

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

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 11 A.M. on Thursday, the 14th March, 1946.

PRESENT

The Hon'ble Mr. Debeswar Sarmah, Speaker, in the Chair, the seven Hon'ble Ministers and 94 Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

Settlement of lands in the plains portion of Garo Hills

Maulavi Md. ABUL KASHEM asked :

1. (a) Will Government be pleased to state if there is any barrier against the settlement of lands in the plains portion of Garo Hills with the people of Goalpara District ?

(b) Are Government aware that the South Bank of the Dhubri Subdivision comprising Mankachar and South Salmara Thanas are subjected to ravages of flood almost every year ?

(c) Are Government aware that almost every year crops of those areas are damaged by flood ?

(d) If so, have Government done anything to ameliorate the condition of the people of the said areas ?

(e) If not, what steps, do they propose to take in near future ?

(f) Will Government be pleased to state whether they propose to settle lands in the plains portion of Garo Hills with the affected people of those areas ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

1. (a)—Under Section 4 of the Garo Hills Regulation of 1882 no non-Garo can acquire any interest in the land of the Garo Hills without the sanction of the Local Government or such officer as may be appointed by them. The Deputy Commissioner has since been authorised to exercise powers under this section in respect of the plains mauzas.

(b)—(e)—Government are aware that some of the areas mentioned is subject to flood. When flood causes damages relief by way of agricultural loan, suspension and remission of revenue and gratuitous relief is given when the Government deems necessary.

(f)—Government do not propose to change their policy for the interest of the tribal and backward Garo community. It is open to inhabitants of Goalpara District to apply to the Deputy Commissioner, Garo Hills, for permission to occupy land in his District.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I may state for the information of the hon. Members that they are not required to read out the questions which have already

been printed in the Question and Answer papers, but they are to put supplementary questions only if and when there are any.

Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: Sir, is it a fact that the plains portion of the Garo Hills District comprises some permanently settled areas belonging to the Karaibari and Gouripur zamindaries?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: I have no information, Sir, exactly on this point. But what I find in the record, as far as I have brought in connection with the question, is that the land within the Garo Hills District is governed by the special provision laid down in the Regulation.

Maulavi Md. ABUL KASHEM: Will Government please state whether they are proposing to give permanent relief instead of temporary one to the people affected by recurring floods?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: We have report on the last year's flood only and relief was given accordingly. There are no reports to show that there were floods every year. If there are anything to show that there were floods of the permanent nature we will surely consider about the matter.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: Will Government please institute an inquiry to know whether there were floods of the nature recurring every year?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: In a matter of this nature we receive reports from the District Officers concerned. So, if we receive reports from the District Officer concerned that there are frequent floods we will consider the matter. But up till now we have received no information from that District Officer on the matter of frequent floods in the areas stated.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: Can the Hon'ble Minister in charge of Revenue take the information from the Members of the Goalpara District who are present here that there were recurring floods almost every year?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: We will take all information that are supplied by the hon. Members as well as by our officers and we will take steps as circumstances justify.

*Khan Sahib Maulavi MUDABBIR HUSSAIN CHAUDHURI: From the answer it is clear that the settlement of the plains portion of the Garo Hills District is left to the discretion of the Deputy Commissioner, Goalpara. May I know from the Hon'ble Revenue Minister whether he would be pleased to make an enquiry whether any portion of the plains portion of the District can be settled with the people of Goalpara whose lands are always subjected to floods?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: The reply given does not say that the discretion lies with the Deputy Commissioner, Goalpara. But it is open to the inhabitants of Goalpara to apply to the Deputy Commissioner of Garo Hills for permission to occupy lands in his District.

Maulavi Md. ABUL KASHEM: Are Government aware that the non-cadastral lands are required by the Garos and not the cadastral lands?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: We have no information, Sir. But the point is that we are to safeguard the interests of the tribal people, and so only this procedure is adopted. So, until we find any reason to justify a change we do not propose to make any other Regulation.

All-Assam Ministerial Officers' Association

Maulavi Md. ABUL KASHEM asked :

2. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether they have recently received any representations from the All-Assam Ministerial Officers' Association regarding the extreme distress of the Ministerial Officers of the Province ?

(b) If so, whether Government propose to take accelerated steps to redress their grievances mentioned therein ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

2. (a) & (b)—Government have very recently received a number of resolutions passed by the last Conference of the All-Assam Ministerial Officers' Association. Most of them have been dealt with by Government and the rest are receiving consideration. Replies have been sent to the Association communicating Government's views on the resolutions which have so far been taken into consideration.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: Sir, it is stated in the answers to questions 2(a) and (b) that most of them have been dealt with by Government and the rest are receiving consideration. May we know in what way those resolutions have been dealt with ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: The answers imply to a large number of resolutions. So, if the hon. Member asks questions with regard to any definite resolution, I shall be in a position to reply. Otherwise, it is very difficult to reply in general.

Report of the Retrenchment Committee

Srijut KAMESWAR DAS asked :

3. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether they propose to take early action on the Report of the Retrenchment Committee which was appointed several years back ?

(b) If so, when and in what way ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

3. (a) & (b)—The examination of the Report of the Retrenchment Committee appointed in 1937, was completed in 1944, but in view of the high cost of living and increased activities brought about by the war, Government postponed the issue of orders till after the war and issued a Press Note to that effect, giving their reasons. The war has ended but economic conditions have not yet become stable. The present Government who had hardly any time to go through the Report propose to consider the recommendations as soon as possible with a view to coming to some decision regarding them.

*Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: Do Government propose to re-examine the Report again ?

*The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: The present Government had hardly any time to consider the recommendations with a view to coming to some decision regarding them.

*Srijut KAMESWAR DAS: The examination was completed in 1944 and the Report was submitted in 1937. So it has taken 7 years to complete the examination of the recommendations. May we know whether Government will take as long a period as this to re-examine the recommendations ?

*Speech not corrected.

*The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI: The hon. Member will appreciate that this seven years was not in our time. The present Government had no time to go through the Report, but propose to consider the recommendations as soon as possible. At this stage no further statement can be made on this.

Shari Bridge on the Sylhet-Shillong Road

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD asked:

4. Will Government be pleased to explain the cause which made it necessary to dismantle the Shari River Bridge on the Sylhet-Shillong Road, 11 miles below Dawki?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied:

4.—The dismantlement of the Shari Bridge resulted from damage to one of the piers below river bed. The cause of the damage is considered to be due to earthquake.

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD: Can the Hon'ble Minister please state, as it is over a year since the Bridge was dismantled, when it will be open for traffic?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I am sorry, Sir, I do not know the condition of this Bridge. I am unable to give the information required off hand.

*Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: May I know how many times this Bridge collapsed since its construction?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I have no information regarding that. I shall require notice of that question.

*Shri SATINDRA MOHAN DEV: Sir, is the same contractor doing the work of this Bridge?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I have no information.

*Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: The reply to the question is that the damage was caused due to earthquake. Is he sure of that?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: That is the technical expert's opinion, Sir.

*Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: Will it be repaired at all?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Of course, it will be repaired.

*Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Can we expect that it will be completed before the rains set in?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: The Department will do their very best to see that the work may be completed before the rains or as soon as possible.

*Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: When did the earthquake take place, Sir?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: I cannot say, Sir.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Is it not a fact, Sir, that the Bridge was damaged by earthquake on a previous occasion? Can the Hon'ble Minister name the expert who considered that this damage was caused by earthquake on this occasion also?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: We had to depend on the expert engineering advice. The answer is there. If the hon. Member questions the statement or opinion of the expert, it is a matter of opinion.

Longai River Bridge between Chandkhira and Patharkandi

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD asked :

5. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) The cause of the collapse of the Longai River Bridge on the main road between Chandkhira and Patharkandi ?

(b) Whether this was due to any person's negligence ?

(c) If so, whether any action is being taken against those responsible ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

5. (a)—The cause of the collapse of the Chandkhira Bridge over the Longai river was damage by flood when one line of steel piles was washed away as a result of floating trees and other flotsam that had piled against the pier during high flood.

(b)—The damage was not due to any person's negligence.

(c)—Does not arise.

Improvement of Latu-Hingajia Road

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA asked :

6. Will Government be pleased to state whether they propose to take up improvement of Latu-Hingajia Road to make it all year motorable ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

6.—Yes.

* Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: May I know, Sir, when it will be taken up?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: It will be taken up as soon as possible.

Maulavi MD. IDRIS ALI: Unless this Road is connected with Juri-Kulaura Road it is useless. Will the Hon'ble Minister please state whether it will be connected with Juri-Kulaura Road ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: That is a new question, Sir.

Re: Babu Biresch Chandra Misra

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA asked :

7. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Babu Biresch Chandra Misra was undergoing a term of imprisonment in the Sylhet Jail in 1941 ?

(b) When was he released and when was his release in usual course due ?

(c) What were the reasons for granting him a premature release ?

(d) Whether he wrote to the Government on the matter of his release ?

(e) If so, whether Government propose to place before the House copies of the relevant correspondence made by him on the subject ?

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS replied :

7. (a)—Yes.

(b)—He was normally due for release in November 1943, and was actually released in July 1942.

(c)—He gave assurances, on the ground of his opposition to Fascism that his activities would not in future be prejudicial to the war effort, which were

*Speech not corrected.

considered by Government to be satisfactory, particularly as his previous activities had not been associated with violence.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—Government perceive no public advantage in so doing.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Is it a fact that Babu Biresh Chandra Misra was a rival candidate of the Questioner in the last Assembly election?

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Yes, Sir.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: This question has been put by my Friend Mr. Rabindra Nath Aditya because he was contested by Babu Biresh Chandra Misra?

*Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Why so much sympathy for him, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: That question does not arise.

Black-out in the Bengal and Assam Railway trains

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked:

8. (a) Is it a fact that the practice, introduced as a war measure of black-out in railway trains of the Bengal and Assam Railway at night still continues?

(b) Are Government aware that this is causing great inconvenience to the passengers?

(c) Do Government propose to take necessary steps to immediately put an end of this practice?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied:

8. (a)—The subject-matter relates to the Administration of Railways, which is a Federal subject. This Government do not exactly know the present condition.

(b)—Yes, if the conditions are as stated by the hon. Member.

(c)—The Provincial Government has already moved the Railway authorities in the matter who stated that lighting arrangements would improve as soon as the required quantity of electric bulbs become available. The war being now over, the situation, it is hoped, will improve rapidly.

*Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: With regard to reply to question No.8 (b) will Government please, realising the present situation, put pressure on the Railway authorities to remove the grievances of the public as early as possible?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: The Government has already moved the Railway authorities.

*Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will Government make a further attempt to move the Railway authorities?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: We have no objection to that. I have said that we have already done so.

*Dr. C. G. TERRELL: Is the Hon'ble Minister satisfied that everything possible is being done and will be done to rectify this nuisance of having no lights in the carriages?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY: Yes, Sir, I myself fully realise this and will try my best to remove it.

Stoppage of Mail Train at Nalbari

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked:

9. (a) Are Government aware that even now the Mail Train of the Bengal and Assam Railway has not resumed its stoppage at the Nalbari station?

*Speech not corrected.

(b) Are Government aware that non-stoppage of the Mail Train at Nalbari station is causing immense inconvenience to business-men, litigants, Government servants and the general public ?

(c) Are Government aware that the Mail Train of the Bengal and Assam Railway stops at almost all stations, excepting a few, between Gauhati and Tinsukia Junction ?

(d) Do Government propose to take necessary steps so that the Mail Train stops at Nalbari as before ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

9. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Evidently it is causing inconvenience.

(c)—The Mail Train stops at 39 stations out of a total of 49 stations between Gauhati and Tinsukia.

(d)—The Provincial Government have already referred the matter to the Railway authorities and replies from the Railway have now been received to the effect that stoppage of Up and Down Assam Mail Trains at Nalbari will be arranged in the next issue of the Time-Table to be in force from 1st April 1946.

Collection of land revenue from Tea Estates by Mauzadars

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked :

10. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that Mauzadars appointed after 1930 are not allowed to collect land revenue from Tea Estates in the Assam Valley, whereas those appointed prior to that year are entitled to do so ?

(b) Whether there is any Government standing order on the point ?

(c) If the answer to any of the above questions be in the affirmative, whether Government propose to do away with such discrimination ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

10. (a) —(c)—The collection of revenue from tea gardens involves no trouble. Although a Mauzadar collecting such revenue does not perform a service deserving remuneration at 5 or 10 per cent. of the collection, it was thought undesirable to withdraw the privilege without notice. In 1929 therefore it was ordered as a measure of economy that Mauzadars collecting such revenue would continue to do so including their successors, if members of their families. But if a new mauza was formed or a man having no family claims was appointed to an existing mauza this privilege would cease. These orders continued in force till 1940 when on the recommendation of the Retrenchment Committee of 1938, the privilege was withdrawn also from the successors of the then existing Mauzadars whether they had family claims or not. Where this privilege has been withdrawn the tea gardens pay revenue direct into Government treasuries. Government do not see any reason to change the orders.

Resuscitation of certain rivers in Sylhet District

Babu JATINDRA NATH BHADRA asked :

11. (a) Are Government aware that the river Charchandi near Biswanath in the District of Sylhet has been silted up considerably ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether they received a largely-signed petition in February 1941, from the inhabitants of the villages on and near the bank of the river Charchandi praying for the excavation of the mouth of this river near Biswanath and for its general resuscitation ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state whether they received a second petition in this connection in November 1943, on behalf of thousands of fishermen and boatmen residing on the banks of this river ?

(d) If so, whether this project has been taken up by the Government ?

(e) If not, do Government propose to consider taking up this work at a very early date ?

12. (a) Are Government aware that the mouth of the river Bahia at Tukur-bazar near Sylhet as well as several parts of the river Surma, its tributaries and branches have been silted up ?

(b) Is it a fact that the silting up of these rivers has blocked natural drainage in places with the result that floods occur frequently in North Sylhet and Sunamganj Subdivisions of the District of Sylhet ?

(c) If the answers to questions 12(a) and 12(b) above are in the affirmative, do Government propose to take steps to undertake a scheme of general resuscitation of this river system at an early date ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

11. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—No.

(e)—The matter will be considered by Government after getting more information.

*Babu JATINDRA NATH BHADRA : With regard to answer to question No. 11 (e), will Government please try to collect information at an early date ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY : We are trying to collect the information.

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

12. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—This Government will consider what steps may be taken in this matter.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : Will the scheme form a part of the Post-War Programme ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY : The answer is there, Sir.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : The answer is not there, Sir. My question is : will the scheme form a part of the Post-War Programme ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY : Whether it will form part of the Post-War Reconstruction Programme or not, that question also will be considered.

