If the hon. member instead of showing the cause of departure would point out what particular rules in the Jail Manual have got to be revised we will look into the matter.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: That also has a connection with the rules that convicts should not be employed as sweepers and the rule should be altered.

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I wanted to know what particular rules in the Jail Manual want revision.

MAULAVI MD. MAQBUL HUSSAIN CHOUDHURY: The Hon'ble Minister in Charge of Jails I think has a happy memory of jail life, and he knows that the prisoners do not at all like the work of sweepers, but sometimes they are compelled to work as sweepers, and in return the Jail authorities give these convicts some concessions in the shape of larger quantity of food, more remission and exemption from other hard works of jail. I think, Sir, this practice should cease to continue. If the idea is that the conviction of a culprit is for the reformation of his life, then I think he should be engaged in such work which will help him to earn his livelihood outside the jail when he is released. By this I mean cane work, carpentry, etc. The work of sweeper can in no way help him in his future life, rather degrades him, and I think this practice should cease.

With these few words, Sir, I support the motion.

SRIJUT MAHADEV SARMA: সভাপতি ডঙৰীয়া, কাৰাগাৰ বিলাকৰ ভীষণতা আৰু তাৰ কঠোৰতা কমাবৰ কাৰণে যি মূলনীতি লৈ আমি আলোচনা কৰিছোঁ সেই মূলনীতি সম্পৰ্কে এটা নন্দেহ আমাৰ মনত উপস্থিত হয় যে কাৰাগাৰৰ ভীষণতা কমাই দি সমাজৰ দৃষ্টি অঙ্গ স্বৰূপ যিবিলাক মানুহক মানুহৰ সাধাৰণ স্বত্ব আৰু সুবিধা বিলাকৰ ওপৰত হস্তক্ষেপ কৰাত সমাজত যি বিঘ্ন আনা ঘটে তাৰ প্ৰতিবিধান স্বৰূপ এই শাস্তি বিলাক

কমালে সেই ধৰণৰ চুঠ মানুহ বিলাকক প্ৰশ্ন দিয়া হব নেকি ? কাৰাগাৰ বিলাক শাস্তি মূলক বিধানৰ পৰিবৰ্ত্তে সংশোধন মূলক বিধান কৰিবলৈ যাওঁতে আমি যিবিলাক প্ৰস্তাবৰ দ্বাৰা তাৰাভীষণতা কমাবৰ কাৰণে চেষ্টা কৰিছোঁ তাৰপৰা আমি কিমান দূৰলৈ যাব পাৰে সেই কথা আমাৰ মনত উপস্থিত হয় । এইটো কথা সকলোৰে জানে যে এনেকুৱা এটা দিন আছিল যেতিয়া দেশৰ শাসনবৰ্গই, দেশৰ শাস্তি ৰক্ষক সকলে কাৰাগাৰক ভীষণতাৰ কেন্দ্ৰস্থল কৰিবলৈ যাবতীয় চেষ্টা কৰিছিল । তেওঁ বিলাকৰ চেষ্টা আছিল কেনেকৈ আৰু কিমান পৰিমাণে কাৰাগাৰ বিলাকক ভীষণ আৰু কষ্ট দায়ক কৰি তুলিব পাৰে। তেওঁবিলাকে ভাবিছিল যে যদি এই কাৰাগাৰৰ প্ৰতি দেশৰ মানুহৰ ভয় থাকে তেনেহলে তেওঁবিলাকে চুঠ বা বেয়া কামৰ পৰা আঁতৰত থাকিব আৰু তাৰ দ্বাৰা সমাজৰ বেয়া অংশ পৰিশোধিত হব । কিন্তু আমি আমি এনেকুৱা দিনত উপস্থিত হৈছো যিটো সময়ত কাৰাগাৰক ঠিক তেনেদৰে নাচাই সেই কাৰাগাৰ বিলাকক শাস্তিমূলক বিধান নহৈ সংশোধন মূলক বিধান হিচাপে গ্ৰহণ কৰিবলৈ প্ৰগতি মূলক দাবী উপস্থিত হৈছে । আমি চাব লাগিব কিমান শাস্তি দিলে শাস্তি ৰক্ষাও পৰিব আৰু আনফালে মানুহৰ সাধাৰণ স্বভাৱক অধিকাৰে অব্যাহত ভাবে সমাজত চলি থাকিব পাৰিব । আমি এইটো কথা ভালকৈ বিবেচনা কৰিছোঁ আৰু আমি সাধাৰণ নিমিত্তে কাৰাগাৰৰ ভীষণতা যিমানলৈকে পৰা যায় কমাবৰ চেষ্টা কৰিছোঁ । ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা জেলৰ ভীষণতা বা কঠোৰতা কিমান কমিছে নাচালেও অস্বতঃ তাত যাতে মানুহে মানবোচিত বাহুহাৰ পাব পাৰে সেইটোলৈ বৰ্ত্তমান শাসকবৰ্গ আৰু শাস্তি ৰক্ষক বৰ্গৰ দৃষ্টি আকৰ্ষণ কৰিব খোজে । যদি আমাৰ কোনো বন্ধুৱে ভাবি লয় যে এওঁবিলাক কাৰাগাৰলৈ ভাবি দাস্তি থকা মানুহ তেওঁবিলাকে তেওঁবিলাকৰ ভবিষ্যত পথ পৰিষ্কাৰ কৰিবলৈ চেষ্টা কৰিছে তেনেহলে মই আশা কৰোঁ আমাৰ বন্ধুসকলে আমাক ভুল বুজাই হব । তাৰতৰ বৰ্ত্তমান বাজৰ্নৈতিক অবস্থাত সমাজৰ উচ্চ গণ্ডি কাৰাগাৰবানী হব লগাত পৰে । আমি আত্মবিধান লাভৰ পথত ভাবতীয় বাজৰ্নৈতিক সকলে কাৰাগাৰৰ কঠোৰতালৈ ভয় নকৰিলেও আমি এই প্ৰস্তাবৰ দ্বাৰা কাৰাগাৰ বিলাকক শাস্তিমূলক বিধান নহৈ সংশোধন মূলক বিধান কৰিবৰ চেষ্টা কৰিছোঁ । মই আশা কৰোঁ তাৰ দ্বাৰা সমাজৰ কোনো হানি নহব ।

