

JACO. HANSEN

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CHRYSTIAN

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Proceedings of the Sixth Session of the First 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 Tuesday, the 14th March, 1939.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(to which oral answers were given)

(Starred questions Nos. 73—75 cancelled.)

(Starred question No. 76 standing in the name of Mr. Kedarmal Brahmin was not put and answered as the questioner was absent.)

Appointment of Lecturers

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

*77. (a) Are Government aware of the fact that certain lecturers are better qualified than some of the members of the Provincial Educational Service (A.E.S., Class I) ?

(b) If so, do Government propose to appoint all as lecturers and then promote them to Class I after a specified number of years ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

77. (a)—If the hon. member means "academically better qualified", it is true that some lecturers are better qualified than some members of Class I of the Assam Educational Service formerly appointed.

(b)—All appointments are now made in the Lecturers' class except to the posts of Heads of Departments of study. Lecturers are eligible for consideration when vacancies occur in those posts. Government do not propose to modify these arrangements.

(Starred questions Nos. 78 and 79 standing in the name of Srijut Purna Chandra Sarma were not put and answered as the questioner was absent.)

(Starred question No. 80 standing in the name of Maulavi Mabarak Ali was not put and answered as the questioner was absent.)

Contribution to Government by Birla Brothers for education of the tribal and scheduled caste people of Assam

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI asked :

*81. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that the Government of Assam is going to receive for 5 years, an annual contribution of Rs.25,000 for the education of the tribal, the Harijan and the backward Muhammadans from the Birla Brothers of Calcutta ?

(b) Whether the immigrant Muhammadans in the Assam Valley come under the category of "Backward Muhammadans" ?

(c) If so, are Government collecting any statistics, subdivision by subdivision, to ascertain—

(1) The number of such immigrants ?

(2) Their immediate needs in the matters of (a) primary and (b) secondary education ?

(d) Whether Government has fixed any percentage of the amount to be spent annually for the backward Muhammadan community out of that contribution ?

(e) If so, what amount will be allotted for the subdivision of Goalpara and other subdivisions of the Assam Valley districts ?

*82. Are Government aware that the immigrant Muhammadans of the Goalpara subdivision are educationally backward and are in urgent need of financial help for education?

*83. Do Government propose to consider the claim and requirements of the immigrants of the Goalpara subdivision in the matter of allocation of fund for backward Muhammadans?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied:

81. (a)—No. Government expect to receive a sum of Rs. 10,000 annually for five years on account only of the tribal people and scheduled castes' education.

(b)—Generally, but without reference to the contribution mentioned in the preceding question, Government are prepared to accept them as such.

(c) (1)—Government do not consider that the elaborate and expensive arrangement which this would require would be repaid. An approximate idea, sufficient for the purpose, can be obtained from the Census Report of Assam, 1931, Part II, Table VI.

(2)—Careful enquiries have been made by the Inspectors, on which Government have framed a scheme for all the classes in contemplation for expenditure of the sum budgeted to help on the education of special classes.

(d)—It is not considered feasible or desirable to deal with such matters by means of percentages, particularly where Government propose to spend money on grant-in-aid to schools, in view of the fact that schools may admit members of more than one such class.

(e)—Does not arise.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I enquire whether the offer was spontaneous from the Birla Brothers?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: A request was made by me.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Whether the request was made as Premier of Assam or as mere Srijut Gopinath Bardoloi?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: The matter was under correspondence even before I took up office.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Not as the Prime Minister of Assam Government?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: I cannot say anything more than what I have said.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: That is quite plain. Even before he took office the matter was under correspondence, that is the answer.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Did not the question of Muhammadan education occur to him?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Not at the time.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I then take it now that the Hon'ble Premier has taken some consideration about the backwardness of Muhammadan Education among immigrants?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: The reply is already there. We have allotted a sum of Rs. 25,000 and in that the consideration of immigrants will be taken into consideration.

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied:

82.—Government are prepared to accept the statement.

83.—They will certainly be considered.

Construction of Kachua bridge

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA asked :

*84. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) When the Kachua bridge was constructed on the Sylhet-Cachar Trunk Road ?
- (b) How long it took to be constructed ?
- (c) At what cost it was constructed ?
- (d) How long after completion of its construction, defects were noticed and reconstruction taken in hand ?
- (e) Who were responsible for its construction and supervision during construction ?
- (f) What is the estimate of expenditure for its re-construction ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

84. (a) and (b)—The construction of the bridge was commenced on the 14th December 1936 and was completed on 5th April 1937.

(c)—Rupees 70,679.

(d)—Movement of the piles due to the bank slipping was first detected in April 1938. The serious flood in September 1938 caused further slipping of the bank and consequent damage to the pile piers. Dismantlement of the bridge commenced in November 1938.

(e)—Messrs. Burn & Co. Ltd. of Howrah constructed the bridge and the following officers were in charge during construction :—

Superintending Engineer	...	Mr. K. E. L. Pennell, I.S.E.
Executive Engineer	...	Mr. Ramesh Chandra, I.S.E.
Subdivisional Officer	...	Mr. Mohit Chandra Chaudhury, A.E.S.
Sectional Officer	...	Srijut Doyaram Das, S.E.S.

(f)—The detailed estimate for the reconstruction of the bridge is under preparation. It is likely to be Rs.32,000 (approximately).

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: With regard to question (d), may I know whether after the defects were detected, Government think it necessary to impose any punishment on the persons concerned ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: The matter is under consideration.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: I want to know whether the contractor is responsible for doing bad work or the supervising authority ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: The whole thing is under consideration. I do think that any one is particularly responsible for this measure.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I know whether in giving contract, conditions are given to the contractor that if the works are not executed satisfactorily some punishment would be imposed upon them ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: The unfortunate incident is due to the abnormal flood.

Maulavi GHYASUDDIN AHMED: May I know after how long the completion certificate for this bridge was granted ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: I want notice of that.

Maulavi MAHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: I want to know whether the completion certificate has at all been granted?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Must have been granted.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: How does the Hon'ble Minister assume it, Sir? I want to know definitely from him whether it has been granted or not. That is my question.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: It must have been granted.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Is that the answer, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Yes, that is the answer. But whether it satisfies the hon. member, is another question.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: It is an assumption, Sir. May I take it like that, or as knowledge based on facts?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The nature of the answer shows that.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: If it is not based on facts, then should not the answer be 'I do not know'?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: The certificate has been granted.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: May we know whether the payment has already been made?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Yes.

Additional expenditure for Reforms

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked:

*85. Will Government be pleased to state the additional expenditure of the Government of Assam for the inauguration of the Reforms of 1921 and 1935 respectively?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied:

85.—Approximately Rs.28,60,000 and Rs.11,71,000 respectively.

(Starred question No. 86 standing in the name of Mr. Kedarnal Brahmin was not put and answered as the questioner was absent.)

Construction of a bridge over Haripani

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI asked:

*87. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether a numerous signed petition dated 10th January, 1939, submitted by the people of Goalpara and addressed to the Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department through the Subdivisional Officer and the Deputy Commissioner, Goalpara, pointing out the necessity of bridging the Haripani stream has been received by Government?

(b) If so, what action Government propose to take to relieve the public grievance mentioned in the petition?

*88. (a) Is it a fact that the Haripanighat ferryman charges passenger-buses Rs.2 (two) each way over and above a toll per head on each passenger travelling in the bus as mentioned in the petition mentioned in question No. 87 ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to state whether it is warranted by rule or law ?

*89. Are Government aware that the approaches to the Haripanighat slopes down to the stream over red soil which becomes very slippery during monsoon months and as such is extremely risky for buses to pass along such slippery tracks during those months ?

*90. Are Government aware—

(a) That a motor mail service has been established by the Postal Department from 1st of October, 1938 ?

(b) Whether the Haripani stream is a serious impediment to the speedy carrying of mails ?

*91. Are Government aware that the Royal-Subdivisional-Mail contractor of Bongaigaon-Jogighopa road has approached the Subdivisional Officer, Goalpara, complaining of the exorbitant charges, the present ferryman is insisting to levy on him ?

*92. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact (i) that Maulavi Muhammad Amjad Ali, M.L.A., placed the proposal of construction of the Haripani bridge in the last meeting of the Communications Board and (ii) whether an estimate for construction of the said bridge was decided to be prepared ?

(b) If so, will Government be pleased to lay on the table the estimate of the approximate cost of construction of the said bridge ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

87. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Government have prepared a rough estimate and the matter is awaiting consideration at the next Communications Board meeting.

88. (a)—Government are informed that tolls are charged at the rates fixed by Government.

(b)—Does not arise.

89.—This is a difficulty common to all ferry ghat approaches on streams with a frequently varying water level. Government have no reason to believe that it is any worse at this particular ghat than elsewhere.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I know whether the Hon'ble Minister has ascertained that the approach to the ghat slopes down red soil ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Yes.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I know if it is true of all ghats ? Is it a fact that all other ghats have red soil through which the buses have to pass ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: It is common, Sir.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: If it is so, can the Hon'ble Minister name one or two ghats which have them ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: It is asking the Hon'ble Minister for too much.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I point out, Sir, that I am asking this question, because of the fact that during the monsoon months especially it is extremely difficult for buses to pass over this red soil?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister is trying his best to answer the question.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Is not the red soil more slippery than the black soil?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: That is what I want to know.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think it is better to go to the next question.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied:

90. (a)—Yes.

(b).—Government are informed that the delay is not so long as to be considered a 'serious impediment'.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I ask the Hon'ble Finance Minister whether during his last visit to Goalpara district he was taken over the stream and shown a spot where it is very difficult for people to pass on a vehicular traffic over the stream?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir, that fact was brought to my notice and that will be taken into consideration in due time.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Is it not a fact that the Goalpara Local Board and the public of Goalpara, while presenting an address of welcome to the Hon'ble Minister mentioned this fact to him?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir, that was one of the grievances which they brought to my notice.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I know, Sir, how many there were?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: During the last visit of the Hon'ble Minister to Goalpara was not his attention particularly drawn to this fact?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister has already said that the point was brought to his notice.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: I simply wanted to show, Sir, how pressing the need is.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Did any other Hon'ble Minister go there?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: The Hon'ble Prime Minister also went there. May I know from him whether the construction of the Harapani bridge was brought to his notice also?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: There was reference to one bridge from Jogigopa to Bongaigaon. I remember that. But I do not remember about this bridge.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: But the Hon'ble Finance Minister said that the matter would be taken into consideration in due course.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: That is a very vague term, Sir. We had some difficulty in the matter during the time of the previous Government, but I expected all these schemes will be soon taken up and materialised by this Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: As the hon. member is a member of the Communications Board, the matter may be usefully placed by him before that Board. He should see and approach other members of the Board for an early action in the matter.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I also request the Hon'ble Finance Minister and the other Hon'ble Min'isters to try to help the members of the Communications Board ?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: What can the Hon'ble Minister say whether the hon. member is entitled to make a request or not ? I think the hon. member will be quite within his right to make a request.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

91.—Government are informed that up-to-date the mail contractor has not paid any tol's at all.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Is the Hon'ble Minister aware that the ferry-ghat-man has served the contractor with a notice for the realisation of tolls ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN : I am not aware, Sir.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Will the Hon'ble Minister be pleased to enquire about it ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Yes, Sir.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: When the matter comes before the Hon'ble Minister would he see to it ?

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN: Certainly, Sir.

The Hon'ble Maulavi MD. ALI HAIDAR KHAN replied :

92. (a)—The matter was discussed.

(b)—Government do not consider that any useful purpose would be served by laying the estimate on the table. The amount is Rs. 63,000.

Line System Committee

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

*93. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The reasons under which the Line System Committee came into being ?
- (b) The work, if any, the Committee performed ?
- (c) The number of days for which the Committee worked ?
- (d) The amount of money the Committee had drawn as their travelling allowance ?
- (e) The decision which the Committee arrived at ?
- (f) Whether Government propose to accept the recommendations of the said Committee ?
- (g) If so, when ?
- (h) If not, why not ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

93. (a), (b) and (c)—The hon. member is referred to paragraphs 1 and 2 of Chapter I of the Report of the Line System Committee, 1938, a copy of which was supplied to him.

(d)—Rs. 3,922-11-0.

(e)—The hon. member is referred to Chapter X of the Report of the Line System Committee.

(f)-(h)—The recommendations are under the consideration of Government

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Is it a fact, Sir, that the principle of the Congress is that any Indian can settle in any province without any obstacle?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Does this question arise, Sir?

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Yes, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Very well the Hon'ble Minister may reply.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I can only say that so far as the Congress principle is concerned, no such bar is imposed on any one.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Are Government aware that in Bengal the system of granting domicile certificates has been abolished?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I am not aware what has happened in other provinces.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: How is it, Sir, that the Hon'ble Minister does not know what is happening in the neighbouring provinces?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I cannot help.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Is it a fact, Sir, that the labourers who belong to foreign provinces are not disallowed to settle in the province?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Does that question arise, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Of course, it does not arise.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Is it a fact that Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru recommended for the abolition of the Line System?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member is going too far. He will do well to keep himself within the limits of the question.

Srijiit GHANASHYAM DAS: Will the hon. member follow the Congress policy?

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: What is the question, Sir?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member asks whether the hon. member who is putting these questions will follow the Congress policy?

(Laughter.)
Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: It does not matter whether I follow the Congress policy or not. I want a reply from the Hon'ble Minister.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I refer to section 298 of the Government of India Act that the disability should at once be removed?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: The people, who suffer from such disability, if protected by section 298 of the Government of India Act, can approach the law courts and easily get their remedy.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Sir, do not Government think that they have got any responsibility in this matter?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: The question has nothing to do with the responsibility of the Government in the matter. If any one thinks that his legal right is being jeopardised and that Government is illegally doing harm to him, he is quite at liberty to go to the law courts and get such grievances remedied there.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Sir, I have not got any reply to my question whether it is a fact that the tea garden labourers are not disallowed to purchase lands.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: How does it come within the Line System?

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: He means ex-tea garden labourers.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: I want a reply from the Hon'ble Finance Minister whether the ex-tea garden labourers are allowed to purchase lands and settle in this province.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: No one, Sir, is debarred from purchasing any land.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: Why then differential treatment was made between the Muslim immigrants and the Hindu ex-tea garden labourers?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, as far as I am aware no differential treatment has been made to anybody.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: May I know whether all the ex-tea garden labourers are Hindus?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Not all of them.

Maulavi ABDUL AZIZ: Are the Muhammadan ex-labourers of the tea gardens allowed to utilise the lands?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir, they are also allowed to purchase the lands.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Will the members of this House be given an opportunity of discussing the report of the Line System Committee?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: The House will get plenty of opportunity to discuss this matter when the cut motions were moved.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I want to know whether the report of the Line Committee will be placed before the House and whether the members will be allowed to bring any motion on the report of the Line Committee.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, in this respect, I shall exactly follow the procedure which was followed by my hon. friend when he was a Minister.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, it is absolutely incorrect and quite deliberately the Hon'ble Minister is making a false statement. It will be remembered, Sir, that 23rd September was fixed for the discussion of the report of the Line Committee and as a matter of fact motions were tabled.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I have nothing further to add to what I have already said. I can only say that the matter may come before the House after Government have considered it and come to a decision.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: The reply of the Hon'ble Minister is that the whole matter is under the consideration of the Government. May I know, Sir, for how long this matter is pending before the Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I have already said about this in my budget speech. If my hon. friend had taken care to read it he would have found everything there.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: May I know from the Hon'ble Minister whether the Government will decide by the vote of this House or

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister has replied that after Government have come to a decision about this, the matter will be placed before the House and the members will be given an opportunity to discuss.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: May I know whether the Cabinet members are the Government or the House?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Cabinet Members are the Government.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I know whether it is likely to come up before the House during this session?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: No, Sir.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: How long it will take?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: It will be done as early as possible.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: It is very undesirable to get a reply like this, Sir.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: More than that I am not prepared to say.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: May we know whether the decision will be arrived at within this session?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member will do well to follow the main question.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, is it a fact that the Provincial Congress Committee has formed a Committee to go into the whole question of the Line System?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Are Government awaiting the report of the Committee?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir. The report of that Committee will be taken into consideration.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I take it that the report of the Congress Committee will be taken into consideration?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Are Government prepared to accept the directions of the Congress High Command?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: As the hon. member should be aware, whenever the Provincial Congress Committee takes up any matter it is done according to the principle enunciated by the All-India Congress Committee and the instructions laid down by the All-India Congress Working Committee.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Is it not a fact that during their last visit, both Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose expressed the opinion that the Line System should be abolished?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: What they said during their visit will be taken into consideration by the Provincial Congress Committee.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: May I know, when the land was settled with the Deputy Speaker, whether the recommendation of the Assam Congress Committee was taken into consideration?

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

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: May I ask the Hon'ble Finance Minister whether the present Congress Government are subservient to the orders of the Provincial Congress Committee?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: That is going far beyond the limits of the question.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: As far as I am concerned.

Maulavi ASHRAFUDDIN MD. CHAUDHURY: May I know whether the land settled with the Deputy Speaker was within the Line?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: The hon. member has got the mistaken idea that any new settlement was given by this Government. No settlement has been given by this Government either to the Deputy Speaker or to anybody else.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I know whether the Congress Executive Committee will give consideration to the Line Committee's Report?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: How can Government answer that?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: The members of the Working Committee have asked me to send them copies of Line Committee's report. As such, I think they will give due consideration to the report.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Are Government awaiting their decision?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: No.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I take it that the Provincial Congress Committee's decision will be followed by this Government?