Motorable road between Biswanath and Jagannathpur

Babu JATINDRA NATH BHADRA asked :

13. (a) Are Government aware that the area between Biswanath and Jagannathpur in the District of Sylhet is badly served in respects of road communication ?

(b) Will Government be pleased to state whether they received public petitions and recommendation of the Sunamganj Local Board for the construction of a motor road connecting the two places, in January, 1941 ?

(c) If so, what action was taken by them to meet this public demand ?

(d) Will Government be pleased to state whether any proposal for such a road has been incorporated in the Post-War Road Development Scheme ?

(e) If so, do they propose to take up the construction of the road in the early years of the programme ?

The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

13. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—This road was considered with others for improvement under the Motor Vehicles Tax Fund, but was not accepted at that time due to shortage of funds.

(d)—The road has been tentatively included in the Post-War Road Development Scheme, and this Government will re-examine the question.

(e)—This matter will be considered by the present Government.

Alluvial lands in Cachar

Professor NIBARAN CHANDRA LASKAR asked :

14. (a) Are Government aware that a series of litigations have cropped up in the different courts of the District of Cachar in connection with the settlement of alluvial lands there ?

(b) Are Government aware that the settlement of alluvial lands with persons other than contiguous tenure holders is causing discontent among the people concerned ?

(c) Do Government propose to bring in a legislation with regard to settlement of alluvial lands in the District of Cachar, extending operation of customary law of settlement with contiguous land owners ?

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI replied :

14. (a)—Five cases were instituted in Cachar claiming settlement of accreted land by contiguous settlement holders. In one case the lower courts decided in favour of the contiguous settlement holders on the strength of the Bengal Alluvion and Diluvion Regulation of 1825 which was considered to be in force in Cachar. Against this decision Government appealed to the High Court of Calcutta who has allowed the appeal and held that the Regulation of 1825 is not applicable in Cachar but has sent back the case to the trial court for retrial on the footing of acquisition of right by custom, if any and failing that on the principle of equity, justice and good conscience. No information on any further development of the case is available.

(b)—No information is available.

(c)—For the present Government do not propose to bring in a Bill as suggested as in view of the High Court ruling a contiguous settlement holder has no right to settlement of accreted land. If any person wishes to press his claim he is at liberty to do so in the civil court.

Re Voting paper for the European Constituency

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD asked :

15. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) Why the back of the voting paper for the European Constituency was used for printed instructions complete with dotted line for the signature of the voter ?
- (b) How many papers were spoilt owing to voters signing on the back in the space so provided ?
- (c) Whether Government propose to consider the advisability of leaving the back of such voting papers blank at any future election ?

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS replied :

15.(a)—The ballot papers were printed in exact accordance with the form prescribed under rule 2 of Part VII of the Assam Legislative Assembly Electoral (Governor's) Rules, 1936. The instructions on the back of the outer-foils of the ballot papers are printed only for the guidance of voters, giving them direction how to record their votes and to return the ballot papers to the Returning Officer. The inverted commas before the words "I enclose" and after the line for the date make it clear that name and date are to be given only on the covering letter. Each voter was carefully instructed by the Returning Officer, in the letter forwarding his ballot papers, "not to sign his name or write anything on the front or back side of the ballot paper", as laid down in paragraph 15, Part VI, introductory, page 32 of the Assam Election Manual.

(b)—It is not possible to give the exact number of ballot papers rejected for this reason as they were counted together with those rejected for other reasons, but it is known that out of the total by far the larger number were rejected because of voters signing their names on them.

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

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD: Does not the Hon'ble Minister agree that the very fact that there was a line with the word "Signature" in front of it, was tantamount to an invitation to sign ?

*The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: I do not agree. A careful elector would go through the covering letter and it could be easily understood that no signature was to be put there. It is only those electors who do not carefully read the instructions will be confused ; no one else.

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD: Were similar instructions issued in other constituencies ?

*Mr. PRABHUDAYAL HIMATSINGKA: Such was not the case in the Commerce Constituency.

Dr. C. G. TERRELL: Will Government rectify the defect in future ?

*The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: The matter is under the consideration of the Government.

Bridge across the Monu River at Maulvibazar

Mr. W. D. RUTHERFURD asked :

16. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) What was the defect in the new concrete bridge across the Monu River at Maulvibazar which necessitated its being closed to traffic for a period towards the end of 1945 ?
- (b) Whether the defect was due to design or bad workmanship ?

*Speech not corrected.

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The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY replied :

16. (a)—A bearing plate under one of the concrete beams was dislodged and had to be replaced. The dislodgement of the bearing plate was considered to be due to earthquake.

(b)—There was no defect in design or workmanship.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Does the Hon'ble Minister agree that there is something wrong with their engineering experts ?

*The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY : That is a matter of opinion, Sir.

*Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN : When did the earthquake take place ?

*The Hon'ble Rev. J. J. M. NICHOLS-ROY : I have no information.

Re-employment of retired Government servants

Professor NIBARAN CHANDRA LASKAR asked :

17. (a) Are Government aware that of late there has been dissatisfaction among the public and the services as well, on account of re-employment of retired Government servants ?

(b) Are Government aware of the large number of qualified candidates within the usual age limit ?

(c) If so, do Government propose to abolish the practice of further employment of retired Government servants in future ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

17. (a)—Government are aware that re-employment of retired officers has caused dissatisfaction.

(b)—This depends upon the nature of the post but generally speaking there are now many more applicants for vacancies, including discharged personnel of the armed forces and essential purposes.

(c)—Now that the war emergency is over and qualified and suitable applicants can be found for most vacancies, it is Government's policy to avoid retention of retiring personnel as far as practicable.

*Maulavi ABDUL HAI : May I know what steps Government are going to take ?

†The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS : Government is considering the question of discharging those officers.

Adjournment Motion re eviction of certain people in Pukuripar area in Chaygaon circle of Gauhati Subdivision

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : I have got an Adjournment Motion standing in my name. May I move it, Sir ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Yes, but before that I now propose to take up the** Adjournment Motion that was moved yesterday by Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : I raised a point of order, Sir ; that has not been disposed of. I raised the question whether or not the Motion was

*Speech not corrected.

†The Hon'ble Mr. B. K. DAS replied in the absence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister.

**Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI to move :

“This House do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance to wit : ruthless eviction of 54 families in Champapathar in Pukuripar area in Chaygaon Circle of Gauhati subdivision on 28th February by demolishing their houses and destroying their crops”.

not defective on account of its vagueness. It is not certain whether he wanted to criticise the ruthlessness in the execution of the policy of eviction or the policy itself. It is not clear from the wordings of the Motion and hence it is defective on account of its vagueness.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Has the Hon'ble Revenue Minister got anything to say.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, as regards the objection raised by hon. Member Mr. Aditya I also think like that. The Motion raises two questions and it does not definitely say what it wants. It is required under the rules that only one subject can be discussed in a Motion of this kind. So, there being two matters, I think also that it is out of order.

As regards the information that we have been able to procure from the Deputy Commissioner, I will begin with the history regarding this reserve.

This reserve Champapathar in Pukuripar was constituted as a Professional Grazing-Reserve by cancellation of the *pattas* of indigenous people who were then in occupation of the land. On cancellation of the *pattas* and on receipt of notice the law abiding indigenous people vacated their *patta* land. Then after the constitution of the reserve and long after the indigenous people left the place 54 families encroached in defiance of orders and they were evicted on the 20th April, 1945. Some time after the eviction about 44 families re-entered in defiance of authority. Some were prosecuted and fined in Criminal Court under section 188 of the Indian Penal Code for defying legally promulgated order but that had no deterrent effect on them whatsoever. Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri, the then Revenue Minister in company with a Sub-Deputy Collector and a Mandal visited the locality on the 23rd December 1945 and was satisfied on the spot that they were all unprotected encroachers, *i.e.*, trespassers, and passed orders to evict them in accordance with the Resolution unanimously passed and published on the 23rd July 1945 by the last Cabinet in which Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri was a Minister and also jointly responsible. Whom does he want to criticise ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : The Hon'ble Minister need not argue at this stage.

The Hon'ble Srijut BISHNURAM MEDHI : Very well, Sir. I am placing facts.

As regards other facts, there was an allegation made by my hon. Friend that a mosque was demolished. Now, the information that we have been able to gather, I will just place before the House. A Senior Extra Assistant Commissioner having first class magisterial power accompanied by the Sub-Deputy Collector of the circle and the Colonisation Officer Mr. Rouf, went to the place. The encroachers were served with notice previously and had also been warned again previously after which 44 families who were found there were evicted. There was no crop which was alleged to have been destroyed. There was mustard cultivation which had already been harvested. Only a few very young plants of *Ahu* and *Jute* were to be seen which were not touched. Most of the area had no crop. Some of the houses were removed by the encroachers themselves and some by manual labour which was engaged for the purpose. There was no mosque in the area and none was demolished.

In view of these facts, I submit, Sir, that this is not a matter which can be raised in a Motion of this kind because the eviction was not at all ruthless but it was most humane and the officers were only discharging their duties in a most humane way. I think, the House will take all these facts into their consideration.

In view of these facts, Sir, I submit, that no leave be granted to move this Motion.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, may I know the name of the Extra Assistant Commissioner who went to the spot?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Has the hon. Mover got anything to add?

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Sir, my question has not been answered.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It is not necessary for our present purpose.

Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: Sir, a question has been raised that this is not a definite matter. The Motion states that ruthless eviction was carried out. It is a definite fact. How can it be more definite, I do not know.

Sir, the Hon'ble Revenue Minister has said that the eviction has been carried out in accordance with the Resolution that was accepted by the previous Ministry of which I happened to be a Member. Sir, on the 2nd February, the Cabinet decided that no eviction should take place from anywhere neither from Government waste land nor from grazing reserves where the people have grown at least one crop. The Congress Government must have repudiated that decision of the previous Cabinet and proceeded on their own motion in accordance with their own judgment to carry out the eviction.....

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Sir, was not there an agreement between the present Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the House about this land settlement policy?

Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: There was an agreement, Sir subject to the ratification of that by the All-India Muslim League.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Was there any clause in that agreement to that effect, Sir?

Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: That is always presumed.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: Presumed under what law?

Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: Sir, it has been said that no mosque has been demolished. I think, there were 5 to 7 Members of this House who accompanied me to the locality. We took a photo of the demolished mosque. Unfortunately it has not yet been developed and printed. I shall try to circulate it to all Members of this House, when printed.

*Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Sir, is it of that place only?

Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: Yes, Sir.

Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Sir, did the hon. Member go to the place of occurrence on the very day the eviction was carried out?

Maulavi ABDUL MATIN CHAUDHURI: No, Sir, the eviction was carried out on the 28th February and I went on the 7th of March.

Sir, it has been said that there was no crop. But we all saw that there were tobacco and onion plants which were destroyed and uprooted. Hon'ble Finance Minister considers eviction as humane. The village spreads over about a mile and all houses were destroyed. If this is humane then the meaning of the word 'humane' adopted by the Congress is different from that we find in the Dictionary.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Adjournment Motion in respect of which leave has been sought is this—

"This House do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance to wit: ruthless eviction of 54 families in Champapathar in Pukuripar area in Chaygaon Circle of Gauhati Subdivision on 28th February by demolishing their houses and destroying their crops".

Now I have heard carefully the statements of facts by the hon. Member who seeks leave to move it and also by the Hon'ble Revenue Minister and other Members. It remains uncontradicted that the place where this eviction took place was a Professional Grazing Reserve and that eviction took place in pursuance of Government Resolution. There is a copy of the Government

Resolution before me. Extracts of the proceedings of the Government of Assam in the Revenue Department No.RD. 68/44, dated the 13th July 1945, read :

"This Resolution does not seek to amplify or modify any previous Resolution and will completely supersede all previous Resolutions on land settlement..

2. The policy to be followed in the settlement of land in future will be governed by four main objects" and the fourth object (d) reads "The maintenance of all Reserves deemed necessary for grazing or other purposes free of encroachment and subject to certain exceptions, the eviction of all encroachers therefrom".

We find that the Government adopted as one of its object for this Resolution the eviction of all encroachers therefrom, that is the grazing reserves.

Now we further find that this Government Resolution still stands and it is not superseded by any other Government Resolution in action. The eviction has taken place under the law and the rules which may be referred to in this connection is the Assam Land Revenue Manual, Volume I—Settlement Rules. Rule No.15 reads :

"No person shall have any right to settlement merely because he is in occupation of land not included in any lease granted by Provincial Government either to himself or to any other person, etc."

Then we come to rule 18 which reads :

"Subject as hereinafter provided, the Deputy Commissioner may eject any person from land over which no person has acquired the rights of a proprietor, landholder, or settlement-holder."

Clause (2) of the said rule, that is to say, rule 18 reads :

"When such person has entered into possession of land that has previously been reserved for roads or roadside lands or for the grazing of village cattle or for other public purposes or has entered into possession of land from which he has been excluded by general or special orders and when, further, there is no *bona fide* claim of right involved, he may be ejected or ordered to vacate the land forthwith, and the Deputy Commissioner may sell, confiscate or destroy any crop raised, or any building or other construction erected, without authority on the land."

Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: Sir, may I be permitted to bring to your notice that Professional Grazing Reserves are covered not by the Land Revenue Regulations but by the Forest Regulations? Professional Grazing Reserves are in Unclassed State Forests and as such the provisions which you have read: Sir, are provisions for ejection under the Land Revenue Regulations which do not apply so far as Professional Grazing Reserves are concerned. They apply only to village grazing reserves and waste lands and not to Professional Grazing Reserves.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. Member is right so far as he has stated that Professional Grazing Reserves are created under the Forest Regulations. I am dealing with the question that has been raised in objection to this Adjournment Motion and Rule 18 of Settlement Rules, in Assam Land Revenue Manual is mentioned in the Government Resolution under reference its elf.