MR. A. F. BENDALL: Sir, we are all in favour of prison reform. But I did not know that the prisoners were so ill off as has been depicted by some hon. members to-day. It may be remembered that in 1918 there was a very bad earthquake. It was particularly severe in that part of Sylhet where the jail is located. The then Superintendent of the Sylhet Jail told me that during the earthquake the walls surrounding the jail collapsed. On my asking him how many prisoners escaped, he said—when I called the roll immediately afterwards I found 50 more than I started with. Prisons were apparently not such bad places in those days.

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, I thank the hon. mover of this motion for giving the House an opportunity of discussing what reforms we can really bring to our jail administration. First of all he wanted to say something about the necessity of revision of

the Jail Manual. I followed his argument very carefully, but I could not find any instance where even according to him the rules seriously require revision, except in the case of the rule which provides for the imparting of religious instruction in jails.

Now, Sir, I do not think that any appreciable section of this House will agree with him when he says that religious instruction should be excluded from the jails. On the other hand, I find that there is an increasing demand for such instruction inside the jails. I hope the hon. member will seriously consider the matter before he would persuade us to change the Jail Manual Rule in this respect. The House will be glad to hear that, so far as religious instruction is concerned, Government incurs very little expenditure, because willing persons are found who volunteer to discharge this duty without any remuneration.

As regards prayer in jails, as far as my memory goes to the period when I was myself inside the jail, I found, Sir, that in all religious ceremonies among Muhammadans, such facilities were granted and there was even *Idgah* prayer inside the jail. I do not know, and I have received no complaint to the effect that the practice has been since discontinued.

MAULAVI MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: What about daily prayer?

THE HON'BLE SRIJUT ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: As regards daily prayer during day-time or even in the night, there is absolutely no restriction, so far as I could see during my sojourn. The Muhammadan prisoners had every opportunity to offer their prayers individually. If that system has been discontinued, or if there has been any interference in that respect, I shall take every care to prevent that.

As regards labour, Sir, it is contained in rule 407. The main object of prison labour should be the reformation of the prisoner. Hence purposeless and unproductive forms of labour should be avoided and every effort should be made to give the best available and up-to-date methods of labour, so as to enable the prisoner to earn a living wage on release. It would be of advantage both to the prisoner and the Jail that he should be of remunerative character.

As we have just heard from our friend from the Garo Hills, this rule is strictly carried out and advantage is gained by some prisoners. Added to that, Sir, we now find prisoners coming out of the jails who can both read and write letters and keep rudimentary accounts, whereas they knew nothing of the sort before they entered them. These Jail Rules, Sir, were revised in 1934 by that able and generous-minded Inspector General of Prisons, Colonel Cameron, whose name I mentioned the other day. It is he who introduced secular education in jails. He has very thoughtfully revised the Jail Manual and any one who reads it cannot fail to be struck by the human touch which pervades it. If in spite of that any hon member would like to point out to me any change which he considers necessary in regard to any rule, it will receive the Government's best consideration.