Mr. ARUN KUMAR CHANDA: On a point of information, Sir. Are we discussing Congress politics here? Let the Opposition join the Congress if they are so interested in it.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Why does not Mr. Chanda ask the front benchers like some of the Hon'ble Ministers to join Congress?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Perhaps Mr. Chanda's point is that the members of the Opposition are exhibiting great faith in the Congress policy.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Not only faith, Sir, but we have got very high hopes (*cheers and laughter*).

Coal in the Garo Hills

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI asked:

*94. Has the attention of Government been drawn to the caption "Coal in Garo Hills" in the columns of the daily *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, dated the 22nd August 1938?

*95. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether they have taken any step to ascertain the correctness of the estimate of Dr. C. S. Fox to the effect that there are five hundred million tons of coal in the Garo Hills?

(b) If so, what it is?

(c) If not, why not?

(d) Do Government now propose to take necessary step to ascertain the truth or otherwise of Dr. Fox's estimate?

*96. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Dr. C. S. Fox, Superintending Geologist-in-charge, North-Western Circle, was officially asked to give his expert views regarding the possibility of extraction of coal in the Garo Hills on a commercial basis?

(b) Whether the Hon'ble Prime Minister examined this question locally during his last visit in January 1939 to Garo Hills?

*97. Do Government propose to undertake to work itself or induce reliable Indian firms to work the coalfields, if any, in the Garo Hills to augment the resources of the province ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

94.—Government have seen the article.

95. (a), (b), (c) and (d)—Government are awaiting the receipt of the report of Dr. Fox on the Geological Survey of Assam, which is expected to state in detail the basis for the estimate. Government cannot now say if they will be in a position to verify the correctness of the estimate.

96. (a)—No. But on receipt of certain applications for prospecting for limestone, coal and clay Government consulted Dr. Fox who happened to be in Shillong in course of his tour in the Kham Hills. He expressed the opinion that the coal resources in the Garo Hills are expected to be of great importance in future, but that in view of the difficulty in transport, the extraction of coal, etc., is likely to be a very expensive affair.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : With regard to question 96(a), is it the answer that communication is the only difficulty ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : On account of transport difficulties the coal was not extracted by one of the Companies which had taken permission for a prospecting licence.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : Do not Government think that this coal in the Garo Hills can be extracted if suitable roads are built with transport facilities ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Certainly, Sir, the construction of roads in this particular area will open up the coal fields.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

(b)—No.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : With regard to question 96(b), may I enquire what took the Hon'ble Premier to Garo Hills in January last ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI : I was not at all concerned with the question of mining lease, etc., in view of the fact that there was hardly any applicant for such lease at that time.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : Then what took the Hon'ble Premier to Garo Hills at that time ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI : As the hon. member may know, the Government is proposing a Committee for the consideration of the enlargement of rights in the partially excluded areas, and my particular object among others in going there was to study the conditions and circumstances, to see how far those rights could be enlarged.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : Was it in response to a telegram from Mr. Marak ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI : I do not remember whether I got any telegram from him or not, but before he went to Garo Hills he requested me to go there and study the conditions in the Garo Hills.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : Shall I be incorrect if I say that two of his followers, Messrs. Marak and Momin, were getting shaky.....

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I disallow this question. Hon. members should not take the opportunity of asking such questions and go much beyond the scope of the main question. (Laughter.)

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

97.—Government have recently decided to grant a mining lease to a private Indian concern and the terms have been settled with that firm for a particular area to work limestone, coal and clay.

Accommodation for landless immigrants

Khan Bahadur Maulavi SAYIDUR RAHMAN asked :

*98. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) If on an enquiry, the special Sub-Deputy Collector found a large number of landless immigrants in Laluk Mouza of the North Lakhimpur subdivision and recommended opening of a block of 9,340 bighas for Muhammadan immigrants and a block of 4,000 bighas for Namasudra immigrants in Nao-baicha Mouza ?

(b) Whether it is a fact that the Line Enquiry Committee also endorsed the above recommendation of the special Sub-Deputy Collector ?

(c) If so, will Government be pleased to state what steps they are taking or propose to take to accommodate the aforesaid landless immigrants ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

98. (a) and (b)—Yes.

(c)—The lands in question have already been thrown open for the accommodation of these landless immigrants.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI : Is the settlement with the Hon. Deputy Speaker an instance in point ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : The question does not refer to a place wherefrom the Hon. Deputy Speaker comes.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA : Is it not a fact that all the members of the Line System Committee did not endorse the recommendation of the Sub-Deputy Collector ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Majority of the members consisting the Line Committee made that recommendation.

(Starred question No.99 standing in the name of Mr. Kedarmal Brahmin was not put and answered to as the questioner was absent).

Question re Sub-Assistant Surgeons

Maulavi BADARUDDIN AHMED asked :

*100. (a) Is it a fact that house rent to the Sub-Assistant Surgeons under the Medical Department is allowed up to Rs.20 a month when necessary ?

(b) Is it a fact that the Sub-Assistant Surgeons under the Public Health Department do not get the same privilege when they happen to live in a town ?

(c) Will Government be pleased to state the reason for this differential treatment ?

*101. (a) Will Government be pleased to state why special allowance is allowed to the Sub-Assistant Surgeons under the Public Health Department ?

(b) Is it a fact that this special allowance is given to them under a time-scale ?

(c) If so, what is the principle on which this is based?

(d) Is it a fact that all the Sub Assistant Surgeons under the Public Health Department are entitled to get the maximum amount of the allowance when they complete 12 years' service?

(e) Is it a fact that there is no difference in the allowance given to the Sub-Assistant Surgeons who are on the epidemic unit and others?

The Hon'ble Srijut RAMNATH DAS replied :

100. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes, the maximum allowance permitted in such cases is Rs.10 per mensem.

(c)—The conditions are not the same, for Medical Department Sub-Assistant Surgeons are required to reside in the neighbourhood of the institution which they serve, and draw house rent, if not provided with free quarters, on that account. However the matter has been under the consideration of Government. In view of the recommendation of the Retrenchment Committee all such allowances are under re-examination.

101. (a)—These officers serve under special conditions, *inter alia* they are not allowed private practice.

(b)—No : save that consideration was given to officers with long temporary service when a portion of the staff was made permanent on 1st January 1936, by giving special pay of Rs.30 to those with 10 years' service, Rs.25 to those with over 8 years' service, and Rs.20 only to those with less than 8 years' service; and also that those appointed before that date who are in temporary service draw special pay of Rs. 30 instead of Rs. 20 in their second and subsequent years of service.

(c)—The principle is, of course, to make some allowance for time spent in temporary service, which does not render the officer eligible for increments.

(d)—No.

(e)—Yes : all officers of epidemic units are given a somewhat higher special pay in view of the risks which they run and the hardships and discomforts of their life. This also is being re-examined.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(to which answers were laid on the table)

Appointment of Sub-Assistant Surgeons

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI asked :

28. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Medical Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that new recruits are being appointed to permanent posts of Sub-Assistant Surgeons in preference to competent officiating hands?

The Hon'ble Srijut RAM NATH DAS replied :

28. —No. Appointments are however made on the recommendation of the Public Service Commission, who may recommend a new candidate even when there are applicants who are officiating or temporary.

Questions re mining leases and manufacturing monopolies**Kumar AJIT NARAYAN DEV** asked :

29. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The number of mining leases and manufacturing monopolies granted by Government since the year 1937 ?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that the claims of many local Companies were disregarded in favour of a Bengali Company at Chhatak in Sylhet ?
- (c) If so, what is the total amount of royalty received by Government from that Company ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

29.(a)—During 1938 two mining leases were granted, one of which carried monopoly rights of a kind for a limited period.

During 1939 one lease has been sanctioned but has not yet been executed.

(b)—No.

(c)—Extraction of limestone, etc., has not yet been begun. No royalty is, therefore, payable.

Question re exemption of Muktears from passing the Revenue Agentship Examination**Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR** asked :

30. Will the Hon'ble Revenue Minister be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government has received a representation from the Gauhati Lawyers' Association requesting to exempt Muktears from passing the Revenue Agentship Examination for practising in the revenue courts ?
- (b) Whether Government is aware that the syllabus for both the Muktearship and the Revenue Agentship Examinations are almost identical ?
- (c) If so, do Government propose to exempt the Muktears from the said examination ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

30.(a)—Yes.

(b)—The syllabus is not almost identical.

(c)—Does not arise, but the matter is still under the consideration of the Government.

Questions re flood and grazing fees on buffaloes**Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR** asked :

31. (a) Is the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Revenue aware that the lands which are invariably the victims of flood every year are causing heavy loss to Government in the shape of flood relief and remission of land revenue granted to the settlement holders of those lands ?

(b) If so, do Government propose to pass strict orders for discontinuing settlement of lands which are frequently subject to floods and also for not renewing annual *pattas* issued for such lands?

32. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge be pleased to state

(a) What are the rates of grazing fees on buffaloes in the two valleys?

(b) Do Government propose to bring them to the same level?

33. (a) Is the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Forest Department aware that fine to the extent of an amount equivalent to the amount of grazing tax is imposed on graziers for making defaults in paying grazing fees?

(b) If so, do Government propose to reduce the rate of fine to a reasonable scale?

34. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether they propose to reserve arable waste lands for the future expansion of the present population of the Province?

(b) If so, do Government propose to reserve adequate areas, Subdivision by Subdivision, of arable waste lands available for settlement, for natural expansion of the existing population?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

31. (a)—Apparently by 'flood' the hon. member means such inundation as destroys cultivated crops. Government are not aware of any area where such flood is an annual occurrence necessitating remission of revenue and flood relief measures every year.

(b)—Does not arise.

32. (a)—The rates are as follows :—

Districts	Rate per head per annum
Lakhimpur, Sibsagar, Nowgong, Darrang, Kamrup and Goalpara.	Rs. 3
Garo Hills	6
Sylhet and Cachar	1

(b)—No such proposal has been received from the District Officers or Commissioners but, if desired, Government are prepared to examine the question.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Do not Government recognise that the disparity is such as requires an enquiry on the part of Government?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir, if it is pressed, I shall make an enquiry into the matter.

Srijut MAHI CHANDRA BORA: May we know the reason as to this disparity in grazing fees as between the district of Sylhet and the Assam Valley?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I want notice of this question, Sir.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will Government be pleased to start an early enquiry?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

33. (a)—The rules do not provide for a penalty for non-payment of grazing fees after assessment, and Government are not aware of any such penalty being realised.

(b)—Does not arise.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will Government accept my statement when I say that at least in the subdivision of Gauhati the fine is equal to the grazing tax ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: If the hon. member is prepared to give a specific case, I am prepared to make an enquiry into the matter.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: When the fine is at least equivalent to the original tax in the district of Kamrup, should not Government make an enquiry ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I shall be much obliged if the hon. member will give me one or two specific cases on which to proceed.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: Will the Hon'ble Minister please refer to the Deputy Commissioner ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I did make an enquiry from the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup, and he is not in agreement with what was stated by the hon. member. If any specific case is brought to my notice, I may make further enquiry.

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR: I am quite certain that the fine is exactly equivalent to the amount of the tax. Will Government verify my statement by reference to the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I am accepting the statement of the hon. member, Sir. But unless some specific cases are pointed out to me, I have also no reason to disbelieve the Deputy Commissioner.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

34. (a) and (b)—The matter is receiving the consideration of the Government.

Grant to Srijut Dandi Ram Dutta to carry on research work

Srijut GAURI KANTA TALUKDAR asked :

35. (a) Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of Education be pleased to refer to Government's reply to my unstarred question No.257 asked in the last Budget Session of the Assembly and state what consideration has been made with regard to the hope given by Government for making a grant to Srijut Dandi Ram Dutta for carrying on research work in Kaitheli system of Arithmetic and Mensuration ?

(b) If nothing has been done in the matter, do Government propose to make an adequate grant to the said scholar and enable him to complete the research work ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

35. (a)—The Ex-Hon'ble Minister proposed to go into the question of making a grant after he had seen Srijut Dandi Ram Dutta and acquainted himself with his work in course of his tours but before he could do so, the Ministry resigned.

(b)—The suggestion will be considered by the present Government.

Sub-Treasury at Barpeta

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS asked :

36. Are Government aware—

- (a) That the Treasury work in the Barpeta Sub-Treasury has greatly increased ?
- (b) That the Sub-Treasury is open only for three days in the week ?
- (c) That on the open days of the Sub-Treasury, chalans, cheques, bills, etc., are received only up to 2-30 p.m. ?
- (d) That chalans, cheques, etc., presented a little late by people coming from a distant place are refused ?
- (e) Do Government propose to take immediate steps to remove the grievances of the public by making the Sub-Treasury open daily ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

36. (a)—The work has increased to some extent.

(b)—The Sub-Treasury remains open on three days in a week and also on the first and last working days of each month. In addition, it opens every day in the week at the time of excise sales and revenue list dates.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—Government have no information, but transactions must be stopped at a certain hour to enable the Treasury staff to compile their daily accounts for submission to the district treasury the same day.

(e)—For the convenience of public the usual number of open days in a week was increased from two to three in November last and Government, if considered necessary, will further examine the question.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: With regard to (d) will Government enquire and see whether it is not causing much hardship to the persons coming from villages ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir, I shall make an enquiry into the matter.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: In connection with that is the same practice in regard to time followed everywhere ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I want notice of that question, Sir.

Srijut GHANASHYAM DAS: Will the Hon'ble Minister make an enquiry ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Yes, Sir.

Revenue peons

Babu BALARAM SIRCAR asked :

37. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge be pleased to state—

- (a) The number of Revenue peons in the Karimganj Collectorate, Patharkandi and Hakaluki Tahsil offices ?
- (b) How many of them are caste Hindus, scheduled caste people and Muhammadans ?
- (c) The percentage of these posts due to (1) Caste Hindus, (2) Scheduled caste people and (3) the Muhammadans of the Karimganj Subdivision ?

- (d) Whether any vacancy for a peon occurred recently there ?
 (e) If so, who has been appointed in that post ?
 (f) Whether any application from the scheduled caste candidates who are acting as apprentices for a long time were received ?
 (g) If so, whether their cases were considered ?
 (h) If not, why not ?
 (i) Whether Government propose to give them any special preference in respect of these posts in future ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

37. (a)—Thirty-three.

(b)—Muhammadans	...	...	...	14
Caste Hindus	...	...	...	17
Scheduled Caste	...	...	...	2
				<hr/> 33

(c)—It is not possible to furnish the information as a subdivision is not taken as a unit for the purpose of calculation of percentages, but the district as a whole. Moreover, under the rules communal representation is not to be taken into account in filling up such appointments.

(d)—Two vacancies occurred.

(e)—(1) Abdur Rohoman, (2) Mati Lal Biswas.

(f)—Yes.

(g)—Yes.

(h)—Does not arise.

(i)—Preference as required by instructions in the Executive Manual has been given wherever possible.

Tea gardens in Assam

Mr. KEDARMAL BRAHMIN asked :

38. Will Government be pleased to state—

- (a) The names of all the tea gardens in Assam, district by district, with the names of their Managers and Calcutta Agents ?
 (b) How many acres of land is under tea cultivation in each garden ?
 (c) How many acres of land are lying uncultivated in each garden ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

38. (a), (b) and (c)—This is a huge task and will take a very long time for Deputy Commissioners to collect the information. The hon. member is, however, referred to the Assam Directory and Tea Areas Hand Book, 1938, which is a priced publication and can be had on payment of Rs.5 only.

Construction of Chunarighat Sub-Registry office buildings

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN asked :

39. (a)—Are Government aware that in the last Budget Session of this Assembly in course of the discussion of a cut motion by Maulavi Abdur Rahman, M.L.A., Government held out hopes to construct the office buildings of the Chunarighat Sub-Registry office in the Habiganj subdivision ?

(b) If so, what steps Government have taken to materialise this ?

(c) Do Government propose to take up the matter early ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA replied :

39. (a)—Government did not hold out hopes to construct the office buildings but only said that the question would be considered after the finances of the province had improved.

(b)—Does not arise.

(c)—The question, as has been said already, will come up for consideration when provincial finances show signs of improvement.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : With regard to (a) it is said in the answer that Government did not hold out hopes. May I refer the Hon'ble Minister to the speech which was delivered by the then Hon'ble Minister in charge of the Registration Department in the last Budget Session ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : No definite assurance was given by the Government. What the Hon'ble Minister said was that the matter would be duly considered as soon as the financial condition of the Government improved.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Was it not said that the matter would be taken up very soon ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : If the hon. member wants, I may read out the statement then made by the Hon'ble Minister : 'I assure the hon. member that this matter will be considered when finances will improve'.

That was the statement.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : May I know whether Government keeps any information that this particular sub-registry office is being held in a shop 8 cubits by 12 cubits in dimension ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : I have no information of that.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Is it a fact that this matter is engaging the attention of Government for the last 5 years ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : Anyhow, the matter will be considered as soon as the financial condition improves.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Do not Government think it necessary to take up the matter as urgently as possible ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA : I have already replied, Sir.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : This is a very vague answer, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER : I am sorry, I cannot help the hon. member. He has already read out that no definite assurance was given and he says that the matter will be taken up as soon as funds are available.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN : Was it not strongly recommended by the Inspector General of Registration ?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: The matter will be considered.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Is it the policy of Government that they prepare the scheme first and then ask for money?

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

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: May I know in view of the strong recommendation of the Inspector General of Registration whether Government is prepared to take up the matter within a few months?