Now, the Government admittedly has the undisputed right to evict all encroachers with just as much force as is necessary to evict them and to preserve the State property in the form in which it wants to preserve. In this case the question for my decision is, if 54 families in Champapathar in the Pukuripur area of Chaygaon are evicted, can it properly form the subject of an Adjournment Motion, or can such an Adjournment Motion, as is before me be held to be in order? I find that this encroachment and eviction operations relate to a big land policy of Government which has been agitating the minds of this Government as well as the previous Government. After due deliberation Government adopted a policy and a Resolution was accepted formulating that policy. The officers of Government are giving effect to that accepted Resolution. I find

that when such a question of policy was involved in a similar Motion in this House an Adjournment Motion was held to be not in order. That was analogous to this in the sense that exactly the reverse of it was expressed in that Motion. I am reading from the Ruling given by my predecessor in this Hon'ble House. "On the 22nd February 1940, Srijut Ghanasyam Das wanted to move an Adjournment Motion on the alleged order of Government stopping eviction of immigrant trespassers into the Lined Areas in Barpeta Subdivision." The Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Revenue then of course opposed it." The Hon'ble Speaker ruled: "I have heard the hon. Member who has given notice of this Motion and the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge. From what has been said by the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge and also the hon. Mover of this Motion I hold that this Motion is not in order. It proposes to discuss a matter which is related to a very big question, that is the question of Line System and from time to time Government have been taking certain actions in regard to the question. It appears from what has been said by the Hon'ble Minister that Government have formulated a certain policy and to discuss a question like this relating to that policy in the form of an Adjournment Motion is not in order. The policy should be discussed as a whole. Such piecemeal discussion of various matters pertaining to that policy by means of Adjournment Motion is not proper."

On that occasion an hon. Member from the Congress Party wanted to move an Adjournment Motion, and the Hon'ble Speaker ruled that the policy of Government adopted should not be discussed piecemeal in this way, but the whole policy should be discussed as a whole.

Now, I find the same thing at page 227 of Sir T. Erskine May's Parliamentary Practice. Among other things we find "Motions have also been ruled out of order when it appeared that the administrative responsibility of the Government was not involved, or that there had not been any departure from the ordinary administration of the law". In this case nothing has been shown that there has been a departure from the law or that there were any extraordinary circumstances which were of importance to a section of the public. Here the only thing that we find is "ruthless eviction of 54 families". When eviction takes place a certain amount of hardship was bound to be caused. If it could be shown that there was any extraordinary hardship, which was caused *mala fide* by Government officers to a section of the public, and the Government were indifferent to such *mala fide* action of their officers then the matter might have stood on a different footing and might have received different consideration. But here the eviction has taken place in the course of law and the Government Resolution itself provides a remedy for any grievance that might have been caused. I am reading from the same Government Resolution: "Provision of Rule 18(2) of the Settlement Rules will apply to all such cases of eviction and appeals will lie against orders of eviction to the Revenue Tribunal, who will see that Government's policy in this regard is duly carried out". So, the eviction took place in the due discharge of the duties of Government officials in accordance with the policy formulated by the Government of which the hon. Mover was a Member at the time of the adoption of the Resolution. And those aggrieved have got a remedy in law, *viz.*, they may apply to Government, they may take recourse to the criminal law of the land for prosecuting people who caused hardship *mala fide*, and the Resolution itself indicates that those evicted will have the right of appeal to the Revenue Tribunal. So, on full consideration of all these points I do not think that this Motion is in order.

Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: With your permission, Sir, I may say that we are in the dark as to your opinion regarding demolition of the mosque. As many as seven hon. Members of this side of the House including one *ex*-Minister, visited the locality and they have emphatically asserted that the mosque had been demolished. On the contrary Government have stated that no mosque has

been demolished, and are we to take it that you have taken the official version to be conclusively true ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I feel that my opinion on this subject is not called for. The hon. Members on the one side stated that there was a mosque and it was demolished, and the Hon'ble Revenue Minister on the other side has stated, on information supplied by responsible Government officers, that no mosque whatsoever existed ; no mosque had been demolished, as there was no mosque in existence there to be demolished. So, this is a matter of a statement against a statement and I feel that in such matters the opinion of the Chair should not be asked for, and I also feel that the Chair should not give its opinion on such a controversial matter about which the House has no evidence before it.

Adjournment Motion re: preventing of *ex-tea* garden coolies settled in Laluk area from occupying Government waste lands

Mr. P. M. SARWAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of the House to move that this House do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence, to wit: discrimination by the Subdivisional Officer, North Lakhimpur Subdivision and Circle Sub-Deputy Collector, shown to a section of the people, preventing *ex-tea* garden coolies settled in Laluk area from occupying Government waste lands.

Sir, there has been definitely a discrimination by the Subdivisional Officer against the poor, helpless and backward section of the people.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Order, order. The hon. Member is not entitled to argue. He should make statements on these three points only, *viz.*, definiteness, urgency and recent occurrence. When did the hon. Member learn of the occurrence ?

Mr. P. M. SARWAN : Sir, I learnt about it the day before yesterday by wire and before that I received information about it.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : When did the hon. Member learn about it before ?

Mr. P. M. SARWAN : First, when I left for Shillong.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : What did he get before he left for Shillong.

Mr. P. M. SARWAN : There was a threat of the people coming to disturb the labourers, and this complaint I forwarded to the Hon'ble Revenue Minister. I do not know what action he took in the matter. Then, when I came to Shillong, I received further information about the matter.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Order, order. That is enough. The Motion is not in order. Because the hon. Member himself states that he knew of this matter before he left for Shillong. Secondly, the same grounds that I stated a little while ago in respect of an Adjournment Motion moved by hon. Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhuri apply to this Adjournment Motion also. If there is any discrimination in the matter, there are the proper authorities to apply to for redress. There are legal remedies too. I would draw the attention of the hon. Members of this House to the fact that the method of bringing certain matters before the House in an Adjournment Motion is a piece of extraordinary procedure and it really encroaches upon the business of the House. So, I propose to stick to the practice which obtains in the House of Commons as well as in different Legislatures in India and also in this House that when there are other remedies available, an Adjournment Motion, generally speaking, should not be allowed.

Now, I call upon hon. Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury to move his Motion.

Adjournment Motion re indiscriminate firing by armed police on unarmed peaceful persons near Paswa Beel in the Sunamganj Subdivision

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg leave of the House to move that this House do now adjourn to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance and of recent occurrence to wit indiscriminate firing by Armed Police on unarmed peaceful persons without provocation near Paswa Bil under Jamalganj Police Station in the Sunamganj Subdivision, District Sylhet, causing seven deaths and injuries to several persons.

Sir, in the Jamalganj Thana in the Sunamganj Subdivision, District Sylhet, there is a private fishery named Paswa. The lessee had obtained the services of a section of armed constables, 13 in number, presumably to protect the fishery. On the 18th February last, when a crowd of persons was going to catch fish with *Polos* at a neighbouring *bell* named Nainda which had already been fished out by the lessee, these armed constables without the slightest provocation, without any warning and without any ostensible reason, fired on these unarmed persons with a disastrous result. In all 31 rounds were fired, seven persons shot dead on the spot and many more were injured.

These *Polwas*, Sir, *i.e.*, the persons who were going to catch fish had no intention of going to the Paswa beel which the armed guards were supposed to protect and this incident occurred at a place far away from the boundary of the Paswa fishery.

There was no Magistrate to supervise their work or to issue an order for firing in the eventuality of an emergency and these officers indulged in practising duckshooting upon human beings. The matter is not only definite but it is also urgent as panic and consternation still prevail in the neighbourhood. My hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Khaleque Ahmed had been to the spot and found that the people were panic stricken and had fled from their home-steads.

The matter is of public importance, because a great principle is involved in it. We should decide once for all whether armed constables should be lent to private individuals without any check upon their conduct and without a First Class Magistrate.

The matter is of recent occurrence because it took place on the 18th of February and this is the earliest opportunity we get of ventilating the grievance.

*Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA: On a point of information, Sir. Is not the matter *sub-judice*?

*MAULAVI ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: We have no information.

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I object to leave being granted to this Adjournment Motion on the ground that the whole matter which the Motion seeks to discuss is *sub-judice*. It appears from what my hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury has stated that he has given his version of the unfortunate occurrence that took place on the 18th February last on the bank of the Paswa *beel*. Government have been supplied with a version of the occurrence quite different from his. Now, it appears, Sir, that my hon. Friend Maulavi Abdul Bari Chaudhury tabled another Adjournment Motion I don't know whether he would pursue that Motion. Notice of that Adjournment Motion was received by the Assembly Office on the 4th March. It runs thus: "This House do now adjourn to discuss an urgent matter of public importance and of recent occurrence namely, indiscriminate firing without provocation on unarmed persons by military constables at Haskuri under Dharampassa Police Station, Sunamganj Subdivision, causing several deaths and injury to innumerable persons and thereby creating

panic and consternation amongst the general public of the locality." It would be seen that the terms of that Adjournment Motion are quite different from those of the one now before the House. I don't know whether these two Motions relate to the same occurrence.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY : On a point of personal explanation, Sir, the Paswa *bell* is under Jamalganj Police Station which has recently been curved out from the old Dharampassa thana and we were not sure to which Police station this place belonged. The place where the incident took place is known as Haskuri. So, the incident referred to in both the Motions is the same.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : Order, order.

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS :— It may be so, Sir. But with regard to the details the Motions appear to be quite different. In the Motion that is now before the House it is stated that there were seven deaths and injuries to several persons; but in the Motion previously tabled it is stated that there were several deaths and injury to innumerable persons and that there were on account of that panic and consternation amongst the general public of the locality. Whatever may be the explanation now given of the difference between the two Motions, it is quite apparent that the hon. Member was not quite sure of the facts when he tabled his first Motion, and therefore, he had ultimately to table this Adjournment Motion. But my submission is that the whole matter being now under a judicial enquiry the points that are to be discussed by means of this Adjournment Motion, *viz.*, whether there was indiscriminate firing by the police, whether the people were unarmed and whether the firing took place without provocation will certainly be adjudicated upon by the Court that is holding the enquiry.

So if any discussion takes place on this matter that would simply prejudice the facts and would go to impede the course of justice. The version of the occurrence that Government have been supplied with is this :

The fishery in question is the property of a Zemindar and it has been leased out to one named Kali Prasanna Das Chaudhury. It is not for the first time that this lessee sought the help of Police to protect the fishery from being looted by people coming from the neighbouring villages. On previous occasions also he had to ask for Police help for the protection of his property against acts of aggression of this nature. On this occasion also he anticipated some trouble and he therefore sought Police help which under the provisions of the Police Manual can be granted. It was in pursuance of that requisition for help that a section of the Armed Police was stationed at the fishery as a guard against the trouble anticipated.

Now the facts of the occurrence that have been supplied to Government are that on the 16th February there was an assembly of about one thousand people on the bank of the *bell* who came to fish in this fishery with *polows*, but the Police succeeded in dissuading them from getting into the fishery and catching fish. These people went away threatening the Police that they would come again some days after and see how they could be prevented from fishing. Three days after, *i.e.*, on the 18th March about five to six thousand people armed with *jathas*, *sulphis* and *lathis* and with *polows* came and surrounded the Armed Police and when these Armed Police saw that they were going to be attacked—a constable was actually hit by a *sulphi* thrown at him by one of the assembled crowd—for self-defence they had to resort to firing. Now my hon. Friend says that those people came for the purpose of fishing in a neighbouring *bell*. This appears to be the defence of the people who assembled to commit acts of aggression on this valuable fishery. But I may tell the hon. Member that those people who came in such a large number were not only of the villages in the neighbourhood of the *bell* but large number of them came from the neighbouring District of

Mymensingh armed with various weapons of offence and defence and it was actually for the purpose of self-defence the Police had to take resort to firing. If the judicial enquiry finds that the firing was not in exercise of the right of self-defence on the part of the Armed Police then only the Police will be held to be guilty of the offence which so many unfortunate deaths mean. At the present moment one cannot say that there was no justification for what the Armed Police did in such a situation that confronted them. Therefore as the position now stands nothing can be discussed on the floor of this House about the occurrence, which Government deplore, in view of the provision in the Assembly Rules that when a matter is *sub-judice* it cannot be discussed by an Adjournment Motion or in any other way on the floor of the Assembly.

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: May I ask the Hon'ble Home Minister who issued the orders for firing ?

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Sir, no orders were necessary to be issued when the Police version is that they had to take recourse to firing in exercise of the right of self-defence.

*Maulavi MUNAWWAR ALI: With your permission, Sir, I may say that there was no Magistrate accompanying the Police.

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: Presence of a Magistrate was not necessary, Sir, to order firing in the circumstances, the Armed Police say, arose. But if it be found that the firing was resorted to not in the exercise of the right of self-defence, those Police people responsible for the firing will undoubtedly be punished.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble the Home Minister has said that the matter which the hon. Mover seeks to discuss by his Adjournment Motion is *sub-judice*. Therefore, under rules of business of this Assembly as well as in accordance with the established practice and principles, when the matter is *sub-judice*, it cannot be discussed in a Motion. In the circumstances I rule that this Motion is not in order.

*Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY: On a point of information, Sir, may I know from the Hon'ble Home Minister who has gone to the spot to make a judicial enquiry ?

The Hon'ble Mr. BASANTA KUMAR DAS: The Additional District Magistrate of Sylhet has gone, Sir, to the locality to hold an enquiry under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code.

Election of the Deputy Speaker

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. The second item in the agenda for today is the election of the Deputy Speaker. There are three nomination papers and I shall read out the particulars as required by Assembly rule 5(5):—

Nomination Paper No. I.—

Name of Member nominated—Mrs. Bonily Khongmen, M.L.A.
 Name of proposer—Srijut Chanoo Kheria, M.L.A.
 Name of seconder—Babu Jagat Bandhu Sircar, M.L.A.

Nomination Paper No. II.—

Name of Member nominated—Mrs. Bonily Khongmen, M.L.A.
 Name of proposer—Srijut Haladhar Bhuyan, M.L.A.
 Name of seconder—Srijut Manisankar Basumatary, M.L.A.

*Speech not corrected.

Nomination Paper No. III.—

Name of Member nominated—Mrs. Bonily Khongmen, M.L.A.

Name of proposer—Srijut Omco Kumar Das, M.L.A.

Name of seconder—Srijut Bijoy Chandra Bhagavati, M.L.A.

Only one hon. Member, Mrs. Bonily Khongmen, has been duly nominated for the office of the Deputy Speaker. I therefore declare Mrs. Khongmen to have been duly elected as Deputy Speaker of this Assembly.

In this connection, I felicitate Mrs. Bonily Khongmen. She was elected a Member to this Assembly, defeating the sitting Member of the Shillong Women's Constituency. That goes to show that she is a popular and worthy citizen. Her constituency nay womenhood of Assam expects that she may be able to stand up to the occasion and bring such a redress to the women of Assam as is possible under the circumstances. I welcome her to this honoured position.