Sir, this Government is very anxious to have prison reforms and with that object in view they have granted special facilities to such members of this House as are taking particular interest in the reform of jails. Therefore a large number of members from the Congress group have been granted that facility. Government are prepared to give any member of this House every reasonable opportunity of studying the jail problem. For that purpose we have already, I think, granted permission to the President to the United Muslim Party, and we are anxious and willing to have the co-operation of any member of this House who desires to study the jail problem and for that purpose to give him all facilities.

As regards the important point of *ghani* labour, Government have already taken that matter in their hands, and very probably it will be decided at the very earliest opportunity, that is, when the next Government meeting takes place. As I have already said, the Hon'ble Chief Minister while he was in charge of Jails, had himself reduced the amount of tasks. Now we are seriously considering whether we should not abolish this system altogether. Only one difficulty stands in our way. It is admitted on all hands that the prisoners sentenced to rigorous imprisonment in the jails must have some sort of hard labour in the jails. There is a school of thought which considers that, if you altogether abolish the provision of punishment after a man is sentenced to imprisonment for a heinous offence, then the fear of punishment will totally disappear. That is one aspect of the question. Now we are considering whether we can substitute another form of labour which will to some extent meet the necessity of giving some sort of penal sentence.

Then as regards mosquito nets, the prison rule is that any prisoner—A and B class prisoners can bring their own nets—can bring it provided the jailer can improvise arrangements for hanging them. It is difficult to provide a large number of mosquito nets for prisoners. The rule has been relaxed to a great extent and it allows any men, who had outside the jail the use of nets, to bring it inside the jail also.

As regards the diet of under-trial prisoners, I admit that it is a some hardship on such prisoners who have to attend courts. Sometimes the courts sit till after 5 o'clock and when they come back they cannot get their food. We shall consider about arrangements for their food—whether to supply food during the time they are in court or to supply them with late meals.

As regards library, we already have libraries in some jails—I believe there is a library at Gauhati and also one at Tezpur. The number of books is not many, and if we introduce the system of circulating the books in the different jails, I think this want will be met.

As regards sweepers there is absolutely no complaint. The former rule was rule 503 of the old Assam Jail Manual which laid down that in jails sweepers shall be chosen from the *methor* or *hari* caste, also from the *chandal* or other low castes, if by the custom of the district they perform similar work when free, or from any caste if the prisoner volunteers to do the work. This rule of the old manual seems to have been split up into three rules in the revised manual now in force, *viz.*, 414, 423 and 424, which do not, however, specify the castes from which sweepers, should be selected. Superintendent has full discretion in allotting labour and is merely instructed to be reasonable as regards caste prejudice.

The actual practice prevailing in the province is that those who volunteer for conservancy work are only appointed as sweepers. Sir, speaking from my personal experience I at first resented very much that some of the jail convicts should be made to work as sweepers and I learnt from inquiries made that they had voluntarily taken up that work. But there are some amount of compulsion even in this voluntary work. The ordinary rations of jails which afterwards prove to be quite sufficient do not at first satisfy certain prisoners and in order to get these people to agree to this sort of work sometimes they are given more food and treated well and ultimately they agree to do that work. If this practice is stopped we shall have to employ large number of sweepers and I am considering whether that can be done or not.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The motion is that the provision of Rs. 1,500 under Grant No. 11, Major head—28.—Jails and Convict Settlements, Minor head—A.—District Jails, Sub-head—1.—Pay of Officers, Detailed head—Superintendents' allowances, at page 84 of the Budget, be reduced by Rs. 10.

KHAN SAHIB MAULAVI SAYIDUR RAHMAN: The other day you ruled out that after the time is up the motion cannot be put to vote.

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The reason of my ruling was that if I allowed the motion after discussion to be put to vote, it would be encroaching upon the time of other demands. So far as this motion is concerned we shall not encroach upon the time of any other demands. Of course I quite realise that I shall be encroaching upon the time of the tea party (*loud laughter*).

The cut motion was lost.

The original demand is:—

"That a sum not exceeding Rs.4,59,300 be granted to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending on the 31st March 1938, for the administration of the head "28—Jails and Convict Settlements".

The motion was adopted by the House.

SRIJUT KAMESWAR DAS: On a point of order, Sir. I find that there are several cut motions tabled for discussion to-day which could not be called for expiry of time limit and there are other motions which were not moved though called. The procedure in Bengal is that these motions find a place in the proceedings. May I request that the same procedure may be followed here?

THE HON'BLE THE SPEAKER: The practice is different elsewhere also. However I shall look into the matter and give a ruling afterwards.

The House stands adjourned till 2 P.M. on Friday, the 27th August 1937.

Shillong ;

The 2nd October 1937.

A. K. BARUA,

Secretary, Assam Legislative Assembly.