The Hon'ble Srijut RUPNATH BRAHMA: There are various demands for opening sub-registry offices. There are many projects which have been deferred for want of funds. I cannot give any definite assurance that it will be taken up very soon. I have already replied that the matter will be considered as soon as financial condition improves.

Cattle epidemics in Sunamganj

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY asked :

40. (a) Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Veterinary Department be pleased to state whether it is a fact that cattle epidemic took a very heavy toll (about 80 per cent.) in the subdivision of Sunamganj in the years 1937 and 1938?

(b) Do Government propose to establish more Veterinary dispensaries in the subdivision to combat such cattle epidemics?

The Hon'ble Babu AKSHAY KUMAR DAS replied :

40. (a)—It is true that cattle epidemic took a heavy toll but 80 per cent. is an exaggerated figure.

(b)—Under the existing arrangements unless Local Board agree to bear their share of cost, the number of Veterinary dispensaries cannot be increased.

Release of political prisoners

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY asked :

41. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Jail Department be pleased to state—

(a) The names of the political prisoners released by the "Bardoloi" Cabinet?

(b) The home addresses and the dates of arrest of these prisoners?

(c) The section under which these prisoners were convicted?

(d) The term of sentence passed against such prisoners and the periods already served by them in jails?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

41. (a) (c) & (d)—The hon. member is referred to the reply given to starred question No. 12 (a to f) asked by Maulavi Md. Amjad Ali, M.L.A., in this session of the Assembly.

(b)—A statement is laid on the table.

(a) Name of political prisoners released	(b) Home address			(c) Date of arrest
	Village	Thana	District	
Gour alias Gauranga Mohan Das.	Bulla ..	Madhabpur	Sylhet	13th Mar. 1933.
Matilal Roy	Birat ..	Ajmiriganj ..	Sylhet ..	2nd Mar. 1934.
Benoy Bhusan Laskar ..	Dariapara ..	Sylhet ..	Sylhet ..	7th Mar. 1934.
Satyendra Chandra Roy	Sajangram ..	Lakhai ..	Sylhet ..	20th Mar. 1934.
Gopendra Nath Roy ..	Mahmudpur	Nabiganj ..	Sylhet ..	24th Mar. 1934.
Rama Kanta Das ..	Dariapara ..	Sylhet ..	Sylhet ..	12th June 1934.
Bipulananda Kar Chau- dhuri.	Satgaon ..	Srimangal ..	Sylhet ..	12th June 1934.
Sachindra Kumar Das alias Kuri.	Majlispur ..	..	Mymensingh	12th June 1934.
Bidyadhar Shaha ..	Telikona ..	Comilla ..	Tippera ..	13th Mar. 1933.
Ajit Kumar Chakravarty	Muharerpara	Baniachang	Sylhet ..	2nd Mar. 1934.

Venture Schools and Muktabs

Maulana ABDUL HAMID KHAN asked :

42. Will Government be pleased to state the number of venture schools such as Muktabs, Girls' Schools, Primary Schools in the district of Goalpara ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

42.—The information is given below :—

	Goalpara subdivision	Dhubri subdivision	Total
Venture Muktabs for boys ...	26	9	35
Venture Muktabs for girls ...	8	4	12
Venture Primary schools for boys...	36	60	96
Venture Primary schools for girls...	2	7	9
Middle English Madrasa for boys...	..	1	1
Middle English schools for boys ...	...	1	1

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: May I know from the Hon'ble Minister in charge whether the figures given in the reply are really correct?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: There is no question of "really" in this matter. The information was collected through the Department, and the information supplied here has been given by the Department.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Are these figures given for those venture schools which applied for a grant-in-aid only?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: I am not aware of it.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Will the Hon'ble Minister take it from me that it is so?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPI NATH BARDOLOI: It is difficult to say one way or the other in such a matter.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Will the Hon'ble Minister take it from me that it is so?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister has already replied.

Maulana ABDUL HAMID KHAN: In view of the statement that has been made, will the Hon'ble the Premier make an enquiry into the matter?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Yes, if the figures are challenged.

Grant of a stipend to the Editor, "Sonar Gouranga"

Babu SHIBENDRA CHANDRA BISWAS asked :

43. (a) Will Government be pleased to state whether Babu Jogendra Chandra Deb, Editor, "Sonar Gouranga" and an inhabitant of Habiganj town, had prayed to Government for granting him a stipend for advancement of Bengali literature?

(b) Is it a fact that Government have refused to grant the prayer on the ground of paucity of funds?

44. Do Government propose to grant him any stipend for the purpose if funds permit ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

43. (a) and (b)—The reply is in the affirmative.

44.—His claims will be considered along with those of other candidates.

Estates managed by the Court of Wards

Maulavi ABDUL BARI CHAUDHURY asked :

45. Will the Hon'ble Minister-in-charge of the Revenue Department be pleased to state—

(a) The total number of private estates taken over by Government under the Court of Wards, uptil now ?

(b) The total number of such estates taken over during the last three years ?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED replied :

45. (a)—The hon. member presumably refers to estates which are at present managed by the Court of Wards. If so, the answer is ten.

(b)—Four.

All-Assam Ahom Association and orders relating to Ahoms

Srijut JOGESCHANDRA GOHAIN asked :

46. Will Government be pleased to state—

(a) Whether they have received a copy of the proceedings of a meeting of the Executive Committee of the All-Assam Ahom Association held at Sibsagar on 15th January 1939 ?

(b) If so, what steps Government have taken or propose to take to redress the grievances mentioned therein ?

(c) Whether the Hon'ble Premier received any intimation from the Assam Provincial Congress Committee on the above subject ?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI replied :

46. (a)—Yes.

(b)—A copy of Government order relating to the Ahoms is placed on the table.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM

HOME DEPARTMENT—APPOINTMENT BRANCH

Letter No. Apptt.-276-1513-39-H.

FROM

D. C. DAS, Esq., I. C. S.,

Under-Secretary to the Government of Assam,

TO

The Commissioner, Assam Valley Division, Deputy Commissioners
 of Assam Valley Division, Superintendent, Civil Veterinary
 Department, Examiner, Local Accounts, Assam, Heads of
Public Works Department,
 Departments, Secretary, Legislative Council,
Assembly,
Assam Public Service Commission
 and the Superintendent of Press, Shillong.

Dated Shillong, the 24th February 1939.

Sir,

I am directed to say that it has been represented to Government that some preference should be given to 'Ahoms' as regards appointment in public services. I am therefore to request that other things being equal their case may be considered when vacancies are filled up.

Your obedient servant,

D. C. DAS,

Under-Secretary to Government.

(c)—Yes.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: May I know what is meant by "some preference"?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: That is the representation to the Government.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: The letter says "other things being equal their case may be considered when vacancies are filled up". Is it contemplated to give them preference?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: I can say nothing more than what has been put down in the letter.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: What is the import of the letter?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: Which letter? The reply is already there.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: The letter is this—"it has been represented to Government that some preference should be given to Ahoms as regards appointment in public services. I am therefore to request that other things being equal their case may be considered when vacancies are filled up".

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: The point that was raised in that letter was that whether they should be given any kind of special consideration, and the reply has been that as they form part of the general Hindu community, other things being equal, their case will be considered.

Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Along with other communities?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: There is no question of special preference, it refers to the whole Hindu community.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: I want a little further explanation, Sir. Supposing there is an ordinary caste Hindu and an Ahom, and they have the same qualifications. Will preference be given to the Ahom?

The Hon'ble Srijut GOPINATH BARDOLOI: If the Ahom representation was found to be inadequate, and if the qualifications were the same, preference will be given to the Ahom.

General discussion of the Budget for 1939-40 and discussion on charged expenditure

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Budget presented to us by the Hon'ble Finance Minister gave us a rude shock. It is a form without substance, a blackboard speech, containing only figures which was devoid of imagination or exposition of policy. It only shows in it marks of the party, to the policy of which our friend the Finance Minister has been newly wedded.

Sir, the Congressites are a set of persons taught in the art of propaganda from their very cradle. Anything Congress to them is all right and all things non-Congress are bad. Conscience to them is a marketable commodity. They can attorn to anybody who can talk Congress. They can sing to the tune of any hopeless utterance. A person who is not in their fold to-day is a jaded fool, a worthless wreck and a worthless villain.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I think the hon. member is not speaking to the budget.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: But the same person is extolled as God, a perfect man or an adorable fellow no sooner he wears a Gandhi cap or a tri-colour badge, as if his whole outlook is changed overnight by a magic wand like the Princess of fairy tales.

To cite one instance, Sir, I may be permitted to mention the Hon'ble Maulavi Md. Ali Haidar Khan. When he was a Minister under the Muslim League Coalition Government he was openly jeered at and pooh-poohed whenever he was on his legs by the Congress Party.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: How is this relevant to the Budget?

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: But as soon as he got to their side he is not only a clever and able Minister but ascribed to the finest order of orator in the block. The tall talk of economy and good finance is only a means of their propaganda. To give a homely example, Sir, the Deputy Speaker's Salary Bill which is presented to this House is another instance in the point.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: That has been criticised by other members.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: I also want to criticise that. It is an established Parliamentary convention in the British Parliament that the Speaker of the House of Commons enjoys as a privilege the right to carry on his retirement the Chair in which he used to sit and preside in the Parliament to adorn his own drawing room (*Laughter from the European block*), that he can have audience of the king at any moment he likes, as also he can cut as much wood from the king's forest he likes, in order to keep himself in good humour. But, Sir, a post without work, a situation without responsibility like our Deputy Speaker to become remunerative is only possible for those set of politicians in Assam who can go to the extent of carrying coal to New Castle by granting 250 bighas of good lands to this God's good man to keep him

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. member is stating something which is not at all relevant in a general discussion of the Budget.

Maulavi JAHANUDDIN AHMED: To keep him in good humour for all times to come, indeed a good convention, along with a monthly salary of Rs. 250 from the public exchequer.

Sir, when they were in this side of the House, they talked a good deal about reduction of land revenue by 50 per cent. and challenged the previous Government that they would be able to achieve it by all means. That was their election pledge. They lost no opportunity of proclaiming from the house tops that they are the friends of the poor and when opportunity offered will bring the millennium and fill the dry hills of Assam with milk and honey. It is a sad spectacle presented to us that no sooner they have been lifted to the power and put in the helm of affairs the poor tax-payers have been saddled with various kinds of taxation and in spite of the grinding poverty of the toiling masses, we have to pay for the Ministers' motor cars, their good houses and their beautiful gardens at Shillong. Sir, our bicycles, clocks, watches, pills and ointment boxes have been taxed as articles of luxury and very soon we shall find that our earthen pots and milch cows, *hooka* and *chilums* (*laughter*) shall be taxed also, for who knows when these would offend their susceptibilities and passed as articles of luxury?

Hon'ble Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed the Finance Minister in his new love and renegade zeal for the Congress might have forgotten that his new patriots gave out in their election manifesto that they would kindle light of education in every home of Assam. Ushering in of the Congress regime was hailed as a blessing in some quarters. But the trust was soon found to be belied as the whole trend of the budgetary provision for mass education has been a serious attempt of Congress propaganda among the classes of people whose representatives in the Assembly are likely to be seceders from the Coalition party. No thought has been given to the basis of population

No attempt has been made to ascertain by figures who need the utmost attention with regard to this. Where a campaign against illiteracy ought to have been lodged, to our great disappointment we find the Ministry making provision for the disputed and questionable Wardha scheme, Sanskrit education, Hindi education and Prachar Samiti have found a good place in his budget but we fail to understand why a thing like Islamic education has escaped his calculation. If it is under the influence of his party politics, I should say that it is a bad betrayal of the Congress pledge, for, all minorities including the Mussulmans are equally entitled to their benign care and favourable consideration. I fail to find out the logic or force of such a wilful neglect or omission.

The want of good drinking water and more money for sanitary and public health was the crying need of the hour. Thousands of persons died of cholera during the high floods of monsoon months and the first attempt to combat the situation from the last public health budget proved abortive and to our disappointment that sum has again been decreased to a lower figure. This is a hopeless lack of imagination on the part of the Finance Minister and his want of foresight.

Agricultural indebtedness being the cause of village life, development of Co-operative credit societies would have been a boon. In his ardent zeal for Congress programme Hon'ble Khan Bahadur Maulavi Mahmud Ali has forgotten to make a study of how this could be done. The Punjab and the Madras Governments have taken a lead in this matter. Easy instalments with long term loans has been found successful in those places and the scheme adopted by the joint conference of the Indian Co-operative Department is worth following. For this more supervisory and much propaganda is necessary. He would do well to seek for more money for paying his field workers. Cottage industries are also being neglected. Rangjuli is an *Endi* and *Muga* producing centre in my district of Goalpara. Save and except a visit for an hour to this place he absolutely made no arrangement for its development. It has a great future and with proper encouragement with funds and supervisors like sericulture demonstrators, I hope, Assam will have a nucleus for this industry in Rangjuli.

To flood affected people in my district of Goalpara the branch of weaving will make an occupation for 6 months as subsidiary income, and by proper guidance under demonstrators in my district, it is bound to yield good income and fraught with immense potentialities and likely to make provision to hundreds of distressed families in this dire want and wide depression.

Sir, one point more and I finish. During the last high floods of the monsoon months Srijut Gopinath Bardoloi, the Hon'ble Premier, visited the district of Goalpara. He has seen with his own eyes the condition of the people due to the flood; he had seen how vast area was lying desolate to the south of the Brahmaputra river. Their home, crops and valuable belongings like plough and cattle had been washed away. And all the cultivable lands having become useless the poor tenantry was rendered utterly helpless. They appeared in large numbers for help and succour to the Hon'ble Premier. He took pity upon their conditions and asked to find out better lands in the northern bank. Sir, this helpless tenantry in consonance with his instructions migrated to Dotma, Sidli and places near Ballamguri. But they were routed mercilessly from these places by the Bodo people under the instructions of some congress people who claimed to be the friends of the poor. Their houses were burnt, depredations on young crops were done and resting places destroyed. Sir, they approached the local police and various agencies brought this to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner. But to our utter surprise the wretched

lot of these tenants fails to evoke any sympathy and justice from them. Sir, I have taken this opportunity of ventilating a local grievance and charge the Government of callous indifference to the atrocities committed to these landless people. When they can find out 250 *bighas* of good land for a single soul like the Deputy Speaker why they should be wanting in sympathy for these unfortunate flood-stricken landless people who are the sons of the soil?

Mr. F. W. BLENNERHASSETT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the budget which has just been presented to this House discloses a large drop in the income of the past year and proposals for still further reductions of income from usual sources for the future. Concurrently with these reductions in revenue, we are presented with demands for greatly increased estimated expenditure for the year ahead. This feature is not confined to this province alone; for increased spending appears to be the order of the day in every country of the world. It is not surprising then to find ourselves faced with proposals for new taxation from hitherto untapped sources and we say at the outset that we hope this new taxation accompanied by wise and rigourously supervised spending may justify the hopes of the Hon'ble Finance Minister and result in a balanced budget at the end of the current financial year. I cannot resist remarking however that the estimated revenue which the Hon'ble Finance Minister hopes to derive from some of his proposals appears at first sight to be more like an optimistic guess than a well based calculation.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister in his speech referred to the increased burden of taxation which the Tea Industry of this province will be called upon to bear and I take this opportunity of again assuring this House that our Industry is fully prepared to bear its fair share of taxation provided proper and normal protection is incorporated in the Acts enforcing that taxation and provided also that the incidence of taxation of the Tea Industry in this province never reaches proportions of such magnitude as will unfairly handicap us in the world's markets against competitors from many other places; for, that would eventually kill the goose which so far as Assam is concerned very much lays the golden egg. We are interested to note that the Hon'ble Finance Minister proposes to devote part of the revenue from the agricultural income-tax to the labour population of tea gardens and we would be glad to hear details of his proposals in this regard.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has stated the intention of Government to further reduce land rent. We do not oppose the principle of this, but we do believe that the present method of reduction at flat rates is inequitable and helps least those whom it should help most. This criticism has many time been advanced from these benches and we now again suggest the desirability of reviewing the entire question of land revenue with the object of effecting rent remission at equably graded rates.

Incidentally I would like to point that whereas land revenue with the object has been granted all over the province ostensibly due to the distressed economic condition of the people, on page 19 of the budget estimate under Excise it is stated that particular revenue, that is to say Excise, increased owing to the improved economic condition of the people generally, an anomaly surely, Sir. Now, Sir, touching the Government's proposal concerning the prohibition of the use of opium. We fully support the principle but we do apprehend that unless preventive measures are so effectively carried out in the experimental areas as to preclude the slightest chance of failure the last state will be worse than the first. Poverty amongst the addicts and their dependants would increase whilst smugglers and illicit dealers would prosper exceedingly. We are fully aware of the difficulties of enforcing Prevention in a country situated as this is surrounded by other

opium-producing countries ; and so to us the sum of one and a quarter lakhs of rupees frankly appears small for the execution of the proposed great task. We venture therefore to suggest that either only one of the two areas is for the time being dealt with, or alternatively double the proposed amount be devoted to this noble object in both.

In our opinion, Sir, the revenue at present derived from Forests is smaller than it need be and we would welcome the organisation of this department on a yet more commercial basis. Building is continually proceeding in this province and we who use so much building material would welcome an adequate supply of timber, and guidance as to its availability of the various classes and their suitability for the various kinds of timber for the various purposes. That information up to now is not forthcoming and as I have just now said we would welcome it especially in view of the present high price of steel. Tea chests for example at present very largely imported to Assam could be made here in far greater numbers if the timber were made available to a greater extent than at present.