Felicitations to the Deputy Speaker

The Hon'ble Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my Party, I heartily congratulate Mrs. Bonily Khongmen being elected the Deputy Speaker of this august House. I entirely agree with you, Sir, that it is in the fitness of things that she has been elected the Deputy Speaker of this House and I hope that she will whenever opportunity arises do her best to keep the dignity, prestige and privileges of this House. I again heartily congratulate her on behalf of my Party.

Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the party which I lead in this House is pleased for the simple fact that the Congress Party has followed the traditions of the predecessors. We have two representatives of the fair sex in the two Houses and Assam's Legislature have been good enough to give them both positions of honour. That is a great respect shown by us to the womenhood. In the Upper House, the Hon'ble Mrs. Aaur Rahman was elected a Deputy President in the first instance. She has now been elevated to the position of the Hon'ble President. The Congress Party by selecting the only woman representative of this House to the same position is following tradition. We hope, Sir, we will find in her when occasion arises, one to keep the dignity of the House, as well as to look to the rights and privileges of the Members of all Parties.

Mrs. BONILY KHONGMEN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you and the hon. Members of this House for the confidence that has been placed on me by electing me as Deputy Speaker of this House. When occasion arises, I shall try my best to discharge my duties which have been entrusted on me to the satisfaction of the House.

Budget discussion

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The next item on the agenda is general discussion of the Budget. Both items Nos.3 and 4 may be taken up together.

I requested the hon. Members of different Parties to give me a list of names of those hon. Members who want to take part in the general discussion of the Budget. The Leader of the Muslim League Party and the Leader of the European Group submitted their lists, but no list was submitted by the Congress Party.

*Babu RABINDRANATH ADITYA: We will do that today, or early morning tomorrow.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: You may go by default.

For today five names have been given by the Muslim League Party and for 15th they submitted as many as 12 names. Tomorrow, as the hon. Members are aware, there will be only half day's sitting, from 2 P. M. and in fact we will get only an hour for general discussion of the Budget, as there will be the Question hour and there may be Adjournment Motions coming up also. We have got 2 hours and 45 minutes for today and there are 5 Members on the list for speaking. I do not fix time limit for today.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is with considerable hesitation that I rise to participate in the discussion of a Budget which was prepared by the last Government and for which the Hon'ble Finance Minister disowns any responsibility whatsoever. The Hon'ble Finance Minister assures us that the present Cabinet will formulate schemes for the rural, intellectual and economic uplift of the people and thus asks us to live on future hopes. The Budget presented by him without new Schemes by itself could not be inspiring. The speech which he had delivered in introducing the Budget, on careful analysis had filled us only with disappointment and despair. The speech which began with a forceful indictment of the British Rule in India ended with some sketchy and scrappy observations on Excise, Supply, Forest, Co-operation and Industries Departments. In it I fail to notice indications of any well-defined policy or programme of the much vaunted people's party. From the Hon'ble Finance Minister's admissions that the Budget on the Revenue side is really a deficit one to the tune of 30 lakhs and on the capital side to the extent of 78 lakhs 73 thousands, we cannot expect any beneficial and spectacular new schemes from the present Government. The present Government is going to usher in two taxation measures not with a view to augment the income of the Province, but with the object of guarding against further fall of revenue. On the contrary, they want to incur further expenditure by proposing to refund the collective fines imposed during the upheaval of 1942 and releasing and restoring the confiscated and damaged properties of the internees. The Hon'ble Finance Minister states that sooner or later, the Government will have to forego a considerable amount of revenue receipts which comes under country spirit. The Hon'ble Finance Minister is bent on giving his anxious thought on retrenchment by scrutinising and retrenching such expenditure as may be found extravagant and unnecessary and abolishing unnecessary posts, but had not a word to say as to the lines he will adopt to augment the resources of the Province. He is discreetly silent over the measure of imposing sales tax on commodities—a measure which was seriously considered by the last Government and for which a special officer was already appointed and the income from which measure was estimated to be more than a quarter of a crore. Thus we look in vain in the speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister for any indication of policy to increase the resources of the Province by any feasible measure of taxation. Assam as is well known is a poor Province with an income of 3 to 4 crores of rupees in normal times—an income less than the income of the Calcutta Corporation—one crore of which expenditure is charged on the revenues of the Province. Until and unless this is done all his promises about fight against poverty and raising the economic condition of the people are mere bunkum and nonsense.

The speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister with due deference to him appears to me to be a sketchy one. He might not have time to evolve any scheme for the well-being of the people but I do not understand what prevented him from stating the programme and policy of the present Government with regard to such important subject as education—the one thing on which the future of the Province depends. This reticence on the part of the Hon'ble Finance Minister is significant. The Hon'ble Premier had taken the initiative in planning a University at Gauhati and is reported to have made a large

collection for the purpose. Now that he is in charge of the Education port-folio it is presumed that he will go ahead with the plan. But the question that arises in the minds of all well-wishers of the country is whether the limited resources of the Province are to be diverted to the foundation of a University first or to the spread of compulsory free primary education in the Province. The last Government took steps to have a survey of primary schools in the Province with the help of a special officer at a considerable cost, only to give effect to the wishes of this hon. House that steps should be taken to make primary education free and compulsory throughout the Province. If, as is apprehended, the spade work done by the last Government be abandoned at this stage and attention diverted to the materialisation of the University project, a great harm will be done to the cause of Education in the Province.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister had assured us that all the Post-War Reconstruction Schemes adopted by the last Government would be re-examined. I only wish that they will be re-examined without much delay and the execution of the emergent Post-War Projects will be accelerated.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister had told us that he would re-examine the Roads Post-War Reconstruction Schemes with a view to give alleviation to the villagers and see that the roads are constructed not for moneyed interest but for the villagers also. In this connection I would particularly stress the importance of the Kamalabari-North Lakhimpur Road and the road from Laluk to Islampur. The former establishes the only connection between the subdivisional headquarters of a district with the southern bank of the Brahmaputra, and the latter is the only means of communication between the large numbers of immigrant cultivators inhabiting the locality with the outside world. I hope these road projects will not be excluded in the interests of the villagers.

I would close my remarks mentioning some of the grievances of the constituency which I have the honour to represent. Foremost in our view is the raising of the status of the Dibrugarh Medical School to that of a college. I would request the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of the Medical Department to consider this question sympathetically and most dispassionately and to execute the project with as little delay as possible.

Next to that is the improvement of the only Girls' High School in this Valley in the town of Dibrugarh. Hon. Members know that this school is in a very wretched condition now. Some years back a plot of land was acquired for the construction of a building but due to war nothing could be done. Only recently when the Air Raid Precaution was abolished some buildings constructed on that plot of land for that purpose had been made over to the Girls' School Authorities. The School has no suitable conveyance for the girls and the difficulties of the girls are too well-known to the people. I only hope that steps will be taken to construct a new building for the location of that Girls' School.

I have next to refer to the recently established College at Dibrugarh. The people of Dibrugarh have begun to collect a large sum for running this College. They have already secured a site from the Municipal Board of Dibrugarh and the University Inspector of Colleges has already promised them the affiliation desired. I only hope that Government will come forward to its help very soon.

I have to mention here about the want of educational facilities in the area where there is a large number of immigrants in the North Lakhimpur Subdivision. They have got a few Maktabs which had lately been granted some help from Government but there are more and I would like to give a list of those Maktabs which require Government assistance very urgently. I hope the Hon'ble Minister in charge will try to help those Maktabs from the provisions in the present Budget. The people inhabiting the Laluk area in the North Lakhimpur Subdivision consisting of a large number of immigrants are greatly suffering for want of any medical facility in that area. They have got a hospital about 8

miles off from Islampur which is the centre from which they come. The necessity for a subsidised dispensary at Islampur is very keenly felt. I hope the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of Medical will see that a subsidised dispensary is opened at Islampur. I had already drawn attention of the Inspector General of Civil Hospitals to this much needed want

Then I have to refer to the construction of a building for the Daulatpur Madrassa. That is the only Madrassa of its kind in the whole of the immigrant area there. The people are already raising money towards the cost of construction of the Madrassa.....

*Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: On a point of information, Sir, may we know why so many educational institutions at Dibrugarh remained unattended for so long when my hon. Friend from Dibrugarh was in charge of Education for a pretty long time ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: These are new grievances.

*Babu KAMINI KUMAR SEN: Sir, does he mean to say that these institutions sprang up after he resigned ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Sir, the last Government gave attention to as much as they could. I am now pressing for those left over undone by the last Government.

*Maulavi ABDUL HYE: Is it a fact, Sir, that because the last Government could not attend to a particular institution the present Government will not attend to it ?

*Srijut BELIRAM DAS: Sir, from when the hon. Member began to give attention to it ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: As I said, Sir, the last Government did its best to remove the grievances as far as they could but more remained to be done and I hope the present Government will not make it an excuse because the last Government could not do those during their regime.

*Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: Sir, is it not a compliment paid to the *ex*-Education Minister because he looked to the interest of other localities than his own ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN: Sir, I was speaking about Daulatpur Madrassa. I hope Government will come forward with a grant for the construction of the Madrassa.

Lastly, Sir, I have to refer to a matter about giving contracts to the indigenous people. I had been to Dibrugarh recently and it was brought to my notice that the Executive Engineer there while giving contracts is preferring outsiders to the indigenous people. I know there is a Government circular that the indigenous people should be given preference in the matter of contract but that particular Executive Engineer is not observing the procedure laid down in that circular and I only draw attention of the Hon'ble Minister in-charge of the Public Works Department to that fact.

Sir, with these words, I resume my seat. (Cheers from the Opposition Benches.)

Maulavi Syed ABDUR ROUF: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will speak just a few words by way of discussion of the Budget placed before us. I had a mind to enter into a detailed discussion and I would have done so. But as I see no utility in discussing the Budget in detail, I refrain from doing so and will confine myself only to one or two points of vital importance.

The revenue side of the Budget shows the normal expected income and the expenditure side shows just the necessary amount required for running the administration as it is. No new source of revenue has been tapped and no new scheme has

been included. It will be, therefore, sheer wastage of time if I go to deal with the figures.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister could have very well introduced such a routine Budget with a few words without entering into a discussion covering a very vast field of politics beginning with the Quit India Resolution and ending in a declaration of war against a most helpless section of immigrant people. But when in his wisdom he has decided to do so what can we have got to say.

I have heard the speech of the Hon'ble the Finance and Revenue Minister with rapt attention and I have also read his speech thoroughly, specially, the portion dealing with the Professional Grazing Reserves. From his speech I have tried to read his mind and the mind of the Government which he represents. I have been compelled to draw the irresistible conclusion that the attitude of the Hon'ble Finance Minister and of the Government which he represents, is definitely inimical to the interests of the immigrants. Before hearing his discourse on this particular subject it was really difficult for me to believe that perversity of facts and deliberate lies could go to such a great extent. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has traced the history of influx of immigrants to a period of some 20 years hence. Now what is this period? It is during this period that the high Assamese Hindu officers and leaders of the Assamese public were, on one side, asking the Assamese to sell their lands to the immigrants and on the other hand were secretly creating the pernicious and barbarous lines against the immigrants. Thus after receiving lakhs of rupees from the immigrants they drove them away—thus cheating the simple immigrants to the extent of some lakhs of rupees and of some thousands of bighas of their purchased land. These cheated persons, and not the labourers and sub-tenants, as the Hon'ble Minister asserts, did really form the nucleus of landless immigrants.

The Hon'ble Minister finds fault with some of us in purchasing lands over, say, 1,000 bighas but how conveniently he forgets that they were the Assamese Hindus who sold this land to us and that after receiving many thousands of rupees from us. With a most nefarious motive behind it the theory of importing *kamlas* by Dewanis had been invented by interested persons and in order to avoid the responsibility of Government for providing land to the landless and in order to create a sense of inferiority complex in our children by suggesting that they are children of no better a class of people than mere *kamlas*, the Hon'ble Minister has taken shelter behind this theory. I challenge the Hon'ble Minister to prove before any Court or any impartial committee that the Dewanis import *kamlas* from Bengal. The immigrants come to this Province with their wives and children and it is simply foolish to think that they come as *kamlas*. The custom of *kamlas* moving about with wives and children may be found in some society but that society is certainly not the Muslim society (*hear, hear*). I take strong exception to these charges levelled against our Dewanis and our society.

We have been asked to believe that in pursuance of the demand of the Muslim League to include Assam in the Pakistan Zone immigrants have been invading Assam. To ask this House to believe such a fantastic theory is but an insult to the intelligence of the Members of this august House. Invasion of a country by a set of famine-stricken poor people is against the evidence of world history.

Another deliberate lie has very cleverly been invented. We are told that available waste land is not even sufficient for indigenous people. Well, let Government come forward with figures showing the areas settled with different classes of people, subdivision by subdivision. It will be seen that the Assamese people have got more land than the whole nation can cultivate. Even now they can have land merely on asking and in spite of such opportunities if there are persons without sufficient land it is because they do not like to have more land

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or do not require it. Take the case of the Sibsagar district. You will find that the Assamese people there have all along remained satisfied with the same area *per capita* for the last century. There is still plenty of *khas* land there; what prevents them from taking settlement of those *khas* lands? In the district where there are immigrants the Assamese people *per capita* possess, in fact, more land than their brethren in Sibsagar. Sudden influx of immigrants during the war being responsible for the encroachment on reserves, as suggested by Government, is but another myth—with no foundation whatsoever. It is a mere pretext for evicting the immigrants.

The Hon'ble Minister has been pleased to deliver a sermon on the utility of cattle in the life of a nation. We know that a cow belongs to the brother-hood of thirty-three crores of gods, that a buffalo's life is more valuable than the life of a dozen of *charuas* or immigrants. I thank the Hon'ble Minister heartily for his attempt towards uplifting the moral, intellectual and spiritual life of the Members of this House by delivering such a learned sermon. How I wish he would have done so before a gathering of school students. The Hon'ble Minister goes on to say that pursuant to the Grow-More-Food Campaign 1,60,000 bighas of reserved land were dereserved and settled only with Muslim immigrants. I challenge the accuracy of these figures. I am prepared to take the responsibility of proving the hollowness of this claim. Let them have the moral courage of appointing an impartial committee to examine the matter. It is true that a few thousands of bighas of land have been settled with immigrants of all classes, the Hindus and the Muslims, the Bengalees and the Sylhetees, but a substantial area was neither Professional Grazing Reserve nor village grazing reserve.

As a preamble to the declaration of war against the landless immigrants the Hon'ble Minister refers to an agreement and to a Government Resolution published on 13th July, 1945. As for the agreement I want to make it clear that the immigrants did never agree to the terms of it and as such we do not think it worth the paper on which it was written. As for the Government Resolution mentioned before I do not challenge its legality at present but as it has no moral sanction behind it I am not prepared to attach any value to it.