We deprecate increased expenditure on secondary education just so long as the needs of primary education remain unsatisfied and we would ask Government to consider the possibility of a wiser regulation of this subject. We welcome the news that two teachers are to be trained in the Wardah scheme for we feel that on teachers the success or failure of the scheme will inevitably rest. Unless suitable teachers initiate the scheme it is doomed in its inception. The Wardah scheme is by no means free from fault but we do see in it a great deal of good. (*Hear, hear*). It contains the seeds of self-help and reliance and it aims at dignifying labour and training the senses on lines which we hope may eventuate in the alleviation of distress so prevalent among the *bhadralog* classes by reducing their numbers. (*Hear, hear*).

It is relevant to refer here to the appeal made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister during his budget speech to Railway Companies, Oil Companies and Tea Companies, to help in absorbing the boys trained in the Technical School of the two valleys. Let me assure this House that both these institutions have our whole-hearted approbation and already there are many of the students employed by the Industries named. We employ these youths when we can and we shall continue to do so.

We hear a great deal about Assam being poverty stricken as indeed in certain parts it is. We feel that this need not be, however, for increased work we believe would bring increased prosperity. We see land which could be used and is not being used. We see land being only partially used and we think that except in places where congestion of population or other economic factors militate against more prosperous conditions, poverty need not be as widespread as it is.

In a land such as this is, Sir, whose natural resources are mainly agricultural, it must be admitted that its prosperity is closely bound up with the problems of production and marketing. Were both these problems satisfactorily solved, the remission of land rent would cease to be necessary, and Assam would be a prosperous and easy place to live in. We feel that both these matters should receive the full attention, their vital importance entitles them to and this we cannot agree they are at present receiving. Better crops, more crops, and of a greater variety should be the motto of this land, and the charge of every official responsible. Concurrently our markets must be expanded and this matter should figure larger and yet larger in the Nation-building programme.

In his budget speech last year the hon. Mr. Hockenhull made a comparison between the crop production of the Mymensingias and that of the indigenous *rai-yats*, and he pointed out that much better use of the soil

is made by the former. We still stand by that comparison. Dare I suggest the desirability of drafting a few Mymensinghias to other villages to show the people how to do better.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had no mind of taking part in the budget discussion this time; but after hearing the speeches delivered by some of the hon. members from the Opposition side, I am somewhat forced to be on my feet and say a word or two in reply to them.

Sir, I do not deem it necessary and desirable to refute arguments put forth by them. But I am giving only some facts and figures to contribute to a sound and clear understanding of the Hon'ble House.

My hon. friend, Rev. Gatphoh, attacked the Hon'ble Finance Minister alleging wrongly that he has done special favours to Garo Hills. (*Laughter*).

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: On a point of order, Sir. In a budget speech are members entitled to criticise points raised by other members.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The budget has been discussed by some members of the Opposition, and if some members belonging to the Coalition Party think it necessary that they should show the fallacy or incorrectness of the criticisms offered, it is within their right to do so.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: Has he got the right to attack a member of the Opposition because he belongs to the Government party?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: When one has the right to criticize, another will have the right to show that the criticism is wrong; and in that view a member belonging to the Government Party can speak in the way in which Mr. Marak is going on to-day (*laughter*). If such criticism to be an attack, I cannot prevent it.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: I raised my point of order on the basis of a ruling given by your predecessor.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: With due respect to that ruling, this is my ruling.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: Sir, I now come directly to the budget itself in which we can find out for ourselves whether the charges made by him against the Hon'ble Finance Minister are false or true.

The Government provided Rs. 21,500 for primary education alone in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills for the year 1939-40, by taking over 65 primary schools from the Mission. And by taking over these primary schools the Hon'ble Finance Minister made a special provision for selection grades of posts for Khasi primary school teachers, *viz.*,

65 posts at Rs. 15—1—20	...	...	...	Rs.
				11,700
18 posts at Rs. 20—1—25	...	...	...
				4,320
6 posts at Rs. 25—1—30	...	...	...
				1,800

This gives a total recurring cost of Rs. 17,820. Adding to this a non-recurring cost of Rs. 3,680, the total comes to Rs. 21,500. Whereas, Sir, no such selection grades are provided for the Garo primary school teachers, and only 36 primary schools are to be taken over by the Government from

the American Baptist Mission, and that too only at a flat rate of Rs. 15—1—20 per month, viz.,

	Rs.
36 posts at Rs. 15—1—20 per month	6,480
Building and equipment	Nil
Fixed contingencies	216

which gives a total of Rs. 6,696. Here, Sir, I am forced to point out that a school cannot go on without a building and without equipment, and this equipment and building has been provided for the Khasi Hills and not for the Garo Hills. Deducting a saving on account of stoppage of the grant to the Mission, namely Rs. 2,308, we have a balance of Rs. 4,388 only for primary education in the Garo Hills for the year 1939-40 against Rs. 21,500 for the same purpose and for the same year in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills.

As regards the question of secondary education in the Garo Hills, I beg, Sir, to take the Hon'ble House to page 88 of the Memorandum on the Budget Estimates of the Government of Assam for the year 1939-40, which speaks and explains for itself. There is not a single High English School in the Garo Hills up to now, but the two lower classes namely classes VII and VIII, and only one additional post in class III in the Assam School Service plus Rs. 100 for equipment, making a total of only Rs. 1,000 has been provided in the budget for secondary education in the Garo Hills for the year 1939-40. And my hon. friend was crying aloud saying that this was too much for the Garo Hills and that by giving this much the Hon'ble Finance Minister was doing some special favour to the Garos.

There are 500 or more primary, a good number of Middle English, many High English schools and colleges and what not, Sir, in the Khasi Hills.

As regards the scholarships, Sir, there are only 15 primary and 2 Middle English scholarships for the Garos, and they too are not for the Garo Hills alone, but they are for the three districts, viz., Garo Hills, Goalpara and Kamrup. And there is no college scholarship provided for the Garos.

In connection with posts and appointments, Sir, how many Khasi Extra Assistant Commissioners, Sub-Deputy Collectors, Executive and Assistant Engineers, Overseers and Sub-Overseers, Doctors and Lady Doctors and what not, Sir, there are in Khasi Hills, whereas there are none such in the Garo Hills.

As regards the question of communication, Sir, there are numberless good metalled roads, pucca bridges, etc., in the Khasi Hills and an ample provision for their upkeep, but not one of the kind in the Garo Hills.

The Government is aware of the conditions and needs in the Garo Hills and they are ever alert and mindful of them, and we are grateful to them for that.

Sir, my hon. friend has every right to criticise the budget, to ventilate all the needs and grievances of his constituency, and let him have Sir, any amount of benefit and help from the Government and I shall not have anything to say about that. But I fail to see, Sir, why the Garos should be eyesore to him for their getting the very insignificant help from the Government and why he should charge the Hon'ble Finance Minister for the same with favouritism. Is this reasonable, Sir? Both the Khasi Hills and the Garo Hills fall under the same category, they are partially excluded areas. The population of the Garo Hills is far above than that of the Khasi Hills and I totally fail to see, Sir, why the Garos, his Christian brothers should be treated differently.

His district is for a long time enjoying what is called the lion share and our share is nothing to be compared with that of his.

Sir, he is an ordained Rev. Missionary and he should not be communal which he has exposed himself in his speech.

Sir, Assam Cabinet is a Coalition one, and its members are mostly non-Congress ; but they have signed the Congress scheme, Congress programme and Congress policy. The Cabinet is trying to follow them very closely and so they are alert and mindful of the groaning hungry millions, wide-spread illiteracy, the appalling mortality from preventable diseases, the thousands of unemployment and many other urgent and important needs and grievances amongst the masses in the countryside. And the problem before them and before us, as well, to-day is how to remedy the situation, that is the main question to be tackled by us all and this calls for the serious consideration of us all. The budget as we heard has, as much as practicable, been in response to these needs and grievances.

The real problem before us and before all other Provincial Ministries to-day is the conquest of power, the power of a definite and decided majority. Without this no Cabinet is in its position to bring about the solution of the present Indian problems in multifarious and diverse directions. Without a common front and internal unity and strength no organization can be stable and powerful. Without this majority power any cabinet is helpless.

We the members of Legislative Assembly of this House are chosen and elected ones and we are persons of grave responsibility ; we are truly responsible for our own respective constituencies. The members of Legislative Assembly are the elected and respectable persons and as such we cannot but condemn the exploitation of man by man and class by class, and we always ought to fight to protect the exploited because according to our conscience the most precious things in man are his responsibility, his duty and soul, and these cannot be degraded for the purpose of exploitation.

To my mind Sir, we are out to offer our sincere and loyal co-operation to a party which is consistently putting forth its best efforts for ameliorating the lot of the masses, a party the Political programme of which is based on economic consideration.

Sir, I am not believer in any sort of attempt to separate the different communities and put them into water-tight compartments.

Keeping in mind the troubles or struggles in Rajkot, Jaipur, Talcer and in other Native States, the oppression and sufferings in those places and sincere and most honest efforts of some noble and self-sacrificing men and women for their remedies, I am convinced to think that the Congress is going to be the asylum of the oppressed and destitute millions of India.

And Sir, I am moved to say that the Congress is not a creation of any particular community, but it is political body built up by the arduous toil of self-sacrificing and noble persons belonging to all communities.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : Is it a budget speech Sir ?

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK : The spirit and tone of the speeches and criticisms made by some of the hon. member, were anti-Congress, and the Hon'ble Finance Minister is a Congress member, who presented the budget, and this is why I was saying a word or two supporting the Congress. *(Loud laughter).*

I do not mean to say, Sir, that the members of the present Cabinet come down direct from heaven and so they are angelic persons. They are also human beings and are not perfect ones ; and the budget under discussion also cannot be said to be perfect one which is liable to correction and criticism.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member will do well to keep himself within the legitimate limits of a budget speech.

Mr. JOBANG D. MARAK: The aim of the present Government is to hold the balance fairly between capital and labour, the Zemindar and tenant. We are fully aware of the fact, the balance is, as it stands to-day, terribly heavy on one side and to maintain the *status quo* is to maintain injustice and exploitation. The only means, therefore, to right it is to do away with the domination of anyone class over another.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member's time is up. As to-day is the last day of the budget discussion, I shall rigorously enforce the time limit. I may tell the House that I wish that all speeches should be finished before 3-30 p.m. so that the Hon'ble Finance Minister may get at least half an hour to reply to all the points that have been raised.

Maulavi ABDUR RAHMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir. First of all let me quote the word of my hon. friend Mr. Marak. Of course, it does not come within my budget speech, but he has made certain remarks against the criticisms which were made by one of the hon. members. My friend has remarked that the Garo people are eyesore to Rev. Gatphoh.

In reply to that I can simply say that if there be any invidious distinction, if there be any step-motherly dealings and treatment between the Garos and the Khasis, I think the remarks of Rev. Gatphoh were fully justified. I now begin my budget speech.

Sir, I congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for his first stereotyped and hackneyed budget. Even a cursory glance of the budgetary provisions shows that he has singularly failed to present a people's budget. Not a single provision has been made for the mass, nay no sincere attempt has been made to provide for a scheme to ameliorate their miseries. There is no scheme for the spread of mass education or to reduce their poverty. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has thus failed to redeem the pledges to the mass—the pledges of the party he represents. I must remind the Hon'ble Ministers that they can deceive the mass for the time being by mere promises but they should not expect to so dupe them for all time. A mere party label will not be a safe pass-port for them unless they can do something tangible for the mass. With a stipulated loan of Trs.50,00 a so-called surplus budget stands to the credit of the Hon'ble Finance Minister. If tactful misrepresentation deserves any credit, the Hon'ble Minister deserves congratulations.

The estimates of receipts and expenditure should be based upon the actuals or at least the average of the preceding three years, for a sound budget. The budgetary estimates of receipts from revenue heads have been inflated by no less than a sum of Trs.21,49 as compared with the average of receipts for the last three years. Though I wish the Hon'ble Finance Minister all good luck, I am afraid he may be disillusioned at the close of the year. Optimism in a youngman is good, but not in matters of finance.

The Hon'ble Finance Minister has taken much pain to produce a surplus budget, but a careful scrutiny will reveal it to be a budget of deficit of not less than a sum of Trs.70,15. Even the borrowing capacity has been taken as a part of the income. The stipulated loan of Trs.50,00 has been shown on the receipt side. Any prudent businessman will tell the Hon'ble Minister that the borrowing capacity is not the true income. Besides the inflated revenue estimated receipt should be subtracted from the total (A sum of Trs.21,49).

Sir, I may tell the House that the capital receipts may be regarded as the trust money or the earmarked amount for specific purposes. If the capital expenditure be less than the receipt, the balance accumulates as the

liability of the Government. The capital expenditure is less by Trs.21,25 than the receipt. The financial effect is that the present Government will leave a liability of the amount for the future. The sum total of these three figures comes to Trs.92,74. If the closing balance be deducted, the deficit stands to a figure of Trs.70,15. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has thus mortgaged the future of the Province to the extent of the said sum. The budget has not therefore been business-like.

Sir, coming to the expenditure side we find that the Hon'ble Minister has not provided for any popular scheme. It entirely lacks in ideas and imagination. The nation-building departments are ill-starved as before. Though considerable increase in the expenditure has been shown under the head Education, no step has been taken to improve the prospect of primary school teachers nor is there any provision for the spread of literacy among the masses. No attempt has been made for the improvement of medical relief to the suffering masses.

Sir, the budget expenditure under Public Health is Trs.8,66 against Trs.8,80, the revised figure for 1938-39. Trs.92 against Trs.98 under Co-operative and Trs.2,67 against Trs.2,80 under head Industries have been provided. These figures show beyond doubt the scanty provision for the nation-building departments.

Sir, it stands to the discredit of all that the proposed Medical School at Sylhet could not be started as yet. I observed in my previous budget speeches that it is a standing disgrace on Assam Government.

The budget is no doubt an illusory one. In fact it is a deficit budget. It aims at no good to the mass and entirely lacks in ideas and imagination.

Sir, with these general and preliminary remarks I shall now pass on to a few specific instances. If inconsistency for an individual is an offence—I can say, without fear of contradiction, that the present Government and its supporters are guilty of the same. The batch of patriots now adorning the Treasury back benches were very much vociferous in their demands when they were in the Opposition. Their persistent accusation of the former Government with having no political foresight and with entire lack of imagination is still ringing in my ears. They accused them for not doing away with the top heavy administration of the Province. There were constant demands for abolishing some high salaried posts in order to relieve the poor province from unnecessary costly ornamentations. As a result you know a Retrenchment Committee was appointed some two years back. This Committee finished its labour and submitted its report to the present Cabinet but to our utter disappointment what do we find? This so-called and well advertised people's Government is now fighting shy over taking any bold action in the matter. The budget does not disclose that any action has been taken on the recommendations of the much talked Retrenchment Committee.

Sir, coming to the detailed features of the budget, we find that there is no doubt one or two departures from the stereotyped method but these are guilty of selfishness. From a close scrutiny it can be seen that the few new projects embodied in the budget are meant for the people of Government party in order to please them. The Hon'ble Finance Minister Mr. Fakhrudin Ali Ahmed is a graduate of an English University and a Barrister. He crossed the seas, had seen much of the outside world and he was expected to be above all petty valley jealousies. But the invidious and stepmotherly treatment, as regards new project, towards the Surma Valley people has belied the broadmindedness of the Hon'ble Finance Minister.

Looking to the financial resources of the Province, we find that quite a good number of new taxation measure is going to be thrust upon the heavily taxed people of the Province. This is against the election pledges of the Congressites, and I am sure people of this Province will be hard hit by these hasty legislations. Allow me, Sir, to speak about the safeguard of the minority Muslim community in the hands of the present Congress Government. The Wardha Scheme has found favour in the budget but would it be a news to the Hon'ble Finance Minister that the Muslim India has denounced the introduction of the said Wardha Scheme in unequivocal terms and a chorus of condemnation has been raised against it? It is regrettable that the hateful scheme is going to be thrust upon the Muslims of this Province in spite of severe protest. The provision made for the encouragement of the Hindi language is another death blow on the Muslims of the Province. Hundreds of Muslims are embracing Jail by opposing the introduction of this Hindi language in some of the Congress provinces. In the new projects no money can be found to be provided for Islamic education. Number of Madrassas are waiting in the list for Government grant. I wonder how the Muslim members in the Cabinet could be a party to these provisions which are seriously detrimental to the Muslim interests. I would therefore ask the Hon'ble Muslim members of the Cabinet to resign their seats if they fail to maintain the interests of the Mussalmans. An unwise measure of allowing music to pass before mosques beyond certain fixed hours has brought disgrace upon the Muslim members of this Cabinet. There is none who can regulate the prayer times of the Mussalmans. The unwarranted communiqué regarding music before mosque, totally disregarding the Muslim views has become a hornet's nest of communal tension. The harmonious relationship between Hindus and Muslims has been much provoked by this communiqué. The action of the Government in this respect is an invasion upon the religious rights and privileges of the Mussalmans. I urge upon the Government that this should be rescinded as early as possible.

The another point—the supersession of the Sylhet Municipality is another indiscretion of the Congress Government. The Congress were fighting for democracy, but may I ask whether it is not a negation of their own principle?

Sir, I am just finishing by referring to a few problems in the Industries Branch of the Assam Government. It is most important for the purpose of the younger generation of the province. It is said to be a nation-building department. The Hon'ble Minister, Industries, made promise after promise for Industrial regeneration in the province, but I would now ask him whether any provision has been made to materialise the promises. May I ask him whether he did see whether his Colleague, the Hon'ble the Finance Minister has not deprived him of getting any substantial help for materialising his promises? Since the establishment of the Industries Department, it has done little or nothing. In all other provinces of India a technical man and not an I. C. S. officer is placed in charge of Industries as Director. Assam cannot, I think, hope to develop her industries without the help of an Industrial Chemist. An industrial Chemist will be in a position to examine the possibilities of development of a particular industry in all its aspects. I would urge upon Government to appoint an Industrial expert very soon and do away with the post of an I. C. S. officer as the head of this Department. The necessity of retaining an I. C. S. officer without technical knowledge for this department seems to be quite useless.

Srijut RABI CHANDRA KACHARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the most urgent need of the tribal peoples of the plains including Mikir Hills is the spread of education among them. We feel, without spread of education among our people, we cannot remove our backward condition, and Reforms or Provincial Autonomy shall be useless for us. This is why we have been so long insisting for a scheme for the spread of education among our people. We find that the present Ministry has found out Rs.40,000 for the spread of education among the backward classes of Assam. I do not say that this sum is quite adequate for the purpose and will meet our demands. But I can boldly say that this sum very favourably compares with the sum of Rs.5,000 granted by the last Government and will make a very good beginning of a new scheme for spread of education among the backward classes. The Ministry deserves congratulations for it.

Our people are all cultivators and improvement of agriculture is another urgent need of our people. In this we need a comprehensive Doug system for the whole of the Northern Bank of the Brahmaputra. The Ministry has found out only fifteen thousand rupees for the purpose. They cannot possibly find out more under the present financial condition of the Province. This sum is surely inadequate. We hope and trust that they will make better provision in the next year's budget.

The next important question which concerns our people is the Line System. We want that there should be special safe guards for our people. We find that the Finance Minister has made no mention of this in his speech. I take that it does not mean that the Ministry is unmindful to our interest in this matter.

Sir, a country cannot progress if a large and important section of its populace remains backward and illiterate. We therefore want facilities to grow and to make our people literate. The present Coalition Ministry has just made a beginning towards that end. It is regrettable that one hon. member of this House has come with a complaint that the present Coalition has been partial to the plains tribal people. The present member has not examined the position thoroughly. Had he done so he would not have uttered such opinion. We have not yet got all justice that we should get on population basis. Does the hon. member want that we should get nothing worth the name and remain ever backward so that others can enjoy our percentage in services and other matters? The hon. member in charge is absolutely baseless.

Sir, no human action is perfect. The budget being the work of the Hon'ble Ministers who are also men, cannot be perfect. In considering the budget we must take into consideration the financial resources of the province and many other attendant circumstances. Considering all these, I find that the new moves which the Present Coalition Ministry has made are all that they can do under the circumstances. They are going to initiate mass anti-illiteracy campaign, introduce prohibition scheme and have granted land revenue remission, though not to the extent the Congress agitators had promised to the raiyats.

Sir, I want to express our gratitude to the Hon'ble Education Minister for the keen interest he has been taking for our education, and hope that he will take still keener interest in it.

With these words I now beg to resume my seat.

Adjournment

The Assembly then adjourned for lunch till 2 p.m.

After lunch

Babu LALIT MOHAN KAR : বাংলা ভাষার যে সব মাননীয় সভ্য সরকার পক্ষে আক্রমণ করিয়া বক্তৃতা করিয়াছেন বিশেষভাবে তাঁহাদের আঙতির ভক্ত আমি ছই চারিটা কথা বাংলা ভাষার বলিতে বাইতেছি। ভূখণ্ডিত ভ্রমের বিষয় নিম্না যে সকল মাননীয় সভ্য বিশেষ ভাবে আলোচনা করিয়াছেন, বঙ্গপ্রদেশে আমি তাঁহাদিগকে আর্থিক প্রত্যাদেশ প্রদান করিতেছি। বর্তমান জাতীয় গবর্ণমেন্ট এই বিষয় অনেক পূর্বে হইতেই অবহিত হইয়াছেন। আমার মাননীয় বক্তৃতা বাহাওর দেওয়ান এক্সিমুর বজা চৌধুরী, শ্রীযুত মহেন্দ্রনাথ শইকীয়া, মৌলবী মতিউর রহমান মিল্লা প্রভৃতি বিকল্প দলের কল্পনামাননীয় সভ্যের এই বিষয়ে বিশেষ আগ্রহ দেখিয়া আমাদের আশা হইতেছে যে এই বিষয় তাঁহারা বর্তমান গবর্ণমেন্টের সহায় হইবেন এবং আসান হইতে এই পাপ আঁচের দূর হইবে।

কৃষক প্রজারা, বাহারা জাতির মেরুদণ্ড, তাহাদের হিতের জন্ত, উন্নতির জন্ত বিহীত চেষ্টা করা প্রত্যেক দেশহিতৈষী ব্যক্তিরই কর্তব্য। আমাদের মধ্যে বাহারা বিস্তৃশালী তাঁহারাও এখানে নিজেদের স্বার্থ রক্ষার জন্ত এখানে আসেন নাই। তাঁহারা জাতির প্রতিনিধি—জাতি বলিতে তাঁহারা বাহারা দেশের খাদ্য উৎপাদন করে। বিস্তৃশালী ব্যক্তিরও স্বেচ্ছায় এইসব অবগণিত দীন দরিদ্রের সেবার ভার নিজ হৃদয়ে গ্রহণ করিয়াছেন। শ্রীহট্ট ও গোয়ালপাড়ার প্রস্তাবিত প্রজাস্বয় আইনে প্রজাদের অনেক অধিকার দিবার প্রস্তাব করা হইয়াছে। বাংলা দেশের প্রজাদের বাংলায় বর্তমান প্রজা গবর্ণমেন্ট যায়া দিয়াছেন তাহা তাঁর চেয়ে অনেক বেশী এবিষয়ে কোন সন্দেহ নাই।

সাংস্কারিক বিরোধের কথা উল্লেখ করিয়া ধর্ম্মনষ্টের ভয়ে আমার মাননীয় বক্তৃতা মৌলবী দেওয়ান আহবাব সাহেব পানিপথে গিয়া জেহাদ ঘোষণা এবং সত্যগ্রহ করিবেন বলিয়া উল্লেখ করিয়াছেন। আমি এই বিষয় আমার বক্তৃতা মৌলবী সাহেবকে আশ্বস্ত করিতে চাই যে তাঁহার ধর্ম্মনষ্টের ভয় যেমন অলৌকিক তেমনি জেহাদ ঘোষণা করার আয়াস বা সত্যগ্রহ করার দু'খটুকু তাঁহাকে কোনকালেই ভোগ করিতে হইবে না। পানিপথে যাইবার ও প্রয়োজন হইবেই না। সাপ এবং স্বপ্ন ছই মিথ্যা। কংগ্রেস গবর্ণমেন্ট এমন কি কোন সভ্য গবর্ণমেন্ট অস্ত্রের ধর্ম্মের উপর হস্তক্ষেপ করিতে পারেন না—করেন না। মিথ্যা ধর্ম্মনষ্টের ধুরা তুলিয়া বাহারা দেশে প্রতিবেশীর শান্তি নষ্ট করিতেছে, মৌলবী সাহেবের মত ব্যক্তি এই অশান্তি দূর করার বিষয় অবহিত হইলে দেশবাসী উপকৃত হইবে। সাংস্কারিক বিরোধ দেশে কংগ্রেস গবর্ণমেন্ট দাড়াইতেছেন শুনিয়া হাংসিব না কাঁদিব প্রথমেই ভাবিতে হইয়াছে। শ্রীহট্টে কুজতুল্লা মসজিদ ভাঙ্গিয়া ইট সুরমা নদীর জলে ফেলিয়া দেয়া হইয়াছে, হজরত শাহজেলালের দরগা ভাঙ্গিয়া ফেলা হইয়াছে, পল্লীগাঁয়ের মসজিদগুলিকে হিন্দুরা দেবমন্দির করিতেছে, গো-কোরবানী নিঃশেষ করিয়া আইন পাশ করা হইয়াছে, ইত্যাদি কথা বলিয়া কাহারো দেশে বার বার হাজার হাজার লোক একত্রিত করিয়া তামসা করিয়াছেন? ইহা কি কংগ্রেস গবর্ণমেন্ট করাইয়াছেন? আশাকরি বিকল্প দলপতি স্যার মহম্মদ সাহুলা এই প্রশ্নের উত্তর দিবেন।

কংগ্রেস গবর্ণমেন্টের আমল মুসলমান স্বার্থ বিপর্যয় হইয়াছে, এই অভিযোগের উত্তরে আমি বলিতে চাই যে যোগা হিন্দুদের চাকুরী দেওয়া বন্ধ রাখিয়া মুসলমানদের চাকুরি দেওয়ার ব্যবস্থা, স্কুল, কলেজে সংখ্যাভূপাত হইতে অতিরিক্ত ফ্রি ও বিশেষ বৃত্তি দেওয়া এবং নীতি রক্ষা করিয়া অন্য সম্প্রদায়ের ন্যায় সম্মত প্রাপ্য দাবী গ্রহণ করিয়া মুসলমানদের সব বিভাগে সুবিধা দেওয়া ও কি মুসলমানদের স্বার্থ বিপর্যয় করা? ওয়াকী কীম সম্বন্ধে অনেক মাননীয় মুসলমান সভা আগন্তু জানাইয়াছেন। ওয়াকী কীমের কোন বিষয়টা মুসলমানদের ধর্মহানীকর তাহার উল্লেখ করা হয় নাই। আমি দৃঢ়তার সহিত বলিতে পারি রজুতে তাহাদের সর্প ভয় হইতেছে না।

নমাজের সময় ব্যতীত সদর বাস্তার গীতবাদ্য মুসলমানগণের ধর্মহানীর আর এক অপূর্ণ কাহিনী। মুসলমান সংখ্যা গরিষ্ঠ বাংলা দেশে বাংলার লাগ নেতা মাননীয় ফজলুল হক সাহেব যে ব্যবস্থা বহাল রাখিয়াছেন, বাংলা দেশের মুসলমানের তাহাতে যদি ধর্মগান হয়না আসামের মুসলমানের তাহাতে ধর্মহানি হয় কি প্রকারে তাহা উপভোগ্য রহস্য। কুলাউরা মসজিদের সম্মুখ দিয়া মুসলমান প্রধান মন্ত্রী স্যার মহম্মদ সাহুলা, লাগ নেতা মোঃ আবদুল লইয়া যাইতে ধর্মনাশের কথা উঠে-নাই। কিন্তু, কংগ্রেসী মন্ত্রী মাননীয় গোপীনাথ বড়মলৈকে লইয়া যাইতে আপত্তি উঠিয়াছিল। এবং কথা আমার মুসলমান বন্ধুদের বৃদ্ধির অভিযোগ অতি সত্য এবং তাহা বন্ধ করা একান্ত প্রয়োজন। দেশে সম্প্রদায়িক বিরোধ কঠোর আইন করা উচিত। তাহাতে সম্পত্তি বাজেয়াপ্ত, প্রাদেশ হইতে বহিস্করণ, বেত্রদণ্ড প্রভৃতির ব্যবস্থা থাকা প্রয়োজন। সরকার এবং বিরুদ্ধ দল এই বিষয় অবহিত হইয়া সমবেত ভাবে তাহা দমন করিবার ব্যবস্থা করিলে অচিরে যে তাহা দূর হইবে তদ্বিষয়ে কোন সন্দেহ থাকিতে পারেনা।

‘এগ্রিকালচারেল ইনকমট্যাক্স’ প্রজাদের দুর্গতি বাড়াইবার জন্য ধার্য করা হইয়াছে— জমিদার ও মহাজন বন্ধু কংগ্রেস গবর্ণমেন্টের ইহাও এক কুকীর্তি,—আমার বন্ধু মোলানা আবদুল হামিদ খান বিশেষ ভাবে এই কথাটার উপর জোর দিয়াছেন। মোলানো সাহেবকে আমি অভয় দিতেছি—বিল খানা তিনি পড়িয়া সমালোচনা করিলে তাহার উদ্ভট কথাই বলিতেন। প্রস্তাবিত এই ট্যাক্স জমিদার, যাহাদের আয় হইবে দুই হাজার টাকার উপর এবং চাকরদের জন্যই ধার্য হইয়াছে। কৃষকদের এই ট্যাক্স দিতে হইবেনা, বরং কৃষকদের উপকারের জন্যই এই টাকা ব্যয় হইবে। হকেনহল সার্কুলার প্রকাশ হওয়ার পর একথা আর না বলিলেও চলিত, সাহেব লাগ চৌধুরী কোম্পানী অন্ততঃ কৃতজ্ঞতার খাতিরেও এই ট্যাক্স ধার্যের কালে আপত্তি না করিয়া পারেন না।

পাঠশালার শিক্ষকদের বেতন বৃদ্ধি সম্বন্ধে মাননীয় প্রধান মন্ত্রী এবারই কিছুটা ব্যবস্থা করিয়াছেন এবং এসব ট্যাক্স ধার্য হইয়া আয় বৃদ্ধি হইলে পর তদ্বিষয় সাধ্যানুযায়ী চেষ্টা

নিবার প্রতিশ্রুতি দিয়াছেন। আমার বিরুদ্ধদের মাননীয় বন্ধুদের আশিষ্যে কড়াইয়া দিতে চাই যে প্রাথমিক বিদ্যালয়ের শিক্ষকদের বেতন বৃদ্ধির প্রস্তাব সম্বন্ধে বর্তমান গবর্ণমেন্ট অর্থাৎ বর্তমান বিরুদ্ধ দলের পক্ষ হইতে প্রয়োজনীয় টাকার সংস্থান করিতে পারিবেন না,—স্পষ্ট ভাষায় শিক্ষা মন্ত্রী এই পরিষদে দাড়াইয়া বলিয়াছিলেন—“আজ যাহারা প্রাথমিক শিক্ষকদের বেতন বৃদ্ধির জন্য চেষ্টা নিতেছেন, দেখাইতেছেন তাহাবাই সেদিন সেই গবর্ণমেন্টের সমর্থক ছিলেন”।

দেশে এখনই যে গবর্ণমেন্ট প্রতিষ্ঠিত হউক না কেন, জাতি বর্ষ নির্বিশেষে সকলেই তাহার কাছে ন্যায় সম্ভব অধিকার পাইবার দাবী করিবে এবং গবর্ণমেন্ট ও তাহা নাকারিয়া পারেননা। গবর্ণমেন্ট কাহারও জাতিগত সম্পত্তি নয় এবং ব্যক্তিগত হইতেই পারেনা। এখানে সকলেই সমান—সকলের সমান অধিকার। এদেশ হিন্দুদেরও দেশ এবং মুসলমানদের ও দেশ। প্রতিবেশীর অশান্তি উৎপাদন এবং রাষ্ট্রিক বিশৃঙ্খলা সৃষ্টি করিয়া বিপ্লব আনয়ন করিলে হিন্দু মুসলমান উভয় জাতিরই শান্তি নষ্ট হইবে। আকাশে থু থু ফেলিলে তাহা আকাশে না গিয়া নিজের উপরই ফিরিয়া আসে। সত্য এবং ন্যায়েই উপর ভিত্তি করিয়া যে কোন কাজই করা যায়না কেন তাহাতে সকল কাম হওয়া যায়। অন্যতর চোরাবালি উপর দাড়াইয়া কাজ আরম্ভ করিলে তাহাতে সকল কাম হওয়া দূরের কথা নিজের অন্তিম বিপন্ন হয় মাত্র।

Srijut KRISHNA NATH SARMAH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate the Ministry for accepting the scheme of opium prohibition in spite of financial difficulties. I shall only confine my speech to why the prohibition scheme is essential and how it can be made a complete success. I am an uncompromising prohibitionist. I declare that opium curse has ruined us. It has killed our manhood. It has destroyed our moral fibres. It has reduced us to extreme poverty. What is worse it has created in us a spirit of lathargy and despair. Our people are demoralised to the lowest level. It has sapped our culture and checked our growth. If we look at the past history of our people, we find that Ahom Rajas lost their kingdom when they became victims to this deadly poison. Assam was full of patriots whose deeds of heroism bear favourable comparison to the Sikhs, Rajputs and Maharastras of Northern India. We now find ourselves prostrate before this deadly poison. Our hill tribes, the Nagas, the Khasis, the Mikirs and others whose physique bear testimony of their iron constitution which God has given to them are now physical wrecks as a result of the consumption of opium. Human nature all over the world is the same. If opium is a dangerous poison to the people of the West, why is it considered as a nectar and saviour to the people of Assam, I fail to understand. Every year lakhs of rupees are spent for the purchase of 'barbih' to cater to the needs of our people. If such amounts were spent for milk or nutritious food, we would have vastly improved in our health. There was a time when opium was used to be sold like hot cakes in the bazaars and the price was then very low. Men of great eminence suspected that by abolishing poppy cultivation Government has a sinister motive of taking over the monopoly of the trade of opium and thereby causing ruin to our people. As soon as our people got into the habit, they sold their body and soul and sacrificed everything worth

in life. Our people are lured into taking up this trade for small gains. We all forget in our zeal for employment and gain that we ourselves were responsible for our own emasculation and ruin. However this is all past history. I am glad that Government has accepted my scheme of total prohibition *in toto* and with a little improvement. I cannot but congratulate the present Ministry for their determination to stamp out the opium evil. Now the question before us is how to make the scheme a complete success. I must warn the Government not to overlook the weaker side of human nature. The whole department is full of corruption. There is the fear of failure due to our sympathy for the mahaldars who were all along the mediums of smuggling. There is hesitation and doubt amongst the officials. We must first of all reject the theory once for all that opium is necessary for health. Such medical men's advice for administering raw opium be never allowed to prevail. Secondly we must guard ourselves against the bugbear of smuggling.