With a very clever bluff Government try to carry the House with them. They say that only those immigrants who are liable to be evicted will be evicted and not others. But I know what they are going to do. I know what instructions have been issued to the officials and the District Congress Committees. Let me expose them in respect of a particular subdivision—say Barpeta. Here applications in prescribed forms were received from all the occupants of reserved land. An enquiring officer was then appointed to enquire into these applications. An concerned entrusted the Mandals with the enquiry, did neither call for records nor accepted verbal evidence. Even the result of such an enquiry has not been communicated to the applicants. Moreover, half the applications have not yet been enquired into. No date or place of enquiry has even been fixed and no procedure, worth the name, has ever been followed. No right of appeal against the findings of an ordinary Mandal has been conceded. When such is the case in Barpeta, the situation in Gauhati and Darrang is definitely worse.

When all the occupants of the reserve have thus been kept in the darkness as to the fate of their applications orders have been issued for their eviction with the help of armed forces. On the other hand Congress people have been advised to follow the eviction party armed with weapons to attack the unarmed evictees and then to plunder away all the moveables belonging to these helpless evictees immigrant Muslims. Let Government deny the charge and in near future facts will speak for themselves. Our co-operation has been sought for in thus destroying our own people. I feel that it is an insult added to injury.

Now, what is the real intention of the Congress Government behind this mass eviction of immigrants? If you think that driving away of two lakhs of

Muslims from the Province is their aim, you will be mistaken as they know it full well that these people cannot afford to go back to Bengal, their intention is either to kill them by shooting as it is not yet an out and out Akhand Hindusthan or to starve them to death. When the country stands faced with an impending famine, the eviction of these two lakhs of immigrants will mean complete annihilation of the number. Intoxicated with power, the Congress Government have taken into hand this inhuman and brutal task and they are being supported by Bivisons and William Joyces under the guise of Jamiat-i-Ulema. When the Government have decided to kill these two lakhs of helpless people, I will not be surprised if these poor people decide to die as martyrs of oppression. If you have the right to kill, I have certainly the right to die. I warn Government against the consequences which may result in near future. I know I have no other remedy open to me than to advise my people to prepare themselves for welcoming martyr's fate. (*Hear, hear.*) The remedy of all these evils lie in the achievement of Pakistan and we have a right to have it. These criminals against humanity, worse than the war criminals, can only then be brought to book and they shall be—Pakistan Zindabad.

Adjournment

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

After lunch

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister in introducing his Budget speech stated that the present Budget is one prepared by the previous care-taker Government and as such he could not formulate any new schemes. In a way, Sir, he has disowned the responsibility or perhaps the ugly features of the present Budget. In a way he has disclaimed its fatherhood and then, Sir, are we to suppose that this Budget is a bastard one? At any rate we have got to accept that the present Hon'ble Finance Minister is not only the putative father but that the present Ministry or for the matter of that the Hon'ble Finance Minister is responsible for the present Budget to a great extent. I must submit that he has got to be recognised as the real father of it on other grounds. Otherwise, Sir, if this present Budget means anything it means formulation of schemes, and the budgeting of figures at least of receipts and expenditure which have taken much labour and time, I must say, Sir, that the Hon'ble Finance Minister should have given thanks to the previous Government, which he has not done. If this Budget is the result of the efforts of the previous Government, he has not shown as it is ordinarily done any sense of appreciation or given thanks anywhere in his lengthy Budget speech, to the previous Government. He has not given thanks because the Budget is his. This is the first post-war Budget. In spite of that, Sir, he has not formulated any bold and liberal policy aiming at any development in Assam, spiritually, economically and morally. But there is one orientation in policy that is finding fault illiberally enough with the previous Government. I do not know whether there is any such parallel in the history of Budget in India in any Province not to give thanks when a ready Budget is received. Well, Sir, we expected that the Congress Ministry with its much vaunted principle of liberalism, with its much vaunted principle of forward policy, with its high sounding slogans, standing as they do for the liberty of the people, should have come forward with a thing which aims at really true upliftment of the people in an oriented way which has not been so far done. It is an undenying fact that every Budget to some extent is a measure of upliftment economically, morally or mentally. It is in that sense a mechanical repetition. There is no denying of the fact that the present Hon'ble Finance Minister is one of the leading men of Assam of reputation and it cannot be supposed by anybody that he does not know the Budget, and that he does not know the intricacies of the Budget. Formerly, he was a

Member of the Assam Legislature. In his public career he came into close touch with the Government in Assam and we all know that he was quite familiar with the Budgets of the previous Government of Assam and the Legislature and since when he has taken the reins of Government recently he had sometime to scrutinise the Budget carefully. This Budget happens to be the post-war Budget, the first post-war Budget, and in this we wanted signs of post-war reconstruction in a bold and forward way. But practically speaking we do not find to our utter regret any trace of that. Sir, in the words of Sir Archibald quoted by the Hon'ble Finance Minister I must say that there are no schemes for removing poverty, ill-health, illiteracy, undernourishment, unemployment and squalor in a definitely oriented way in the Budget which can be called his. Sir, at page 4 of his Budget speech he has found fault with the former Government saying that "during the period the Congress Members of the Legislative Assembly left the Legislature and were detained without trial, almost the entire amount raised by the new taxation measures sponsored by the Hon'ble Finance Minister of the Congress Coalition Cabinet for the purpose of ameliorating the condition of the poor peasants, labourers and the backward people was absorbed in giving fat salaries and special allowances to innumerable persons appointed in various new departments created during the war emergency period." There also he put unliberal criticism against the former Government. He did not say which of the fat-salaried officers are to be retrenched; if he would have said so, we would have been in a position either to support or criticise him in his Budget speech on that point. As a matter of fact, he has not given any hint as to who and how many officers he wants to retrench. If really some of the departments are top-heavy, we have got a right to know that. As he has studied the Budget ten times more carefully than we did, he is in a position to say which of the officers are wanted and whose services are to be dispensed with.

Then, Sir, at page 6 of the Hon'ble Finance Minister's introductory Budget speech he said, "I feel inclined to say that the Grow-More-Food Campaign was not a success." Again at page 11 of the Budget speech, he said, "Due to the short-sighted policy pursued by some of the Ministers of the last Government, these reserves which play such a vital part in the economic life of the rural people were opened under the guise of Grow-More-Food Campaign and about 1,60,000 bighas of reserve land were settled with immigrants to the exclusion of the just claims of the landless indigenous people including Hindus, Muslims and Tribals and Scheduled."

Sir, he has stated that the Grow-More-Food Campaign was not a success. That under the policy of this avowed Grow-More-Food Campaign immigrants have been given preference to others. He admits that the Grow-More-Food Campaign is a necessity. The Congress stands for Indian Federation. Sir, Indian Federation will be a thing in which Assam will be a part of a great organic body. As a part of an organic whole Assam must contribute as far as practicable to the well being of the rest of India. We know in India through famine, inundation and through other freaks of nature there is always shortage of food almost every year. If Congress really wants an Indian Federation and if we want freedom of India, Assam cannot sit silent and allow the rest of India to suffer. They want to usher in an existence of things with all the organic parts of India contented when Federation of India will come forth and for which Congress stands for and the Congress Organisation throughout the length and breadth of India are trying for it. If really you are sincere that you want an Indian Federation and if you are really sincere, in that case it will be your essential duty to help the rest of India, as far as practicable, being a component part of entire India. Can you just put aside waste lands uncultivated and unreclaimed and advocate your policy of Grow-More-Food Campaign in Assam? Do not you want to minister to the necessities of any other part of India when required?

Srijut BELI RAM DAS : May I know from the hon. Member whether he does not want Pakistan ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSHSAMS : I want Pakistan and I want to explain the principle of our stand, and criticise your standpoint. I have got figures to show, Sir, that there are exigencies when land should be thrown out for settlement unstintedly. The Census Report of the year 1941 was not published, but so far as figures of 1931 are concerned, I have got them with me. Therein I find that density of population is as follows—Brahmaputra Valley—171, Surma Valley—438 and Hills of Assam—39 Bengal, that is British Bengal density is 646—as regards population of course. Then the entire Bengal's density is 642. Density of Bihar is 642, Orissa 512, Bombay Presidency 243, the United Provinces 422 and Madras 329.

If we take the neighbouring provinces so far as, Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the United Provinces are concerned, Assam has got the least density and it is thus seen that it is the place where surplus people of the neighbouring Province can migrate for their bare sustenance.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : What is the optimum density of population ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS : It is beyond my knowledge to say that. All I want to say is that if there is surplus population in Bengal, in Orissa and Bihar, then Assam is the fittest place to migrate.

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA : Wherever there is surplus population they should migrate to Assam. Is that the idea ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS : I am coming to that. So Assam has got the least density. It has almost got $\frac{1}{4}$ as much density as that of Bengal or Bihar. So, Congress of Assam vaunting as it does that Assam will be part and parcel of the Federation of India that is envisaged, Assam cannot really shut out immigrants coming to Assam and thus raise a mountain of barrier against immigrants.

Babu RABINDRA NATH ADITYA : Say Australia ; that is better.

Srijut BELI RAM DAS : What about those in Palestine ?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS : Conditions in Palestine are not the same as in Assam. Linguistically, religiously, ethnologically these Assamese people are akin to the people of Bengal. By religion and culture we have got resemblance to Bengal. Analogy of Palestine does not hold good ; circumstances are quite different there. Congress stands for Akhand Hindusthan. It waxes eloquent over Indian rights as far as circumstances in South Africa are concerned. There, the Congress shows its greatest anxiety for Indian liberty and Indian privileges, but why does not Congress show the same sympathy for immigrants who came from Bengal. Having many things in common with them they deserve much greater sympathy than Indians in South Africa and the immigrants are our neighbours also.

Well, Sir, there are other points. The Congress speaks in terms of Indian nationalism. If any Swaraj comes, if any independence to India comes, it will be the independence of Indians. There is only one nation. That is the Congress principle. Now, what does the Congress show us ? If any independence comes to India as a whole, Congress being in overwhelmingly great in number will be masters. They will be 75 per cent. So, if anybody profits, Congress will profit by that sort of Swaraj or independence. Seeing the treatment Congress metes out to the immigrants, we can well foresee that they will mete out the

same treatment to Muslims who will be helpless minorities in that so-called Swaraj. What guarantees are there, what signs are there that Congress will treat us in a different way. You being part and parcel of Indian Federation...

Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: Whom is he addressing, Sir? What is about time limit?

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: I am criticising the Congress Government through you, Sir? I have got a right to speak. I do not want any special privilege. The Hon'ble Speaker has ruled that there will be no time limit.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Of course there is no time limit. But I was just thinking if you are not going far beyond the discussion of the Budget.

Maulavi ABDUL HAMID: He was introducing the question of Pakistan and that owing to remarks from the opposite side, Sir, he has got to criticise the Congress policy.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi ABUAL MAJID ZIAOSH SHAMS: So if you really want to consider the welfare of India as a whole, throw open your waste lands to all people and allow the immigrants to come as they came before and thereby show your real sympathy to Muslims. We know what is your policy? You apprehend that there will be a majority of Muslims here in this Province. It was said that if you scratch the Whigs you get the Tories. So you scratch a congressman you will find him in 90 per cent. cases an out-and-out narrow "Hindu Sabhait."

Now, at page 7 of the introductory speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister he has said that the surplus has been shown in anticipation of the receipt of a sum of Rs. 20 lakhs; otherwise the Budget would have been a deficit one. If the Hon'ble Finance Minister feels that there will be a deficit, why it was not shown like that. On the other hand, there is a closing balance of many lakhs. Here again at the end of the paragraph there is a regrettable exclamation that the financial position of the Province which has been left to us is a bad legacy of the state of things. Again there is a criticism of the former Government.

Then, Sir, coming to minor details regarding some intricacies of the Budget at page 62 of the Detailed Estimates of Demands for Grants for the year 1946-47, I find that a sum Rs. of 1 lakh and 30 thousand has been shown as share cost for the maintenance of the Calcutta High Court. No details have been given as to how this share cost is borne by Assam. It is said in the Budget Memorandum that this share cost is fixed by the award of the arbitrator. But does this arbitrator fixes the share cost arbitrarily? Are we not entitled to know from him on what principles share cost is borne by us?

I think, Sir, as details have been given about the other expenditures it behoves the Finance Department that this figure also should be explained so that we may find under what minor items we have got to bear this expenditure for the maintenance of the Calcutta High Court.

Then at page 64 I find there is a head additional temporary officers under (d) District and Sessions Judges "temporary officers" for which Rs.39,000 has been budgeted as the expenditure. The revised estimates on this head shows only a figure of Rs.2,000 only. Whereas the Budget Estimates of 1945-46 shows a sum of Rs.29,000. If the revised estimate is Rs.2,000 that shows that the Budget figure of 1945-46 of Rs.29,000 was not at all justified. We fail to understand why there should be such high budgeting of Rs.39,000? Do these "additional temporary officers" include temporary Munsifs and Extra Assistant Commissioners? We have seen in the Gazette that some of these temporary Extra Assistant Commissioners have been given a fresh lease of life only up to August or something like that. If that be so, I fail to understand why there should be Rs.39,000 under the head temporary officers. It requires some elucidation.

Then, Sir, coming to narrower questions although important regarding our own district, I would point out a few facts. When about 13 years back out of the duties of the petrol about 3 crores of rupees was sanctioned by the Government of India to Assam for roads, Goalpara did not get a single farthing and in the Post-War Reconstruction of roads, I know, that under the head District Roads, Sylhet will get about 21 lakhs, Kamrup will get about 18 lakhs whereas Goalpara goes in for a poor dole of 7 lakhs only although it is a vast area and Goalpara has not got that sort of artery of roads as most of the districts of the Upper Assam and for the matter of that Sylhet has got. So I will request the Hon'ble Minister to see that Goalpara should come in for its proper share of roads under the head District Roads because there are different heads. So I would request Hon'ble Rev. Nichols-Roy to go into these figures and see that Goalpara to which great injustice has been done in the past and continue to get a shabby treatment from this Government receives its proper share.

As regards embankment and drainage under the head Civil Works, we find embankments have been provided for in many of the districts but so far as Goalpara which badly requires some embankments, we find that no embankment has been provided for although there is a great necessity. I know Mankachar thana from which my Friend Maulavi Abul Kashem comes there are frequent inundations due to sudden flood from the Garo Hills and the crops of the people go under water almost every year. People suffer very much in consequence. So, Sir, embankment is needed there.