The smuggling then will die a natural death along with the eradication of the habit.

✓ I say that in 1921 we suffered terribly. The then Government stood in our way. We succeed in reducing the consumption by intensive propaganda alone by about six hundred maunds in a single year. Thousands of addicts voluntarily gave up the habit and not a single case of death has been reported. We found all of them vastly improved in health blessing the non-co-operation volunteers and the economic conditions has been improved. We are proud of our workers and we are glad that our past sufferings have not gone in vain. I may speak with perfect confidence that our workers and the great organisation to which we belong will be solidly with us to make the scheme a complete success. Our Congress M. L. As. are great fighters. Each one of them is eminently fitted to take charge of the prohibition works. They will be able to carry thousand along with them and create unprecedented enthusiasm amongst our people that the highest officials will feel it a pride and pleasure to meet them. The officials are not yet ready, it appears, to fall in line with us completely with our ideas of prohibition. The true test to prove this is that but for the Congress Coalition Government they would not have taken up the initiative. We would not object to co-operate with the officials in our march to achieve the object but they must carry with the policy with iron determination and must in all humility move out the the people like us. They should work in full co-operation in the midst of Provincial Prohibition Committee recommended the appointment of a non-official prohibition Commissioner. If this is not possible, at least one non-official of equal rank should be appointed honorary for better mass contact and success of the scheme will largely depend upon the co-operation of the non-official organisations to serve the cause of humanity. I am sure Rai Bahadur D. Sarma, our present prohibition Commissioner will make a name and fame and lead the movement to success and be able to purge the department of its corruptions as a work of love with full co-operation of Congress workers. The officials must divest their official arrogance of the cause of humanity. I would request Srijiut Omeo Kumar Das, Srijiut Debeswar Sarma or Srijiut B. C. Gogoi to be ready to take up this high office if necessary. Amongst workers outside the legislature, Srijiut Hemchandra Barua, Pandit Kanak Chandra Sarma and His Holiness the Adhikar Swami of Garamoor must be put into responsible position. There are hundreds of sincere workers both in Congress and non-Congress people who are eager to join in the cause and they should be mobilised.

Now coming to the actual operation of the scheme we may divide the works as follows : Propaganda, Relief, Vigilance over the addicts and detection of smuggling and corruption.

I may mention here that Colonel H. P. Allen may be specially appointed for both the subdivisions for a period of six months as Chief Medical Adviser. The Government has sanctioned 1½ lakhs. We may divert the amount of Rs.13,000 allotted to the Excise budget for rewards to the prohibition expenses and I refer the Hon'ble Minister to my budget speech last year about these items. In this connection I beg to draw the attention of the House that Rev. C. F. Andrews and Lady Amrit Koor may be asked to come over to Assam to assist us in our prohibition work. I am sure that they will be too glad to accept our invitation and help us to fight out the evil.

One fact more and I finish. It is estimated by the Government that the probable number of unregistered consumers will be about 1 of the registered consumers. It may be more. There is a feeling expressed that a census of these consumers are required to be made. In my opinion this is unnecessary. It will swell the number to a large extent and add to our difficulties. I think Government should immediately issue a circular to the people in the prohibited areas that if there are any unregistered consumers who want to avail themselves of the medical treatment they may report to the prohibition authority on or before the 15th April 1939. Our valuable time will be wasted and work will suffer if we put the cart before the horse and make a beginning of census operations at this stage. We must remember that the last Government gave them ample opportunities year after year and actually issued about Rs. 20,000 opium passes during the last ten years. It is useless to open any more concessions to them. The existence of a large number of unregistered consumers is a serious reflection on the part of the Excise Department. Secondly we must ignore the bugbear of smuggling. Our first concern will be to cure the habit of those consumers who will be in our charge and the vigilance workers will be occupied to guard them. If they fritter away their energy by following the shadow of the smugglers work will be hampered. Deportation and confiscation of property of the smugglers must be the consequence. A drastic measure must be adopted to check the smugglers. The Excise staff who will be greatly relieved of their duty of inspecting the opium shops that are closed should be specially utilised to check smuggling; but our workers must concentrate their energy in eradicating the habit of the addicts in their charge. Any possession of opium in the prohibited areas must be an offence and there can be no excuse under any circumstances to excuse illegal possession of opium. Opium addicts from other districts cannot be allowed to take opium in the prohibited areas. Doctors will not be allowed to give raw opium in course of their treatment. The corruption and bribery in the department must be reduced to nil. Excise mahaldars will be severely dealt with for short weight sale and mixing of water with liquor and a warning be made to all concerned about the policy of the Government. Excise mahals may be allowed to be inspected by M. L. As., *Mauzadars*, Police and any public man of importance and Congress Leaders. Any officer of the Excise Department found suspect of corruption or in any way connected directly or indirectly in smuggling should be immediately suspended or removed.

Regarding other districts where accelerated reduction of rations will continue propaganda work must be carried on in the same way as in the prohibited area. First cut in the rations must be made before 1st April 1939. Two or more opium shops whose rations are below three seers a month should be amalgamated into one. All shops whose rations are one seer or below one seer per month should be abolished. It may be noted

that opium shops are hot beds of smuggling and the Mahaldars are agents of the smugglers. The reductions of opium shops will greatly reduce smuggling. In this connection I appeal to the tea planters to provide facilities for providing tea shops to serve the addicts and thereby take advantage of the situation for expansion of tea drinking and as well as help the movement by their generous offer like that of Madras. We will be in need of a tea shop in every centre as the addicts will find it very pleasant to take a few cups of tea in place of opium as a stimulant. Regarding liquor shops a beginning is made by closing the same on Sundays. This will greatly satisfy my friend Mr. Bideshi Pan Tanti who is of opinion that poor labourers earn for six days to spend on the 7th day their money in drinking. This will give them an opportunity to save some money at least for their food. I would urge on Government that all over Assam, especially in the prohibited areas the policy of the Government be advertised by beat of drums and pamphlets and bulletins be issued under the authority of the Government at once.

With these few remarks I congratulate the Finance Minister once more for providing funds towards prohibition. I emphatically declare that the loss of revenue will be more than compensated by the increased prosperity of the addicts. When the Government have accepted prohibition in principle, no stone should be left unturned to make it a success. We should not depend on officials alone, nor upon non-officials only. Both the officials and non-officials must be of one mind and work shoulder to shoulder without any reservation. There should be no loss of dignity to shoulder follow anybody, whether official or non-official, in any matter to obey or which is to serve the cause of humanity. It should be our honour and pride to serve our brothers and sisters to the best of our capacity. The provincial Prohibition Committee have formulated a detailed procedure and I hope they will be helpful to carry out the movement. The we shall gain experience and our present fears will be nullified. As we work, say that in this matter there are no two opinions in the country. I must perfectly sure that the scheme will be a complete success. I am

Mr. NABA KUMAR DUTTA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this year's budget is undoubtedly much more inspiring than the hackneyed budgets with which we have been hitherto familiar. (*Hear, hear* from the Opposition). Some steps in the right direction will certainly support the claim to call it a very much people's budget. The Government must be congratulated for the substantial extra sum they have found for Primary and Secondary Education and for their sacrifice of revenue due to the proposed prohibition scheme. In the matter of education, Sir, there will be some disappointment due to the non-fulfilment of the long-standing people's demand for a separate university at Gauhati. I fully realise Sir, that the Government must stabilise its financial position by tapping all proper sources before they can venture into a major project like this. But I do hope that the Government will recognise the claim of the people and see their way to establish a university at Gauhati in the near future. If I suggest member aright, Sir, the Hon'ble Premier suggested that a "university day" should be observed for raising funds for the purpose. I would like to suggest that a State lottery on the analogy of the Burma State lottery may be undertaken for this purpose.

Now, Sir, as regards the Excise Department, in view of the Government's proposed prohibition scheme, a thorough re-orientation of this department would be necessary. Hence at this stage I refrain from discussing the workings of this department. But I must say that prohibition will be

absolutely undermined if corruption is not checked. Hence I suggest that proper vigilant officers should be appointed in each district.

Now, Sir, I want to speak a few words about the Agricultural Department. As usual, this department is carrying on experiments and research. These experiments and research are of no use, unless the people are enabled to utilise their results. I am afraid, till now much success has not been obtained in bringing the results of these experiments and the improved methods of agriculture to the notice of the cultivator. I should like to suggest that, as is being done in Bombay, some non-official agricultural agents should be appointed to help the Agricultural Department in carrying out propaganda work.

Now, Sir, in view of our claim for autonomy as well as an economic measure I must approve the appointment of a separate Advocate General for Assam. But sufficient work for this officer can only be found when a High Court will be established in this province. At the moment I am absolutely in the dark as to its establishment (*hear, hear*). But we are very much perturbed to find that the share cost of the maintenance of the Calcutta High Court is rising. I hope the Government will take such steps as to expedite the establishment of a High Court in this province as early as possible. (Dewan Md. Ahbab Chaudhury: At Gauhati?) Yes. (*Laughter*).

I should like to say, Sir, that the provision in the budget for the office of the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Division to enable His Excellency to discharge his special responsibilities becomes a matter of constitutional interest. In any case in view of the desire of the Legislature recorded in the past, the Government must recommend for its abolition as soon as possible. With these few words I resume my seat.

Mr. C. GOLDSMITH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the budget as presented is an indication of what the Congress professed to do if they got the power and what they are actually doing when they have got the power. Truly speaking, Sir, the Hon'ble Finance Minister has laboured much to explain that what the Congress boasted of doing when they would be in power that it has not been able to do. The reason he has given is lack of funds and lack of time. It is regrettable indeed to note that, being prepared with a programme and policy for two years and having criticised two budgets previous to the present one, the Finance Minister now complains of lack of time and lack of funds. It is also very significant that, though pledges have not been redeemed and promises not fulfilled, yet they have been more or less able to close the mouth of a great section of the public. This of course will not last long. The public cannot be fooled for all time.

It is clear that the Finance Minister has excuses for not giving full remission of land revenue as promised. But why did they promise when they knew that they could not redeem them? I do not say that the Government ought to give 50 per cent. reduction. I did not say that before, nor do I ask the Government to do it today. I sympathise with the difficulties of Government. Land revenue is the principal source of income. Why then reduce it? If real development of the country is to be achieved, then revenue is to be realised. I would favour remission in the case of those who are sorely in need, who cannot pay and who are on the verge of starvation. But why aim at uniform and universal reduction of revenue by 50 per cent.? I would say it is fallacious now, even as I said it was fallacious during the regime of the former ministry. Today you give 50 per cent. remission and people will not be satisfied. During the next election others will have to promise 75 per cent. reduction and succeed in getting elected. The net result will be that Government will become bankrupt and any

nation-building programme cannot be undertaken. People will become lazy, thriftless and indebted. Even if remission of revenue is not given to the extent of 50 per cent. and even if drastic retrenchment is effected, still we do not have enough funds to do things needed for the good Government of the province. Taxation of some kind will be necessary. I sympathise with the Government for the predicament that they are in and the recourse they have to take to as regards taxation. But in this they will have to move very cautiously and judiciously. Agriculture is the main source of income of the people and the Government should see that it does not kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. But the irony of fate is this. If taxation proposals had been made in 1937 by the former ministry, then such a hue and cry would have been raised that even in the Assembly a pandemonium would have been created similar to the one at Tripuri. I do sympathise with the Finance Minister in his difficulties and I for one am not in favour of criticising without rhyme or reason as the Congress had been doing since April, 1937 and I would ask all those who are not in the Coalition not to criticise as the Congress did, but say anything that is bad, bad and anything that is good, good.

With high hopes all were looking forward towards the inauguration of prohibition in Assam and our hopes were almost fulfilled when we noted that in two subdivisions it would be started. The mountain groaned and travailed but it only brought forth a mouse. To our surprise, instead of banishing intoxicating liquor, Congress has confined itself only to prohibiting opium and the Finance Minister boasting that he is sacrificing 5 lakhs of revenue. Before this Congress was moving to sacrifice 35 lakhs. As regards opium they were prohibiting import of even one seer of opium into the country but when in power silver is valued as gold and those tall talks vanished into thin air. There was a Committee on excise which recommended starting prohibition of liquor in certain areas but those recommendations have been shelved. We as Christians would have welcomed highly such a measure and even now we will co-operate in any measure which eradicates these evils. If the former policy of opium reduction possible in and rules regarding passes and licenses stiffened and the department continued more vigilant, the goal would have been achieved automatically, as far as opium is concerned. What is engaging the attention of all other Congress provinces is the drink evil. This, the Assam Government have not touched but contemplates taxing foreign liquor for more revenue. This is indeed regrettable and its policy most reprehensible. Regarding raising of the Primary School teachers Congress whole-heartedly sponsored the resolution to raise their pay. But in the budget now there is no provision at that time. I opposed the raising of pay when funds were short and when funds were short and when many schools were to be opened in backward areas and venture schools to be taken up. I do sympathise with the Government for not being able to give effect to that resolution, for I know it is not possible now and not advisable under the present condition of the backwardness of the country. But the truth remains that the Congress was not sincere when it sponsored such a resolution when it very well knew that it could not and should not be done.

There are many other instances to show that the Congress boasted of accomplishing if were in power but when actually in power could not fulfil them. There is no time to enumerate them all here.

We have noted that some money have been set apart for training of teachers under the Wardha Scheme. But what about the training of teachers for our innumerable existing primary schools and schools that will be started if compulsory primary education scheme is really at heart of

the benign Government. I have noted the regrettable fact that there are about 8,000 primary school teachers in Assam and only 14 per cent. of them are trained. Let Congress beware that they do not sacrifice the true interest of Assam on the altar of All-India Congress creed.

The last point I want to touch is the taking over certain Mission schools in the Khasi and Garo Hills and using the money to run them that was given as grants to these schools. If these schools can work efficiently by Government with such funds then it is a move on the right direction. Mission would welcome such arrangements, for after all it is the business of the Government to bear the burden of education of all people in Assam specially in the primary stage. But I like to clarify one point here lest there would be some misunderstanding lurking in the minds of some hon. members in this Assembly and the public. In the quinquennial report of the Director of Public Instruction a remark was made to the effect that in the hills these Mission schools were agencies for proselytising and only Christians got the benefit out of them. It is far from the truth. Wherever Christianity has gone the light of the Gospel was always eager to dispel ignorance, superstition, uncleanness and illiteracy and therefore education which serves this purpose most was in the forefront of its programme and not proselytising its first concern. When people got the proper light some of them get converted but not all. The Mission did pioneering work in education in the hills which the Government or any other agency at one time could not do. The rapid spread of education in the hills is the direct result of their efforts. All those who go through the Mission schools are not all converted and the truth is hundreds of non-Christians pass through these schools without ever thinking of taking the religion. If enquiry is made throughout Assam, I am sure it will be found among those who go through Mission schools the percentage of non-Christians are more than Christians. In fact the highest record made in the last three years shows that non-Christian hill boys had topped the list all going through the Mission primary and middle schools. They have still not become Christians. During the last three years four hill boys had passed the B.A. Examination with Honours and of them three were non-Christians. The percentage of literacy amongst women in Khasi Hills is the highest in the whole of India except Travancore. Mission has done pioneering work in education and it had been a hard work impossible for any other agency to do for which they do not ask any reward. So, they are very willing to hand over schools which they have so efficiently managed for the last 100 years. They are still ready to do any further pioneering work in any line the Government would put in their hands and co-operate with any Government for the welfare of the backward people of Assam, so long neglected.

I hope all those well-wishers of the educational development in Assam will not be carried with the idea that the schools are being taken over because they had been proselytising agencies. I trust the good sense of the Coalition Government that they will always remember the valuable contribution the Mission has made during the last 100 years in the spread of education in the hills and valleys of Assam.

Finally, I hope the Ministry in preparing this budget has learnt to be more sincere in all their words and actions whether in power or not in power. I further hope the present Government will pursue the path of truth and honesty the violation of which will cause any Government to fall whether Congress or non-Congress. I wish God-speed to the Finance Minister in such sincere efforts to do good to all sections of the people and not specially to a few whose immediate support the Cabinet would like to seek.

Maulavi ABDUL AZIZ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am really sorry I cannot congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister for more than one reason. I have gone through the budget and I am disappointed to find that so far as Surma Valley is concerned no provision has been made in the budget. It is a well-known fact that in Surma Valley there was a need for a Medical School at Sylhet. Pre-autonomous Government recognised that need and they started buildings and other things. Government have spent a sum of eight lacs of rupees on buildings for this school. Now everything is ready and we want only a staff and some appliances to start that school. I find in the budget that the Hon'ble Finance Minister has provided for many new schemes but he has made no provision for that most important scheme which is meant for the Surma Valley. As I was looking into the budget, I found that the present Government is very lavish in spending people's money. They have freely granted concessions and remissions of land revenue. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has come before the House in order to replenish the shortness of funds and has brought forth many Bills the most important of which is a Bill for tax on agricultural income. From this Bill Government expect to get about 25 lacs of rupees. In this Bill we find that Government propose to tax rice, mustard seeds, tobacco and other things which the cultivators produce. The plea of the Government is that they are going to tax the rich and not the poor. I submit, Sir, that they ultimately fall on the poor people of the province. It is a known fact, Sir, that great majority of our people obtain the major portion of their annual consumption by purchase.

So, if this Bill is passed into Act, the burden will fall on the consumers—the labourers and the cultivators. Under the circumstances I shall be the last man to lend my support to the Bill.

Again, Sir, Government is proposing to take the motor spirits and certain lubricants. The incidence of this Act also will fall on the cultivators and the poorer section of the people. These Bills seem to be very cruel and all the proposed taxation measures will touch the purse of the poorer section of the people. In the name of providing education and improving sanitation, the Government is going to tax the poor people. But they should know that the producers who will be taxed, will shift the burden to the consumers, the labourers and the cultivators. I submit, Sir, that there were other sources of augmenting revenue which the Government have not touched. There are yet vast arable waste land, and if the major portion of it is thrown open to settlement, large sums of money will be coming to the State coffers which would be quite sufficient to furnish Government with money to meet their capital expenses.

Sir, in the budget the Hon'ble Finance Minister has provided for some new schemes. Under the head Education I find, the Ministers have provided a sum of Rs. 25,000 for spread of education among the hill tribes and another Rs. 25,000 for spread of primary education among the scheduled castes and depressed classes, and Rs. 29,000 and odd for the schools from the hands of Welsh Mission. I do not understand how the Government is going to be a gainer by the last item of expenditure. I ask of the Government whether this is curtailment of expenditure or whether it is burdening Government for all generations to come.

Sir, as regards needs of Surma Valley, I do not find any new project finding place in the budget. We have got 4 Ministers representing our interests, but so far as I see the interests of the Surma Valley have been completely overlooked by the present Government. Though we have got the Public Works Department Minister we do not find a single new road project in the budget. His own subdivision is hopelessly lacking in road

communication and the roads which have been taken up by the Public Works Department are not yet complete. The Maulvibazar-Sherpur road had been taken up several years ago, but up till now it is not an accomplished fact. In this connection I beg to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Public Works Department Minister to the fact that Maulvibazar-Sherpur road is connected with Sherpur-Sylhet road. It will be very kind of the Hon'ble Minister if he extends this road on the east up to Shamshernagar and takes up that portion of the road which now goes by the name of Maulvibazar-Shamshernagar road. This road was once a Public Works Department road, but for local reasons Government handed this over to the Local Board but for want of funds the road is not maintained in good order now. It will not cost Government much to take up this road, which is only 12 miles long, the only expense will be the cost of a bridge at Chaitraghat over the river Dhalai. If the Government takes up that road, we shall have a road from Shamshernagar to Sylhet. When I asked a question about this road, last time I was told that it does not come within the provincial programme, but I request the Hon'ble Minister to consider the fact that if these 12 miles are tagged to Maulvibazar-Sherpur road it will easily come under the provincial programme. The road is quite in good order, the only expenses are those of construction of a bridge, which will not exceed Rs. 20,000.

As to Industries, I submit, Sir, that the Hon'ble Minister of Industry is doing nothing for the improvement of industries and industrial institutions of my subdivision. My subdivision is a high land subdivision, and so there is scarcity of water annually there. The grants for water supply are very scanty and I request the Hon'ble Minister to take note of the fact and provide a suitable grant.

As to Muhammadan education, I am sorry to see the budget is very miserly in this respect. All sorts of education has received new grants, but special Muhammadan education has been deprived. I beg to inform the Hon'ble Minister that the new madrasa scheme includes in it secular education up to Middle English standard. These new scheme madrasas in many places, impart education to Hindu boys as well. There is such a madrasa at Shamshernagar in my Constituency and half the boys of the said madrasa are Hindus. So, I do not see why this subject of Muhammadan education has not received consideration from the Government.

(The Hon'ble the Speaker having declared that the time limit has reached, the hon. member took his seat.)

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order. May I know how much time the Hon'ble Finance Minister will require to reply to all the points raised?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I will require, Sir, at least half an hour.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: May I know whether the Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition is going to speak, and if so, how long will he take?

Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: During the last two days in your absence my friend the Hon'ble Finance Minister suggested that I should speak last of all non-official members and sum up the debate. I will require about 25 minutes.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Then only 15 minutes' time is left for other members.

Voices: Let us sit up to 4-30 p.m., today.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: If the House decide to sit up to 4-30 p.m., I have no objection.

Voices: Yes, Sir, we shall sit up to 4-30 p.m.

14/3/39

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to congratulate the Hon'ble Minister for Industries for his recognition of the necessity of pushing on the cause of *endi* and *muga* spinning. I have noticed that, in his Budget, he has allotted a small sum of Rs.5,000 for the purchase of a spinning wheel which is known as *Sudarsan Jater* with the help of which *endi* and *muga* can be spun at a tremendously speedy rate. I also find that this is not a grant, but that he wants to purchase the spinning wheels at a nominal price, because it is stated in the memorandum that he wants to purchase 125 spinning wheels for Rs 5,000, which means Rs.40 for each spinning wheel. Sir, I know personally the gentleman who invented the spinning wheel. He has practically devoted his whole life for not be less than Rs.65. Actually, out of the discretionary grant of one of the Hon'ble Ministers in our time two spinning wheels were purchased for the Gauhati Jail last year. If the Hon'ble Minister really wants to encourage this spinning wheel, instead of purchasing this spinning wheel at such a nominal price, he ought to make a grant so that he may establish a workshop in order that he can produce the wheel in future at a cheaper rate.

Sir, I find from the speeches which have been delivered by the members of this House representing the majority in this House, that we are all very happy with the Budget that has been presented. But on my part if there has been an orientation in this Budget for 1939-40, this orientation will have to be found in the new colour of the covers of the Budget. There is a departure from the previous practice, and we find very beautiful colour in the cover of the Budget estimates. For this reason, perhaps, Mr. Chari, Superintendent of the Government Press, got his due share of thanks. Mr. Chari, as we all remember, was, at one time, responsible for the strike in the Government Press, and not a day passed, during my experience in the Assam Legislative Assembly or the Assam Legislative Council when some sort of criticism was not levelled against him. It will also be remembered that it was only in the last year that my friend, Srijut Debeswar Sarmah, was so disgusted with the working of the Assam Government Press that he wanted permission to inspect the Press, so that he might suggest measures for a thorough overhaul. I suppose on account of the glaring colour of the Budget, he is entirely silenced, and not merely of the criticism from that quarter, I find public appreciation of services of Mr. Chari, from no less a person than Hon'ble Finance Minister himself.

Sir, there is a tendency to compare the present Budget with the old ones and to find out things by favourable comparison. I consider the old will be no credit to the Congress Coalition Government to find out certain facts or figures in this Budget and compare with the old and then exult over it, to compare their Government with the Government that existed in the pre-autonomous days and then dance over it. The Congress has got a well-established reputation of doing something for the people in general and of doing something for the masses. They have a definite programme and in holding out that programme before the public they have to clear the position. Their main principle is truth and honesty and they will be judged by this standard by the ability to follow this programme which they had laid down. They will be judged by the measure of the results which they produce. Judging by that standard, Sir, I think the present Coalition Government has undoubtedly failed in their object. I am fully conscious of this fact that everyone cannot do what he wants to do, or that one cannot

do a thing as quickly as he would like to finish. At the same time, a responsible man will be more careful about the promises he makes and will try to prove to the public that he has kept up to this promise.

So, Sir, I should ask some definite questions to the Hon'ble Premier and the Finance Minister. I want from the Government definite statements; I want to know their position, so that public may also know what they can expect and what they cannot expect.

I want first of all to know particularly whether they are going to grant 50 per cent. reduction of land revenue or not. If they are not going to grant 50 per cent. reduction they ought to let the public know this, because the *rai-yats* are expecting more substantial remission of land revenue, and to that extent they are unwilling to pay land revenue. So, Government should now circumspect their position and tell us definitely if they will be prepared to grant more substantial reduction of land revenue i.e., 50 per cent. as they hitherto fought for.

Then, Sir, I also want to know from the Government whether they are going to establish a University within the next two years or not. I think it is an unwise thing to say to the public that we would raise a fund and if this fund is established then we shall establish a University. We know, the people of the Surma Valley are not in favour of establishing a University. So if that is the difficulty in their way, the Government can frankly tell the public so that the public may know what to do.

As regards a High Court, I think Government have already replied that they are trying to establish it as quickly as possible and that they have not departed from the decision laid down by the previous Government. So far so good.

Then, Sir, I want to know what the Government are going to do in the matter of the abolition of the second post of Commissioner. Are they really going to abolish it, or are they going to take shelter under the special powers of His Excellency the Governor? That is the point the Hon'ble Prime Minister or the Hon'ble Finance Minister ought to make perfectly clear. I have heard—I do not know how far it is true—that the Government has entered into a compromise with the Secretary of State, or his representative, that they would abolish the second post of Commissioner in exchange for the reservation of the post of Revenue Tribunal for an Indian Civil Service Officer. If it is true, and a compromise like that has been arrived at, it will be very unfortunate because it will be taking away the right of the legislature to constitute their own Revenue Tribunal, and I think that the Government should not agree to such a compromise.

As regards the continuance of the post of the Commissioner of the Assam Valley Division, at least one of the posts of Commissioners, I have my own views, and I consider that the continuance of this post is necessary for some time.

Then, Sir, I would also like to point out to this House that the Government has incurred in their budget certain unnecessary expenditure. For instance, the creation of the post of Advocate-General for Assam. We had managed for all these years quite smoothly without the creation of that post, and there is no reason to suppose that the creation of this post has now become necessary. There is absolutely no justification, so far as it appears to the public, for this post, and it is considered that this post has been created in order to satisfy a particular individual who had helped in the formation and maintenance of the present Government (*Hear, hear*). Who that gentleman is I need not mention because it is already published in the papers. What is more, he is said to be in the papers the mentor of the present Government of Assam.

Then, Sir, another piece of extravagance, that must have been stated by other hon. members also, is the provision for the salary of the Deputy Speaker. For the last 16 years this province has managed without paying any salary to the Deputy Speaker, and it is not understood how his duties have become so arduous all on a sudden for the Government to present him with a purse of Rs. 3,000 a year. It is in the air—nay, it is very widely talked, that this proposal to pay him this salary, coupled with the fact that he has already been allowed to occupy 250 *bighas* of land, is in order to get his support (*Shame, shame.*)

Then, Sir, I also draw the attention of the House to the continuance of the Second Chamber. I have my own views about the second Chamber, but I ask the hon. members on the opposite to remember their views—their pronounced views—about the continuance of the second Chamber. If they were really earnest about the abolition of the second Chamber would the Hon'ble the Prime Minister have been instrumental in nominating an additional member for the Second Chamber? (*Shame, shame.*) What was the necessity for that additional post for a Chamber which sat only for 3 days on the last occasion and did not transact any important business—of course it will have to do so in future so long as the Constitution Act remains as at present—is there any justification for appointing an additional member who will have to be paid a salary of Rs. 100 per mensem besides travelling allowance and halting allowance? Is this not an extravagance?

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: The Hon'ble Prime Minister has denied it.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: He has been instrumental in getting him nominated.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: That also is not correct.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Let him deny it.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Prime Minister is not entitled to disclose what advice he gave to His Excellency the Governor.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: He has said neither yes, nor no.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: He remained silent.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: What I want is that public uneasiness should be removed. There has been a lot of uneasiness in the minds of those persons who helped to make the present Coalition Government. I would remind the House of the fate which met Maulavi Matior Rahman Mia; the fate which met my hon. friend Babu Hirendra Chandra Chakravarty.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The hon. member's time is up.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Sir, two minutes of my time was taken up by interruptions. (*Laughter.*) However, I will finish by saying three things—the fate of my hon. friend Maulavi Matior Rahman Mia, the fate of my hon. friend Babu Hirendra Chandra Chakravarty, and the distribution of motor lorries have, amongst other things, caused greatest uneasiness in public minds.

Srijut KHORSING TERANG: সভাপতি মহোদয়, বাজেটৰ আলোচনাত যোগ দিবলৈ থিয় হৈ কোনেও কোনোদিনে কটাক নকৰা এটাইতকৈ শিচপৰা মিকিব সকলৰ প্ৰতি বৰ্ত্তমান দয়ালু মন্ত্ৰীমণ্ডলীৰ দি সামান্য দৃষ্টি পৰিছে তাৰ বাবে তেখেত সকলক অন্তৰ্বে নৈত শত ধন্য ধন্যবাদ জনায়েছোঁ।

আমাৰ এইদেশত বৃটিছ গবৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ শাসন প্ৰায় আজি ১৫০ বছৰ পাৰ হ'লহি। এই বৃটিছ গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট হেনো পৃথিৱীৰ ভিতৰত সকলোতকৈ সভা আৰু শেষ্ঠ গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট। এই স্বসভা গবৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ তলত আজি ইমান দিব পকাৰ ফলত আমাৰ কি উন্নয়ন হৈছে বৰ্ত্তমান কংগ্ৰেচৰ বাণী প্ৰচাৰ হবৰে পৰা তাক জানিব পাৰি লাগে আৰু যুগ লাগা গৈছে। আমাৰ মিকিব জাতিৰ কাৰণে শিক্ষা দীক্ষা নাই বুলি কলেও বঢ়াই কোৱা নহয়। চিকিৎসা আৰু ভাল খোৱাপানীৰ অভাৱত কুষ্ঠৰোগী, খাইচিছ, কলাজা, মেলেৰীয়া আদি নানাবৰ্ণৰ ৰোগত মহ—গৰুৰ দৰে মানুহ মৰাৰ সংখ্যা বৃদ্ধি পাইছে। কিছু গবৰ্ণমেণ্ট এফালক বিষয়ে কেতিয়াও দৃষ্টি বৰা নাই। আমাৰ গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে মিকিব হিলৰ পৰা লাব খেজা, কাঠ, বেত আৰু ছালমুগুৰা গুটিৰ ৰয়লট, চাং পাৰান আৰু মাটিৰ পাৰান আদায় কৰি বহুত বহুত টকা পায় আৰু বিবিধৰ কানি পুৰি কানিৰ পৰা বহুত টকা আয় কৰে। এতেকে মিকিবৰ শিক্ষাৰ কাৰণে যথেষ্ট টকা ব্যয়, ৭০০খন গাৱঁৰ ভিতৰত একোখনকৈ নিম্ন প্ৰাইমাৰী স্কুল, আৰু ৫০০খন নিম্ন প্ৰাইমাৰী স্কুলৰ ভিতৰত একোখনকৈ মিড্ল ইংলিছ স্কুল দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰক। আৰু যি বিলাক লবাই গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে স্কুলত পঢ়ে তেওঁবিলাকক বিনা মাছুল পঢ়িবলৈ দিয়ক আৰু যথেষ্ট সংখ্যা স্কলৰ ছপা দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰক।

মিকিব হিলৰ ভিতৰত আছিলৈকে কতো অহাযোৱাৰ সুবিধাৰ কাৰণে আনিবট দিয়া নাই। মিকিব বিলাকে অহাযোৱাৰ সুবিধাৰ ফলত কিনা বেচা কৰা বহুত বৰ্দ্ধায়ক হৈছে। গতিকে তেল, নিমখ, কাপোৰ আদি বস্তু ২০ শতাংশ দাম দি কিনিব লগা গৈছে আৰু উৎপন্ন মাল, যেনে—তিল, কপাহ, লা, সবুজ আদি একেদৰেই কম দামত বিক্ৰি কৰিব লগীয়া হৈছে। এইবোৰেই মিকিববিলাক ভৱীয়া হোৱাৰ মূল কাৰণ হৈছে। এতেকে এই দয়ালু কোৱাৰিছন মন্ত্ৰী মণ্ডলীৰ দি ত মাছে মাৰে আলি বাট দি অহাযোৱা আৰু কিনাবেচাৰ সুবিধা কৰি দিয়ে যেন। প্ৰথমতে নগাঁৱৰ দিকু ৰেলষ্টেচনৰ পৰা মহং-দি জুয়াটলৈ মাত্ৰ ১৪ মাইল বাস্তা—সেই বাস্তাত বৰ্ত্তমানে গৰুৰ গাড়ী চলি আছে। তাৰ improvementৰ কাৰণে কিছু টকা সাহায্য কৰক বা বাস্তাটো য'তে ভাল হয় তাৰ নিমিত্তে গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে তাক হাতত লওক। দ্বিতীয়তে, শিৱনাগৰ জিলাৰ অন্তৰ্গত বোকাৰান ৰেলষ্টেচনৰ ওচৰৰ Development Boardৰ আলিৰ পৰা আৰম্ভ কৰি দিয়ালাই, মহংদিজুয়া, এবাৰ্গাও, তেতেলৌগুৰি, দাঘলপানী, তাৰাবাছা, ফুলনগৈদি নগাঁও জিলাৰ ডেন গাৱঁৰ ওচৰত ডবকা ৰোডত লগলগাই গৰুৰ গাড়ী যিব পৰাটক এটা আলি দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰক। এই আলিটো দিলে সদৌ মিকিব বিলাকে কনা বেচা আৰু অহা যোৱাত বহুত উপকাৰ পাব। এই আলি দাখলে প্ৰায় ৪৫ মাইল মান হ'ব আৰু পাহাৰো কাটিব লগাত নপৰিব। গতিকে, গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে বোচ টকা খৰচ নকৰাকৈয়ে হ'ব।