So far as Northern Goalpara is concerned it is common knowledge to the hon. Members of this House, it is a well-known fact that there are the Aye, the Manas and the Benki and other hill rivers which place the people sometimes under their mercy. Sometimes the houses of the people are washed away, sometimes the railway line becomes impassable and the traffic has to be diverted. So some embankment for diversion of flood water is necessary also in northern Goalpara.

Lastly, Sir, I would ask the Hon'ble Education Minister to have a soft corner in his heart for the Lady Kerr Girls' High School at Dhubri for which we have been trying for an Islamic teacher to teach Urdu and Persian for the last ten years but we find ourselves always relegated to a cold shade of neglect with the reply that Government has no fund. It is a question of Rs.40 to 50 per month. I will appreciate the present Ministry and feel that they have got really great sympathy for Islamic culture if they can show their actual practical sympathy by giving some money for this much needed one. I would, Sir, conclude with just recapitulating the words of the Hon'ble Finance Minister in his introductory speech where he said :

"May I ask him why this state of things prevails here in India which was one of the richest countries in the world before the advent of the British to this unhappy land ?"

Then again.

"Is not the condition now prevailing in India, as depicted by Sir Archibald Rowland, due to the exploitation of the masses by the British ruling classes which have ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually during this period of 150 years ?"

I would ask, Sir, as they (Congress) are in power, let them not exploit the other party, the other people who are not in power now and let them get their due share.

With these words, Sir, I resume my seat.

*Maulavi Md. ABDULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, budgetary provisions are the mirror of the proposed activities of the Cabinet during the year. It is the

concrete expression of their breadth of vision, ideas and imagination. In this view of the matter the budgetary provisions cannot but disappoint even the blind supporters. It is a stereo-typed *mamuli* thing produced by the guiding hands from behind. I do not know if the Hon'ble Members of the Cabinet were sandwiched in any way. I cannot believe they were, since they profess that the lure of office did not attract them to undertake the responsibility. Promises and pledges are meaningless and pointless unless they can be honourably redeemed. Spectacular demonstration and false propaganda cannot deceive all people for all time to come. Stern realities have to be faced manly and popularity should not be sought but should be the automatic result of redemption of pledges made. It is certainly not a happy role to play into the hands of others or to make some one else the custodian of your conscience. You cannot exercise your discretion and cannot rise to your full height. Let the Hon'ble Ministers rise up to the occasion and prove worthy to be popular Ministers by their achievements. Let them not disillusion the electorate by whose support they were returned.

Sir, to my surprise I find that the so called popular Ministry's Budget is no departure from the past in all material points. The same wasteful extravagance has crept into it. The multiplicity of appointments and re-employment of temporary officers in the various departments continue as before. These might have been necessary evils—the legacies of the war. Now that the war has ended there should be no justification for their retention any longer. In the beginning of war when everything was in a disorganised state, the permanent services did all extra work in addition to their duties. On the plea of overwork new posts and departments were created. Now, there is no justification for their retention. Nine additional listed posts were created for work which could be ably managed by the officers of the Assam Civil Service. Some of them had a big jump over their grade pay from Rs.650 to Rs.1,275. While a junior i. C. S. officer is given a listed post he gets Rs.1,000 per mensem. A member of the Assam Civil Service gets Rs.1,275 irrespective of his grade pay. We are for full Provincial Autonomy and steps should be taken to have a superior service eventually to replace the All-India services (*hear, hear.*) But this superior service should be within the means of this Province. It is no good imitating more affluent provinces. There are 13 more military officers for civil employ in this Province, 30 temporary Extra Assistant Commissioners from among the outsiders and retired officers, 25 temporary Sub-Deputy Collectors and lots of new posts in various branches—too vivid examples of wasteful extravagance. Government is certainly not a charitable institution to find employment for time-barred officers and briefless lawyers. If a judiciary be considered a necessity, why not appoint first class lawyers with one year's experience on the same scale as the Munsifs under the Hon'ble High Court? If the temporary officers can compete with others let them be absorbed but there is no justification to absorb them simply because they held temporary jobs. Without increasing the cadre of the services these temporary incumbents cannot be absorbed and let not the cadre be increased simply for absorbing them. If you do so, you will be playing into the hands of others and will be betraying the trust reposed on you.

Sir, with my experience of Government departments, I can boldly assert that nepotism should have no place and everyone should be given a fair deal. The multiplicity of posts and discontent among the permanent branches of the services impaired the efficiency of the administration. If you really want to tone up the administration, you will do well to see contentment in the permanent services. General administration has deteriorated and steps should be taken to invigorate it. First, have a proper diagnosis and then prescribe. There is no such attempt in the budgetary provisions of the year 1946-47. Sir, as in the past, with equal force, the same charges can be levelled against the present budgetary provisions. It is no use crying hoarse over it, unless at the time of preparation of the Budget

or subsequently, Members' suggestions are carefully examined and acted upon. If the caravan passes on, irrespective of the suggestions offered, the executive ceases to be a popular one irrespective of their propaganda to the contrary. It may be a news to the hon. Members that the appointing authorities made certain appointments of Election Officers being fully conscious that they were not likely to be useful to the district officers. This is an instance how on the plea of finding jobs for the temporary hands posts were created and multiplied at the cost of the provincial exchequer. The present Budget made no provision for abolition of many unwarranted posts.

Sir, corruption is so rampant and what provision is made to stamp it out? Restriction has stemmed the ordinary trade channels of the Province. Instead of having monopolists at the cost of the Government, the quota for each area should have been ascertained and allotted and the society of traders should have been encouraged to indent at their own risk (*hear, hear*). This would have saved the Government a great deal of loss. No machinery would be called for. Simply maintain a price control staff under the district officers. These novice Directors and Deputy Directors with their paraphernalia should go. No attempt is made in the Budget to this aspect of the matter too. Sir, Ministry may come and Ministry may go but the grievances of the poor rural area in matters of controlled commodities, kerosene and cloth remain as before. To be popular what has been done in this Budget?

Another catch-word has been invented to catch the imagination of the people, *viz.*, reconstruction. Was there any construction before? What meagre attempt is made to implement this promise? This Province has no cotton mill, sugar mill or paper mill or the like. It has no Medical, Engineering or Agricultural College, no University or a High Court of its own. But it has the luxury of having a number of Ministers at par with other Provinces. There is no provision in the Budget to exploit the possibilities of the Province. Is this the picture of a popular Government or of a popular Ministry, Sir?

To sum up, I must say that steps should be taken to redress the grievances of the rural area by redeeming the pledges. Trade restrictions imposed by the Provincial Government should be relaxed. A decent burial should be given to the monopolists. Wasteful extravagance and top heavy administration should be abolished in right earnest. Attempt should be made to improve the general administration by making it efficient and healthy. Corruption should be the object of attack. Money thus saved could be spent more usefully for popular demands.

Maulavi MAKABBIR ALI MOZUMDAR:—Mr. Speaker, Sir, I offer my congratulations to the Hon'ble Finance Minister on the presentation of his first Budget. I will not deny the credit to the guiding spirit of the same.

The revised Budget Estimate for 1945-46 shows an opening balance of Trs. 1,94,94 including of the capital receipts. Similarly, the opening balance of the Budget Estimate for 1946-47 has been shown to be Trs. 1,07,90. With inflated receipts, revenue receipt has been shown in the Estimate to be Trs. 5,15,59 and Revenue expenditure has been estimated to be Trs. 5,05,32. Thus, by manipulation of figures, a surplus Budget has been produced to the complacency of the Hon'ble Minister. On scrutiny, it is to be found a deficit than a surplus Budget.

To have a sound Budget it is necessary to base the estimated receipts and expenditure on the actuals of the last preceding three years. It has not been so done in the present Budget Estimate.

Sir, the estimated receipt under the head Land Revenue is inflated by 14 lakhs over the actuals of 1941-45. The marked deterioration in the inflation of currency and the income of the people, has been ignored. There is hardly any ground for optimism of 1945-46. Similarly, the receipts under

the head Rates and Cesses had been inflated by three lakhs over the actuals of 1944-45. If the inflated figures be deducted, the revenue - receipt and estimated expenditure will show the Budget to be a deficit one. With an ingenuity, the Budget has been shown to be a surplus one. It is indeed illusory and unreal and not warranted by the actuals of 1944-45. It is better to face the stern realities than live on false hope. It is no use to be duped by the unreal figures.

The statement of capital income and expenditure is not the true state of affluence of any party. At best it is a test of credit. It is not the part of genuine income. With the help of capital receipts, the closing balance is shown to be Trs 1,07,90 but we are told that the outstanding Treasury bills on 1st March 1946 will be about 3 and half crore. I ask, is it the sign of solvency or proof of a surplus Budget as estimated ?

Sir, the hopeless attempt to show the Budget having a surplus revenue of Trs. 10,27 is no surplus if the inflated receipt be left out. Even with the borrowed feathers, it could not by any stretch of imagination be regarded as such. I must give credit to those who could produce such an illusory and false financial picture of the Province.

I shall confine my comment in respect of some major items only. It is stated at page 11 of the Budget Memorandum that the surplus is mainly due to the fact that the Ministry had no time to think out any new scheme. Is it another attempt to deceive the public ? You cannot deceive all for all time. I will not be surprised, if want of fund swallows up many such vaunted and advertised schemes or nullifies the pledges lavishly made.

For a proper appreciation of the cost of the Provincial Autonomy, I would suggest that every Budget Memorandum may contain the actuals of the year prior to the introduction of the Provincial Autonomy as well as the actual average of the three preceding years of the year to which the Budget estimate relates. I can safely assert that there has been a staggering increase of the expenditure without the corresponding benefit under the so-called Provincial Autonomy: I fully appreciate the position of the Hon'ble Minister who had to be sandwiched between the plea of increased work and reckless commitments of the past under the pressure of the permanent executive here or elsewhere. No attempt has ever been made to survey the alleged volume of increased work. Instances are not rare how the additional posts and departments are being multiplied to add to the dismay of the public. Creation of new temporary posts had added to the corruption. Restrictions are nothing but so many handles for the unscrupulous to swindle the public. Many of them have not even an hour's work. To mention only few, I would point out the posts in the Supply Department and in the Textile and Procurement Departments of the Government. I understand that posts in the Supply Department are being multiplied. With the end of the war these temporary departments should have been abolished and the work should have been taken by the permanent Departments in addition to their duties. Without seeing for yourself, do not yield to the clamour of increased work. It may not be news to the House that due to the creation of many additional temporary posts, some of the permanent incumbents now find time for a mid-day nap. If this be aimed at, the additional temporary posts justify their creation and retention.

On account of State Provident Fund only, the total liability of the Government on the 1st April 1946 will be Trs. 1,30,00. Provincial Excise Revenue shows an increase in the estimated receipt. Is this a healthy sign for the people under a so-called popular Government ? Without casting all our moral scruples to the four winds, we cannot have any complacency on this account.

Sir, I shall be failing in my duty, unless I invite the pointed attention of this House to the budgetary estimate of Trs. 6,10 under the head "Publicity". We

are told in the Memorandum that the increase is due to the expansion and re-organisation of the Department on a scientific basis on the line indicated by the Government of India who contribute 66½ per cent. and 50 per cent. on the recurring and non-recurring expenditure respectively. This reminds one how lavishly one spent the guardian's money. It might be within the recollection of many in this House that it was indeed a pleasure to spend lavishly those days when one lived on guardian's income. Central Government advances money but do not certainly tell us to spend it extravagantly. You have appointed some people in the department without taking into consideration their intrinsic value. This was done in making many other temporary appointments in the various departments. The designation of the Provincial Publicity Officer is changed to that of Director of Publicity and Publicity Officers appointed from various grades of candidates for each subdivision. In Bengal for the rural area Publicity Organisers were appointed on a fixed pay of Rs. 90. They can certainly organise publicity propaganda by the officers of the various departments. The class of Publicity Officers appointed in this Province had no special training in the line. Some appointments were made and they could not be given any work. I should like to mention the case of the mobile unit who did not work and the other men had also little or no work. This is an example of sheer wastage of public money. Those who are responsible for such a state of thing, should have due admonition on the floor of the House. Those who have seen publicity work anywhere will frankly admit that it is serving no useful purpose. Is this the work for which a sum of Rs. 6,10,000 is to be spent? If the publicity is to be effective, better ask officers of the various Nation Building Departments to draw up a monthly programme and submit it to the Deputy Commissioner or the Subdivisional Officer who would arrange conveyance and necessary facilities through the organiser and not the so-called Publicity Officers. Have more Organisers, if possible, one for each thana on a moderate scale and give him one Radio and a publicity centre. Do not make it top heavy (a characteristic of the present day) administration. If you want to have real Publicity Officers have an extempore speech competition and then select incumbents for it. Do not make it a show.

Sir, the Budget Memorandum shows the provision for ten Ministers for this Province. One at Rs. 2,000 per month and 9 others at Rs. 1,000 per month. Has the Ministerial party decided on a higher salary leaving the party ideal and slogan?

Sir, under District administration has been shown 20 Deputy Commissioners and the Province has only 12 districts. If one officer's work is to be done now by two or three, it would be fair to give them the pay of one officer. The Civil List of the Province shows that at present there are 15 listed posts. Thirteen more military officers are also employed for civil work. If the permanent executive has so much deteriorated in quality why not have a revision of their Lee-Loot? If it be not within your control make a representation in proper quarters. There are about 28 temporary Extra Assistant Commissioners employed from the Bar on Rs. 4,00 per month and the budgetary estimate is mixed up.

The budgetary provisions for the temporary officers should have been shown separately. It may be intelligible only to the authors of the same.

It is to be noted with regret that under the Head "Industries" there is a proposed reduction in the expenditure. There is a Director of Industries of the Province. What a hoax it is?

Sir, under head "85 A.—Capital Outlay" on Grain Storage Scheme, the estimated expenditure is shown to be Trs. 3,28,49 and the anticipated recoveries have been shown to be Trs. Rs. 2,75,00 leaving a deficit of Trs. 53,49. We are told that the total lag at the end of 1946-47 will stand at Trs. 4,43,62 from the inception of the scheme since 1942-43. This is no doubt very cleverly put and there should be a thorough inquiry to ascertain the losts of the respective years. Is it mounting up to swallow the entire annual revenue receipt of the Province?

Has the scheme been originated from outside and if so, who is the author of the same and who is going to shoulder the responsibility? It may not be a news to the House that it failed to give any relief to the grower or the consumers. It may be pertinently asked for whose benefit was it introduced? Certainly not for the benefit of the author or its agent or that of the officers of the Department.

The monopolists of the controlled commodities are being maintained at the cost of the Government and the House has a right to know what amount of commission had been paid to all such monopolists from year to year. The Budget Estimate felt shy to specify it. Only the total lag had been estimated roughly. It is disappointing to find that the Budget does not contain any indication to abolish the system not profitable to the Government concerned. It is within common knowledge that the distribution of controlled commodities makes an undesirable distinction between the urban and rural area and similarly in matters of textile goods discrimination is made which cannot but cause hardship on the rural area. Departments have existed for years but no system could be devised as yet. They will simply ask for more officers. I would submit, these systems have added to the miseries of the people. Sooner they are abolished, better it will be for all concerned. It is within common knowledge that even for the marriage or for the sick no self-respecting person can get a permission. The goods indented on Government account by their agent are not always of approved quality. So long the system of indenting through the middlemen remains, it cannot be otherwise. Best thing would have been to ascertain the minimum need of an area and ask the trade channel to indent and stock four months goods always in stock and simply existing give a nominal staff to check the price. This will leave no room for deficit of crores of rupees on Governments account. Supply and the Textile Departments proved failure and they should be abolished.

Sir, post-war reconstruction was much talked of but it is disappointing to find no clear cut scheme in the Budget. Unless the reclamation of some of the dying rivers be undertaken the Province will be at the mercy of the freak of nature. I should like to impress upon the urgent necessity of the reclamation of the river Barak, construction of a bridge over it at Sadarghat in Silchar, prevention of erosion of Silchar town and giving sufficient aid to aided High Schools and Local G.C. College and reconstituting the governing bodies of those institutions without delay.

To sum up, the estimated budgetary provisions do not show any attempt to live within the means of the Province. There is no attempt at retrenchment without impairing the efficiency of the services. There is no provision to provide liberally for the nation-building departments. There is no sincere attempt to spend money with an eye to economy. There is no attempt to mitigate the suffering of the rural area in any way. The Budget of a popular Government should have been different from a stereotyped one.

Maulavi Md. MAFIZ CHAUDHURY:—Mr. Speaker, Sir, I crave your indulgence to speak a few words on the Budget Estimates that have been presented before the House. The old Assembly outlived its normal life and a new election was only possible after a long period of nine years. We naturally expected that a new era would be ushered in with its reconstitution. But going through the figures of the Budget we are filled with a sense of disappointment. There has been no departure from the past and we are confronted with the same old story. There is nothing to enthuse over. No provision has been made to improve the deplorable condition of the poor. No bold scheme has been undertaken to ameliorate the general state of things prevailing in Assam. No attempt has been made to tag the vast natural resources of our fair Province. During the last nine years, much water has flown down the Brahmaputra and the Surma. But unfortunately, Sir, we remain where we were. The new Government cannot shirk their responsibility by laying all blame at the door of their

predecessors. It is their own Budget and they are responsible for every figure that is in it. They could rely on their comfortable majority and come forward with the Budget Estimates at a subsequent session of the Assembly.

Sir, we have heard with rapt attention the impassioned speech of the Hon'ble Finance Minister. A greater portion of the speech is devoted to party propaganda. The Congress programme has found a very prominent place in it. We are sorry to find that the Hon'ble Minister was being haunted by his fear of Pakistan and the Muslim League. He pleads for co-operation and good will and at the same breath do not hesitate to spread venom on the poor immigrant Muslim population of Assam. It is really surprising that the Hon'ble Minister should indulge in insinuations which are unwarranted by facts. Surely this is not the way to pave the way for a healthy atmosphere.

It is false to suggest that since the Muslim League put up the claim to include Assam in the Pakistan zone, huge number of immigrants began to invade Assam as if under a plan. Such an insinuation against a mighty organisation is really unworthy of a Member who is adorning the Treasury Benches. (*Applause* from League Benches and cries of 'Question' from Congress Benches).

With perfect ease he could know the correct state of things. The Revenue Secretary could inform him that the immigrants' invasion of Assam was only a myth and had its origin in the fertile brain of false propagandists. As a matter of fact nature itself invited these Bengali cultivators to cross the artificial provincial boundaries and spread in some parts of Assam. They fought with disease and wild animals and established prosperous villages on desolate tract, of lands. The Hon'ble Finance Minister conveniently forgets the contribution of these cultivators in making Assam healthy and prosperous. I do not know, Sir, who invented the word immigrant. Providence alone knows why an honest citizen should be styled as immigrant for settling from one part to another part of India.

Coming to the Budget Estimates, first of all I am reminded about the sad lot of Primary Teachers in the Province. The persons who are entrusted with the education of our future generations are practically starving. The little doles in the shape of dearness allowances have not improved their conditions. During the last Budget Session of the Assembly a Resolution was passed fixing their minimum pay at Rs.40 per month. But no attempt has yet been made to give effect to that Resolution. A popular Government worth the name should honour the unanimous verdict of the House. If we cannot make these teachers free from want, we cannot expect any real service from them.

Introduction of free and compulsory education, I mean Primary Education, is the foremost need of the day. At the instance of the last Government a survey was undertaken. In no time the Special Officer appointed for the purpose will submit his report. We only hope that the report will receive the earnest consideration of the Government and all endeavours will be made to make Primary Education free and compulsory in the Province. (*Hear, hear.*)

The Medical School at Sylhet is rotting in neglect. Huge sums of money were spent in erecting the buildings. May we hope that the present Government will rise above valley-patriotism and start the much needed Medical College in the buildings.

Sir, coming from Sunamganj as I do, I cannot conclude my remarks without referring to the utter lack of communication that prevails in the Subdivision. The Sylhet-Sunamganj Road, the only road of its kind in the whole area could not be finished within a period of nine years. The work is progressing in snail's pace. The bridges are yet to be constructed. If it continues in the present rate, it will take another decade to finish the work. We request the present Government to take up the project in right earnest and finish it as quickly as possible.

Sir, I will be failing in my duty if I do not refer to the cloth and kerosene famine that prevails in the country. War has ended but our miseries created by

war emergencies did not end with it. Black—marketing and profiteering has added enormously to our difficulties. The officers who were put in-charge of distribution did not discharge their duties with a clear conscience. I would humbly suggest an all-Party drive against corruption. (*Hear, hear.*)

Sir, the day is not far away when we will achieve Pakistan (*Hear, hear* from Muslim League Benches and *Never, Never* from Congress Benches) and the fair Province of Assam will form a component part of the Islamic State. The Hon'ble Finance Minister should not be afraid of Pakistan which will mean freedom from want, and freedom from misery. Pakistan alone will save the masses not only from exploitation by the British Ruling classes but also from the exploitation by the Brown Bureaucrats of India. (*Applause* from Muslim League Benches.)

Maulavi MUHAMMAD ABUL KASHEM:—Mr. Speaker, Sir, at the very outset I must mention that it is no good discussing the figures of the Budget this time, as the Hon'ble Finance Minister has made it clear that they had no time to prepare the Budget in accordance with their policy and programme. Let us then wait for what they present during the next session in July. But myself as a representative of the poorest of the poor in the Province shall be failing in my duty to them if I do not suggest some means for the amelioration of their conditions. As the Cabinet declares its policy of good will and mutual co-operation, my discussions should not go in vain if those are actually practical and useful for the uplift of our people in general. Being a native of a neglected village in the neglected South Bank of the Dhubri Subdivision in the most neglected district of Goalpara, sharing the common fate of the poor, I can truly feel and represent the causes of the poor mass people. Before taking up the matters of different discussions, I would painfully state that it has become a fashion with the Government to do injustice to the people of Goalpara district in particular. I do not know what is at the root of this scourge of Government. It might be that our Government is literally interpreting the Goalpara district as "the hamlet of milkmen" who will simply supply milk and butter to others having nothing for them. I appeal to the good sense of the Cabinet and request them to do justice to us by fixing quotas of Provincial Services and scholarships, strictly on population and communal basis for the safeguard of the interests of these backward and neglected Muslims and non-Muslims of the district.

Education.—To remove poverty of the people and to ameliorate their condition, we should first of all try to foster the light of education in them. The existing system of Education—Primary, Secondary and College, is defective and the provision inadequate. In every civilised country Primary Education is compulsory and why should we be an exception to it? Government might say that they have no funds at their disposal for taking such a big enterprise, but I would say money cannot stand as a barrier against this noble cause, if the Government sincerely and whole-heartedly feel the need for it. Necessity is the mother of invention. First by introducing free compulsory primary education, let us create the necessity for greater income to meet the increased expenditure, and then the means will be automatically found out by way of new taxation touching the richer section.

The Government should do away with the dual control of Boards and Deputy Inspectors over the Lower Primary and Middle Schools. The Government should make provision for sanctioning enhanced pay to Lower Primary School Teachers.

In the sphere of Secondary and College education, I urge upon the Government to make a wholesale change by deprovincialisation. Both the Aided and Government Schools and Colleges are to maintain the equally qualified staff, to impart the same education and to follow the same syllabus and curriculum. Why then the Teachers and Professors of Aided Schools and Colleges should live such a miserable life? Moreover, Government Schools and Colleges

are maintained in the towns where there are sufficient number of persons to organise and manage their own institutions for the education of their own children. On the other hand, villagers are neither capable of organising or managing an institution nor they realise the value of it due to their ignorance. Should the Government then continue to carry coal to New Castle? Will the Government please do away with this injustice and make arrangements to redress the grievances of the teachers of the Secondary Schools and the professors of aided Colleges?

Now I come to point out the difficulties in my Constituency. Government is aware of the fact that South Salmara and Mankachar Thanas of Dhubri Sub-division are subjected to yearly flood and inhabitants are poor, but still, not to speak of showing special favour to them, they have not been given their own dues.

The three Aided High Schools at South Salmara, Mankachar and Hamidabad are getting such inadequate and nominal grants that their existence is being threatened. Will the Government be pleased to treat these Schools with sympathy and sanction adequate grant-in-aid? It will not probably be out of place to mention with gratitude that the High School at Mankachar was started by the public with this humble self as the Headmaster on 23rd March 1939 at the instance and initiative of Hon'ble Mr. G. N. Bardoloi, who was pleased to pass remarks as follows on 28th January 1939 on his visit to the Middle English School at Mankachar. "Why this School has not yet been able to venture for a High School status has not yet been understood by me.....I hope with the usual enterprise of Khan Bahadur we shall see this School seeking fair way for a High School in the near future". Though the Government favoured the school with the sanction of some grants in the very year of its start, it is still getting quite inadequate grant. There is a long-standing Middle English School at Sukchar in the South Salmara Police Station which shows brilliant result every year but it gets no grant from the Government. There are Middle English Madrassahs at Mahendraganj in Garo Hills and at Jhandanga in Mankachar Police Station with inadequate and nominal grant-in-aid. Will the Government do justice to these institutions by sanctioning enhanced grants in consideration of the backwardness and poverty of the locality?

Supply Department.—The pressing need of clothes has reached its climax. Our sisters and mothers are going almost naked or half-naked. Immediate steps should be taken to have increased quota of textile goods regularly. District Officers should be directed to take keener interest in the matter. As the Deputy Commissioners are over-worked, it would have been better to entrust the Additional Deputy Commissioners with the entire charge of the Supply Branches exclusively. If this is done, the existing black-marketing and mal-distribution would be soon stopped. For want of a whole time officer of Deputy Commissioner's rank, the officers of the Department get opportunities to exercise their discretion in favour of their favourites. A strong committee with the true public representatives may be soon formed for each Subdivision or the District as the case may be to advise the Subdivisional or District officer from time to time as to the manner in which profiteering and black-marketing is to be stopped.

If Government is assured of constant and adequate supply of textile goods, cloth rationing may be forthwith introduced in rural areas; but if the supply is uncertain and inadequate, shops in each zone may be sanctioned with local surveillance Committee to be formed with the consent of the public of the zone and not at the will and desire of the officers and the dealers. Moreover, Government should do away with the intermediary in the cloth distribution. If too much stress is given to the interest of the businessmen in the line people will be groaning heavily under their oppressive pressure.

Public Works Department and Post-war Reconstruction.—Public Works Department seems to take lukewarm interest for the people of Dhubri South Bank. There is

no road of the Department save and except the Trunk Road that fortunately passed through that Bank but unfortunate as we are, at the touch of our magic wand of misfortune the Trunk road there has become merely a pair of parallel lines on the surface without any more sign of a road. Government is surely aware of this state of affairs and I do urge upon the Government to take up the works of reconstruction of the Trunk Road as well as taking over works of some village roads in the area. In this connection it may be stated that there is not an inch of local Board Road in Mankachar Police Station.

Mankachar and Tura are inter-dependent. The road is of extreme need for the whole year but its condition has not been sufficiently improved for the purpose. It is imperative to construct permanent bridges over all the streams and Kalo-river with a view to giving transport facility for the whole year. Mankachar is the gateway to Garo Hills and as such an Inspection Bungalow there is of extreme importance.

Forest Department.—In the Budget speech the Hon'ble Finance Minister points out that due to the cessation of hostilities there will be fall in revenue. I, therefore, request the Government to order the Divisional Forest Officer, Garo Hills, to have open market sale of green and dead wood to the public who are passing their days in difficulty since the outbreak of war in Europe. Will the Government please consider the question of abolishing the post of a Conservator along with that of the Commissioner of Divisions as both these officers have proved to be mere two white elephants.

Industries.—I would like to suggest that the Government should introduce some cottage industries in the secondary schools for their speedy expansion. Sericulture may be included as one of them. I request the Government to introduce sericulture in the schools by creating a post of Assistant Inspector of Schools for Sericulture in the near future. One B. T. with training in Sericulture should be prepared if the suggestion is approved and a Sericultural Demonstrator should be provided to every recognised High School.

Local Self-Government.—The Hon'ble Finance Minister realises "the principle of taxing the rich who can well-afford to bear the burden" and as such he can surely realise the injustice that has been done to the carters due to the levying of tax on carts by the Boards. I personally know that in a number of cases carters are to pay the taxes by selling their bullocks or buffaloes or the very wheels of the cart. This being the case, there is no justification for taxing the poor carters who having failed to take to better profession, took to this profession of dishonour and manual labour. I, therefore, urge upon the Government to see its way to remove this heavy burden of taxation in no time by asking the Boards to do away with the system and compensating the Boards with adequate grant.

Agriculture.—This Department, is meant for the interest of the agriculturists but it is a matter of great regret that the officers of this Department are in touch only with their files and not with the public for whom they are meant. The working of this Department is far from satisfactory. I urge upon the Government to see to this and to post one separate Inspector for Mankachar Thana to help the people to take to such agriculture as will yield good return and will not be damaged by yearly flood. The Inspector at South Salmara should work for that Thana only. The number of good active Demonstrators and Kamdars may be increased.

Veterinary.—The working of the Veterinary Department is rather far more unsatisfactory. Is the Department meant only for treating the dogs and horses of the Europeans and aristocrats? If so, I have nothing to say save recommending for its abolition. But if it is for the agriculturists' cattle, I must say, it is doing nothing in practice. Government takes no interest in it. Even there are ridiculous division of area of operation of each dispensary. There is a veterinary dispensary at Mankachar proper for some portion of the Garo Hills only while

Mankachar Thana is under the area of Sukchar dispensary which is at a distance of about 20 miles from Mankachar. Will the Government be pleased to include Mankachar Thana under Mankachar dispensary from the commencement of the next session.

Medical and Public Health.—There is only one dispensary in Mankachar Thana. People who live at a distance of 5 to 12 miles are deprived of its services. I urge upon the Government to sanction two dispensaries of any grade one for Kalapani and the other for Diarah to meet the crying needs of the public. Death roll is heavy in these areas.

General Administration.—Ministerial officers have been representing their just cause for the increment of their pay and dearness allowance just to enable them to take two meals a day. I personally know the embarrassment of many ministerial officers in the Province. Their deplorable condition beggars all description. It is very painful to say that many of the officers had to rent out their dwelling houses in towns and send their families to their village in the care of some distant relations and to live in the hotel or in mess or with some gentlemen as private tutors. Many of these officers have irreparably lost their own health. Their wives and children in many cases have become victims of many diseases due to their living an unaccustomed life in the village with insufficient money to procure bare necessities of life. Probably 50 per cent. of the officers and their families are to go without two full meals a day.

Very earnestly, I urge upon the Government to redress the grievances of these officers without loss of time. Should we do injustice to them due to their sole dependence on us for justice? Should we not consider that the Postal employees with better pay and allowance have been given assurance of better scale of pay, etc., because of their threatening for commencing a strike? Should the Government compel our ministerial officers to create dead-lock by commencing a strike to have their legitimate demands met? Will it not bring discredit to a Government in Indian hands?

Before coming to a conclusion I am painfully constrained to record my protest against the remarks made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister regarding the inclusion of Assam in Pakistan zone. He has said: "It suffices to say that the British Government refused to accede to the demand of the Indian National Congress on behalf of the people of India for immediate declaration of complete independence and a Constituent Assembly elected by the people to frame the Constitution of Free India with full safeguards for the protection of minority rights." I request the Hon'ble Minister to consider what he meant by safe-guards for the protection of the minorities. If this means safe-guards for the protection of the Muslims as well, the Hon'ble Minister should not be panic-stricken at the idea of Pakistan which is only for the safe-guards of the Muslims—a minority in India. If he sincerely treat us as his brethren, I request him to go deep into the scheme of Pakistan as an impartial judge to see if it is anything but safe-guard of Muslim interest.

Muslim immigrants, to speak the truth, do not come to invade Assam. They have no means to earn their livelihood in Bengal and as such they are to take shelter in the jungles of Assam just to get two meals a day. I earnestly request the Government to treat them from humanitarian points of view and they should not be condemned and maltreated for no other fault than that they are Muslims. I have got every sympathy for our landless indigenious people but the state of helplessness of these immigrants demands prior consideration. By this I do not mean to say that I do not support the view of not settling lands with those who have sufficient lands but I mean to say that those who are actually homeless and landless should be given shelter by dereservation. This

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I say because of the fact that needs of land for landless indigenous people will come after some time when we may reasonably have improved method of cultivation and agriculture with better return per Bigha and that the need for land has become pressing for immigrants for their present existence.

With these words, Mr. Speaker, I conclude my speech of the day.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I have been informed that the hon. Member Srijut Gauri Kanta Talukdar will like to speak.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on this occasion while discussing the Budget there seems to be no room for criticising the Ministry as in fact they are not its authors. And the adverse and uncalled for criticisms that are being levelled against the Hon'ble Finance Minister by some of the hon. Members of the Opposition will certainly fall upon the critics themselves like a boomerang. But we shall not be wrong if we throw some suggestions for their consideration that may be helpful in their serving the people and in removing certain public grievances.

Sir, the most important problem to which I desire to draw their serious attention is the top-heaviness of our provincial administration. The stumbling block that confronts a popular Ministry in introducing measures beneficial to the masses and in their endeavours to do justice to the lower order of public servants is this top-heaviness of the administration. The lion's share of our provincial revenue, Sir, go to the pockets of the high officials of the superior services with salaries which are to be counted by hundreds and with halting allowances and mileages equally fat—whereas a mere pittance falls to the lot of the humbler sections of the Government and semi-Government servants. A glance at the pages of the Civil List will fully corroborate my remarks.

As if to add to this heavy burden of liabilities our Government have been incessantly multiplying such big posts without the slightest compunction, and without the least regard to the capacity of the public exchequer. It seems, Sir, under the present system, there cannot be a Director of a Department without a Deputy Director: there cannot exist a Superintendent of Police without one or more Additional Superintendents of Police and some Deputy Superintendents of Police: there cannot be a District Magistrate without one or more Additional District Magistrates. The Director of Public Instruction under the present system, it seems, cannot be expected to possess the abilities, integrity or fairmindedness to look to the interest and welfare of all communities; so there must be as many Assistant Director of Public Instruction as there are communities. Then again in spite of their getting the help from these Deputies and Assistants and in spite of their being no sufficient work to do, these high officials are required to be relieved of the arduous task of using their hands and they must be provided with Stenographers to receive their dictations. Though Mahatma Gandhi can make time to write articles and replies to letters even in running trains, our high officials feel it to be beneath their dignity to use their hands in writing orders, etc., while comfortably seated in their office rooms. And they must have Stenographers.

Now, Sir, let us look at the other side of the picture. An Orderly, a Process-servant Peon and an office Chaprashi start with a monthly pay of Rs.12 and end with Rs.17 a month: a Mandal begins with Rs.15 per month and ends with Rs.20 per month: teachers of Lower Primary and Middle Vernacular Schools start with Rs.12 per month and end with Rs.14 a month. Normal passed teachers of Middle Vernacular Schools under Local Boards get Rs.15 per month and seldom have the good fortune of getting Rs.29 a month: Poddars of Government treasuries start with Rs.25 per month and end with Rs.30 a month. The Lower Division Clerks of District offices begin with Rs.35 per month and end with Rs.80 per month. The lot of the teachers of Aided High English and

Middle English Schools is equally miserable. There a Matric passed teacher gets Rs.25 per month and a graduate teacher generally gets Rs.40 to Rs.50 per month. Sir, in this statement I have not taken into account the petty reliefs these persons are getting in the shape of dearness allowance or free rations as these are purely temporary. Sir, this is the common lot of our hard-working Government and semi-Government servants of the lower orders. Their miseries can better be imagined than described. The fate of the Government Servants who come in between these two classes cannot be said to be much better.

Sir, this unfair and deplorable discrimination in treatment towards different classes of public servants, this partiality shown to the officials of the superior ranks, this policy of feeding a few and keeping content a section of the Government servants and ruling the dumb masses through them is a well-established policy of our bureaucratic Government. Sir, it is this policy and this top-heaviness of the Central and Provincial administrations imposed upon us by our foreign rulers which is responsible for most of our privations and sufferings. It has rightly been said by Mr. Leonard M. Schiff that the British rulers are running in India "a Rolls Royce administration in a Bullock Cart country" and that their rule in India is "damnably expensive". Sir, it is a pity that some of our own countrymen holding responsible positions do not see through this trick and thoughtlessly follow and further this baneful policy.

Sir, this policy and this top-heaviness of the administration can no longer be tolerated. I, therefore, hope that this Ministry will boldly take some drastic measures such as retrenchment, etc., to do away with this top-heaviness and will also think thrice before creating or confirming high posts in future. And I hope they will initiate and boldly pursue a new policy of serving the masses and giving adequate relief to our hard-working half-fed public servants of the lower and middle orders who in fact form the foundation of the administration even with the extremely limited powers at their disposal. Sir, I am not unaware of the fact that under the present so-called autonomous Government the Ministry and as a matter of fact this Hon. House have very little power over the Provincial revenues and that the share over which we have authority to exercise discretion is also extremely slender. However even within these limitations we must try to do what little service and justice can be done to the masses and the much neglected public and semi-public servants of the people.

Sir, I shall be failing in my duty if I do not mention here one very important item that should receive the Government's consideration in connection with the post-war development schemes. It is the question of creating a subdivision at Nalbari comprising the Nalbari, Rangiya and Barama thanas. The necessity of creating this subdivision has been more than once recognised by the Government in the past. I hope my request will not fail to receive this Government's serious attention.

Sir, I also like to point out that Sanskrit education, as a matter of fact *Sanskritic* culture, has been systematically neglected and it has received merely a step-motherly treatment at the hands of the past Ministries as has been rightly pointed out by our late Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Small, in his Quinquennial Reports. I may mention here a few instances. The past Ministries in spite of their recognising that the "Brittamanjari" of the late Mahamahopadhyaya Dhireswar Acharya was a monumental work on Sanskrit prosody and that it was worth publishing at Government cost, did not care to publish it in spite of my repeated requests made since 1937. The Sanskrit College at Nalbari which teaches nine important subjects has also failed to receive its due share of Government grant in the past.

Sir, "*Kaitheli Anka*" is a brilliant relic of achievement of our forefathers in the field of Arithmetic and Mensuration. It is going to get extinct. It failed to receive the last Government's due consideration. And in spite of my constant demands made since 1937 the Government have practically done nothing even to finish the work of collecting the various treatises on the subject lying scattered all over the Assam Valley by deputing some able person having interest in the subject. I hope this Government will see that this valuable branch of ancient knowledge does not get extinct.

Similarly, the Assamese system of "Jyotish" or Astronomy on which the preparation of our Assamese "Panjika" (Almanac) depends is going to get extinct and supplanted by other systems for want of timely protection. It has not, in spite of my requests in the Assembly, received due considerations in the past. I hope this Government will depute some capable "Jyotishi" (Astronomer) to conduct research work in this system and submit a report and in the meantime to get the volume known as "Khanda-Sadhya" properly edited and published at Government cost.

Sir, the Ayurvedic system of medicine which is the mainstay of our villagers has not received due consideration in the past. Since 1937 I have been urging the Government to establish an Ayurvedic College at Gauhati without success. I hope this Government will not neglect to do justice to this important matter.

Sir, I also desire to refer to the Nalbari-Palla Road in my constituency. It is a very important road which connects a large number of thickly populated villages of four Mauzas with the Small Town of Nalbari, an important business centre of the Kamrup district.

*Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA: On a point of information, Sir, does the hon. Member mean to say there should be a subdivision at Nalbari?

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR:—Certainly. Sir, Demands for a subdivision at Nalbari has already been made and the Government have recognised the justice of the demand and now they should satisfy this demand by including it in the Post-War Development schemes.

*Srijut PURNA CHANDRA SARMA:—What is the opinion of the hon. Member?

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: I have already given my opinion. There should be a subdivision at Nalbari.

(A voice:—Why not at Rangiya?)

Now, Sir, this road connects the Gauhati subdivision with the Barpetta subdivision. It is subject to very heavy cart traffic, and its condition is simply miserable. The Gauhati Local Board which maintains it can hardly afford to give it as much attention as the road deserves. I hope the Government will not fail to include this road in their Post-War Road Development schemes.

The Amingaon-Hajo-Nalbari Road is another important road under the Gauhati Local Board and it equally deserves to be included in the Post-War Road Development schemes.

In conclusion, Sir, if you would allow me to take a little more time, I will draw the attention of the Hon. House to the unequal rates of fares and freights charged by the two carrier companies on the Gauhati-Shillong and the Shillong-Sylhet Roads. Sir, the distance between Gauhati and Shillong is 63 miles and the distance between Sylhet and Shillong is 86 miles. But the disparity

between the rates of fares and freights charged by these two Companies on these Roads are simply astounding. The charges are as follows:—

GAUHATI-SHILLONG ROAD—63 MILES

RATES OF CHARGES OF THE COMMERCIAL CARRYING COMPANY, LIMITED

	Rs.	a.	p.
Fares 1st class	17	0	0
„ 2nd „	10	0	0
„ Inter „	5	0	0
„ 3rd „	2	4	0
Freight per maund—luggage and parcel	2	8	0
„ „ „ goods	1	0	0

SYLHET-SHILLONG ROAD—86 MILES

RATES OF CHARGES OF THE UNITED MOTOR TRANSPORT COMPANY, LIMITED

	Rs.	a.	p.
Fares 1st class	18	0	0
„ 2nd „	8	0	0
„ Inter „	4	0	0
„ 3rd „	2	8	0
Freight per maund—luggage and parcel	2	0	0
„ „ „ goods	1	0	0

Now, Sir, the above figures will show what grave injustice is being done to the passengers and the general public—who have to make use of the Gauhati-Shillong Road. The rates of fares and freight charged on the Gauhati-Shillong Road by the Commercial Carrying Company, Limited—if brought to the level of the respective charges of the United Motor Transport Company, Limited on the Sylhet-Shillong Road will stand as shown below:—

	Rs.	a.	p.
Fare 1st Class	13	3	0
„ 2nd „	5	13	0
„ Inter „	2	15	0
„ 3rd „	1	13	4
Freight on luggages and parcels	1	7	6
„ „ goods	0	11	9

Sir, I do not grudge the lower rate of fares and freights charged on the Sylhet-Shillong Road. The charges there cannot be considered to be low. What I want is that the charges on the Gauhati-Shillong Road should be brought to the level of the charges made by the United Motor Transport Company, Limited on the Sylhet-Shillong Road. For the sake of fairness and justice, the Government ought to take the earliest steps to remove this disparity. And if any loss be found to be caused to the Commercial Carrying Company, Limited by this equalisation of the rates, the Company should be adequately compensated. This important question, Sir, I wanted to bring before the Hon'ble House in the shape of a Resolution. But unfortunately my Resolution happened to receive a very low position in the list on lottery. And there is little chance of its being discussed during this session. Hence I have introduced the question in connection with this Budget discussion as I consider the matter to be highly important. Sir, with these few remarks and after offering my congratulations to the Hon'ble Finance Minister for his fine budget speech, I resume my seat.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 2 P. M., on Friday, the 15th March, 1946.

SHILLONG,
The 17th April, 1946.

A. K. BARUA,
Secretary, Legislative Assembly, Assam.