মোৰ constituencyৰ ভিতৰত যি বিলাকে ভৈয়ামত থাকি দ'খেতি কৰে আৰু মাটিৰ খাজানা দিয়ে তেওঁবিলাকৰ প্ৰায় ঠাইতে ভালপানী খাবলৈ নোপোৱাত বোকাপানী খাই কলাজৰ, মেলেৰীয়া আদি নানাবৰ্ণৰ ৰোগত ভুগি অনেকেই অকালত প্ৰাণ হেৰুৱাইছে। একে নিম্নলিখিত ঠাইত অতি শীঘ্ৰে ভালপানী দিয়াৰ বন্দবস্ত কৰিবলৈ অহুৰোধ জনালোঁ। যেনে :—নগাঁও জিলাৰ লাংফৰ মৌজাৰ (১) এবাৰ্গাও, (২) বালীজান (বাহনী), (৩) তেতেলিগুৰি; নমাতি মৌজাৰ (৪) তাৰাবাহা, (৫) ফুলনী; আৰু বংখাং মৌজাৰ (৬) বৰখৰ, (৭) বৰপথাৰ।

ওপৰত লিখা ৭ ঠাইত অতি সোনকালে পানীৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰক।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, মিকিৰহিলত কুষ্ঠৰোগী, পাইচিছ আদি ইমান বেচিটক হবলৈ ধৰিছে যে তাৰ প্ৰতিকাৰৰ বাবে অতি শীঘ্ৰে এটা ব্যৱস্থা নকৰিলে মিকিৰ জাতিটো সমূল্যে নাইকিয়া হ'ব। সেই কাৰণে গবৰ্ণমেণ্টৰ ওচৰত মোৰ বিশেষ অহুৰোধ এই যে তাৰ জন মান special ডাক্তৰ নিযুক্ত কৰি, survey কৰাই চিকিৎসা বিধানৰ অৰ্থে তাৰ খন মান হাস্পতাল পাতি বোগীবিলাকৰ চিকিৎসাৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে। আৰু ইয়াৰ লগে লগে সকলোবোৰ কুষ্ঠৰোগী গোটাই আনি এটা colony স্থাপন কৰাৰ বিধান কৰিব লাগে।

মিকিৰবিলাক দুখীয়া হোৱাৰ মূল কাৰণ কানি খোৱা। বৃটিছ গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে মিকিৰ জাতিটোক কানি খুৱাই একেবাৰেই ধ্বংস কৰিলে। সেই কাৰণে মিকিৰ হিলৰ পৰা কানি একেবাৰেই উঠাই দিবলৈ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে। মই জানিব পাৰিছো যে অহা ১৫ এপ্ৰিলৰ পৰা ডিব্ৰুগড় আৰু শিৱসাগৰ ছাণ্ডিভিজনত কানি একেবাৰেই বন্ধ কৰিবলৈ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে আৰু দুবছৰৰ ভিতৰত গোটেই আদামৰ পৰা কানি উঠাই দিব বুলি শুনিছোঁ। কিন্তু মিকিৰ হিল অংশিক বহিভূত হোৱাৰ কাৰণে তাত কানি উঠাই দিয়া নহ'ব বুলি শুনি বৰ দুখত হৈছোঁ। মই আশা কৰোঁ মিকিৰ পাহাৰতো ইয়াৰ লগতে কানি উঠাই দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব। বৰ্তমান দুবছৰৰ ভিতৰত কানি উঠাই দিবলৈ ব্যৱস্থা কৰি গোটেই দেশজুৰি বৰ্তমান মন্ত্ৰী সভাই ধনুবাদ আৰু আশীৰ্বাদ পাইছে। আমাৰ মিকিৰ হিলতো লগে লগে কানি উঠাই দি গৰীব মিকিৰৰ পৰাও আশীৰ্বাদ ল'ব বুলি আশা কৰিলোঁ।

সভাপতি মহোদয়, দা'খেতিৰ উন্নতিৰ কাৰণে এজন Demonstrator নিযুক্ত কৰি দা'খেতিৰ উন্নতিৰ কামনা কৰিছে—তাৰ বাবে মন্ত্ৰীসকলক ধনুবাদ জনাইছে। মিকিৰহিলত লা, তিল, সৰিয়হ, কপাহ আদি বহুত বৰ্ণৰ খেতি হয়। কিন্তু দুখীয়া বাইজে বেচি বৰ্ণৰ খেতি কৰিবলৈ অপাৰগ, কাৰণ সিবিলাকৰ অৱস্থা শোচনীয়; গতিকে, গবৰ্ণমেণ্টে তেওঁবিলাকৰ প্ৰতি দৃষ্টি ৰাখি ৰূষি ধান দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা আৰু তেওঁবিলাকক স্থায়ীভাৱে বসতি কৰিবলৈ দা'খেতিৰ সুবিধা থকা বিজাৰ্ড খুলি দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে। গোলাঘাট মহকুমাত দুটাৰবাগৰি মৌজাৰ ফালে মিকিৰৰ চাং—টেক আৰু মাটিৰ খাজানাও লোৱা হয়।

এইটো উচিত হোৱা নাই। যদি চাং-টোয় থাকে তেন্তে মাটিৰ খাজানা থাকিব নালাগে। যদি মাটিৰ খাজানা থাকে তেন্তে অলপ মৌজাৰ বাবে যেনেকৈ খাজানা দিহে আৰু পট্টা পায় তেনেকুৱা হ'ব লাগে।

বৰ্তমান মন্ত্ৰী মণ্ডলীয়ে কংগ্ৰেচৰ নীতি মানি পিচ পৰা জাতি সমূহৰ প্ৰতি, বিশেষকৈ শিক্ষা দিবলৈ যি সাহায্যৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিছে তাত বৰ্ত্তমান সময়ৰ চকু পৰিছে। তেখেত সকলৰ চকুপোৰা উচিত হোৱা নাই।

শ্ৰীযুত বনশ্ৰাম দাস বিষয়াই পিচপৰা জাতি সমূহৰ শিক্ষাৰ উন্নতিৰ কাৰণে ১০ হেক্টৰ কৈ টকা দান কৰি দি দৰে মহাহুস্তবতাৰ পৰিচয় দি গোটাই দেশৰে প্ৰজাৰ ভাজন হৈছে সেই দৰেই তেখেত সকলকো পিচপৰা জাতি সমূহৰ প্ৰতি কৃপাদৃষ্টিৰে চাবলৈ অহুৰোধ জনালে।

অৱশেষত বৰ্ত্তমান মন্ত্ৰী মণ্ডলীয়ে দাব কৰিও সজ কাম কৰিবলৈ আগবঢ়াত আকৌ এবাৰ তেখেত সকলক ধন্যবাদ দি তেখেত সকলৰ স্থায়িত্ব কামনা কৰি সামৰণি মাৰিলে।

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to compliment the Hon'ble Finance Minister on the Budget that he has produced for the first time in this House. Indeed this is the very first Budget of the Congress Coalition Government which came into power not even a year ago. Considering the briefness of time and the many handicaps imposed upon him by a change in Government, what the Hon'ble Finance Minister has achieved is a remarkable success and he is deserving of high praise. I have listened patiently to the speeches that have followed the Budget Speech, from the Opposition benches. Most of them have been delivered in a spirit of bitterness, the sole object being to malign the Hon'ble Finance Minister personally or the party to which he happens to belong. I do not propose to reply to insinuations and innuendos with counter insinuations and innuendos, although the provocation has been great and justification so ample. I wish only my hon. friends had remembered the good old adage, "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones at others". Some of the points raised are so trivial and parochial that one could not persuade oneself to take any serious notice of them. It is a pity that in their zeal to malign us on this side of the House, the Opposition forgot what was expected of them, the result being an plethora of vague accusations and an utter poverty of constructive suggestions. I will attempt to touch upon a few points outside the domain of abuse, because I am not an expert in that art.

One interesting point raised by one hon. member was that this Government had surrendered Provincial Autonomy to the High Command of the Congress and that the Hon'ble Finance Minister had sounded only His Master's voice. This was meant to be a piece of mockery, but we claim this as high praise. The Government that is functioning in this province to-day is trying in its own humble way to implement the policy of an organization which is settling accounts with our foreign rulers with single-minded devotion little heeding the interests of any particular sect or interest or percentage of appointments under the Crown. It is far more honourable

to surrender to this High Command than the low command of narrow interests at the beck and call of foreigners; it is far more honourable to voice our own master's voice rather than that of our foreign masters'.

One hon. member has charged this Government with creating new posts; what new posts he referred to except one was not however specified. There was also a charge that this Government had shown favouritism in the distribution of contracts. Favouritism is an offence when it leads to inefficiency, when it injures the state by involving it in financial loss. But there is nothing to show by facts and figures that there is anything in this charge except a spirit of personal disappointment (*Hear, hear*). Did any sane man ever expect that this Government should consistently with the best interests of the province and those of all communities that inhabit it, extend their patronage to any quarters plotting to overthrow this Government and set up another from which they could look for undue advantages and favours? Sir, Rev. Mr. Gathphoh has accused the Government of according preferential treatment to one Hill District. We have always been taught that Christianity is a religion of love, that it is free from all traces of hate. But it is a sad spectacle to find this torchbearer of that great religion succumbing in this manner to the spirit let loose by certain of my hon. friends opposite. But he was modest enough to say that commonsense has nothing to do with politics. That makes further criticism unnecessary in his case.

One hon. member has charged the Hon'ble Ministers with unnecessary touring. If he had condescended to state what even in his opinion are the standards of necessity and unnecessary in this direction, the House might have critically examined if the charge was maintainable or not. But the present Ministers are popular Ministers, they are people's men. They must respond to the call of the people. If they do not politically educate the country but content themselves with inhaling the rarefied atmosphere of high places, clubs and parties and races (*Hear, hear*) and other amusements, then they will also deserve to be hounded out of office.

One hon. member is aggrieved that Gauhati has got more money than any other town in Assam and in a characteristic manner insinuates that this has been so as it happens to be the town of the Hon'ble Premier and Hon'ble Finance Minister. I will only add that Gauhati is also the town of their political opponents, the redoubtable knight of Assam and the town-nighted Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri. So the fruits of this grant will be enjoyed by their political opponents also.

One hon. member has advised the Government that only Tea should be taxed of all agricultural produce. When I heard this I was overcome with surprise. It may be acceptable to my friend's philosophy that only my throat should be cut because I am a pest. But in his zeal to cut my throat he forgot that he and his party still continue to get the necessary stiffening from the people like me who are in Tea. Well, my European friends may cry out to-day in the anguish of their soul 'God save us from our friends' (*laughter*). There has been an amusing criticism of the proposed Agricultural Income-tax Bill on the score that this would operate as a hardship on the poor. I read a little of Indian Economics once upon a time. I was taught in those days that the income of the Indian agriculturists a small insignificant sum. Since when have milk and honey been flowing in this unfortunate country of ours to raise the income of the agriculturist to the sum of Rs. 2,000 as their net income? I lay special emphasis on the word *net*, Sir, even the India of our dreams perhaps would not claim agriculturists having an income so high. My friends opposite have not found new facts and figures to contradict Indian economics; Indian Economics is what it has been since British domination of this country. But my

friends opposite have to criticise the Government : they want to laugh at our Ministers little realising which way the laugh goes ?

Sir, in their real zeal to hurl abuse at this Government, some hon. members have gone so far as to say that this Government is befriending the well-to-do classes. Sir, I have the misfortune to be looked upon as belonging to that much maligned class. If I may be permitted to say, the legislation initiated by the present Government will hardly harm another family more heavily than it will harm mine in my part of the country. And I know how many other members will also suffer quite severely even though they are sitting on this side of the House and yet the Government is being criticised as befriending us and we have been classed as a lot of self-seekers. Perhaps, those who voiced such sentiments are incapable of thinking that there may be people who support a Government because they approve of its policy and programme and are impressed with its noble intentions.

Some hon. members have suggested that the proposed measures of amelioration do not go far enough and do not even touch the fringe of our problems. That may be so. But only the perverse-minded would not think of the vastness of the problems and the paucity of means to solve them. One hon. member in criticising the scheme of Prohibition goes to the length of saying that this is not the only means to cure the ills from which the people suffer. Government have never claimed that Prohibition is the panacea of all our ills. Government are seeking to make only a beginning however small. Would it have gladdened the heart of that hon. member if no beginning was made at all in the customary callous manner ? Would he have admiration for the Cabinet if they threw up their hands in despair, pocketed big salaries and waited for good times and prosperity to descend from the skies ? In spite of the fact that soon after the assumption of office, by this Cabinet, heavy floods made heavy demands upon the provincial exchequer, the Hon'ble Ministers have bravely stood up to the task that devolved upon them at a very awkward time. This Government has in spite of these serious handicaps increased the educational grant by over two lakhs of rupees in excess of the last grant. Among the nation building departments nearly all including Agriculture, Medical, Veterinary, etc., have had their quota of proportionate rise in the respective grants, a definite improvement upon the conditions that prevailed in the province in happier times. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has also outlined the policy that the Government propose to implement their programme when the finance of the province improves. They have only given an earnest of their promise and done no more as nothing more was possible under existing circumstances at once. In spite of the facts that the Government have had to lose heavy sums of money for remission of land revenue and the initiation of their excise policy, yet they have found the means to give increased grants for nearly all nation building departments. May we not hope that all section of the House will join to vote all the taxation Bills and thereby give this Government a chance to fulfil all their promises ? They will be liable to criticism such as we have heard if they, when placed in funds, fail to achieve all that they promised to do.

We can feel that in certain section of the House suspicion prevails about the intentions of Government. In my opinion those who suspect are entitled to pity if not sympathy. They must have had severe disillusionments in the past not to be able how to trust anyone to-day. But figures do not lie. Let them take the lessons of the figures and wait and see what a Government can achieve if it has got the right angle of vision.

It is a very common frailty that we notice in some of our fellow-beings that they judge everything by their own standards. The hon. member who brought in the story of asses can therefore be forgiven ; also the member who suspects the Premier and who accepts the hospitality of old acquaintances. Some men become swell-headed when they get into high places and forget poorer friends. Srijut Bardoloi is to be congratulated that he has not dropped his old acquaintances now that he is a big man. That person who fears that one may be won over by an act of hospitality has a poor opinion of himself. Happily all the world is not so cheaply purchaseable : then, good-bye to all social contacts on which the society is based.

I feel that I should say a word about the vexed question of the Line system. The members who have so far spoken from the opposition group, as advertised from time to time belong to one United group, yet it is clear that there is a sharp cleavage of opinion in the party itself in the same matter (*Hear, hear*). This clearly proves the magnitude of the problem. The Hon'ble Finance Minister has expressed his regret that he has not been able to give this matter due consideration owing to shortness of time. It does not lie in the mouth of those who have not succeeded in getting anything done except incurring heavy expenditure through the Cabinets which had their support for eighteen months to expect a Cabinet to perform miracles within barely one-third of that period. That the Hon'ble Finance Minister is wide awake to the immensity of the problem would be borne out by the fact that he has not rushed into the matter with undue haste nor has he plied anyone with false hopes and promises.

In conclusion, I would again congratulate the Hon'ble Finance Minister upon his Budget. It is an example of what one can achieve with sincerity of purpose and devotion to duty. There is a lot remaining to be done. But I will not sermonise. Government would do well to give effect to the recommendations of the Committee for retrenchment and resources. This would give a new tone to the administration. This would also augment our funds. The province would further be rid of much unnecessary expenditure.

As a representative of the poor Indian planting community, I feel I would be failing in my duty if I did not take it upon myself to suggest Government that a substantial portion of the income likely to come out of the Agricultural Tax should be earmarked for being spent in connection with improvemet of garden communications, conditions of labour and other crying needs relating to labourers in view of the fact that the brunt of the taxation would be borne by the planters. This should satisfy those who have criticised the Government for not doing much for the improvement of the lot of tea garden labourers.

Sir, it is a pity that this House has noticed vomitings of communalism and Valleyism under the garb of budget speeches. I know there are some people who trade on such 'isms' for various reasons. But we certainly can expect a Government which is pledged to carry out the Congress programme to rise above such pettinesses and meannesses. We care little for Hindu Raj or Muslim Raj or any other Raj for the matter of that. We care less for the interests of the one valley spited as against those of another. All we care for is the Raj of the people by the people and for the people. And we believe that this Government is well-fitted to put us on the road to our destined goal. (Cheers and applause from the Ministerialist party).

Mr. BENJAMIN CH. MOMIN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak a few words as regards the Budget presented before us by the Hon'ble Finance Minister. I am glad to find in the Budget allotment of some amount of money for the education of our backward people. In addition to this sum

a non-recurring grant may kindly be provided for building and equipment for 36 schools. Though the given amount will appease the amount for the present, I wish that a larger amount than this may be assigned when fund permits for the betterment of this purpose. I am also delighted to find that the Government have found out some sources of income for nation-building purposes and upliftment of the poorest class of people from their pitiable condition. The Government also proposes to take loans so as to meet the demands and requirements of the people. In such case, I wish that the Government will grant some amount for improvement of the water-supply to our little town which suffers very badly for scarcity of water every year during this time of the year.

I also like to draw the attention of the Government towards communication as it is very bad in our district. Government should see to it and make good roads as early as possible so that there may be communication to our place throughout the whole year. I again bring to the notice of the Government that cotton is grown in abundance in our hill, but the people are ignorant of the art of making 'Miri jin' and the modern method of spinning and weaving. So I urge the Government to enlighten our people with the above mentioned arts and thereby industrialise our hill.

Lastly I thank the Government for taking up the primary schools in the non-excluded and partially excluded areas of our hill. I hope that in future they will extend their helping hand in taking up more schools in those areas.

Srijut BIDESHI PAN TANTI: মাননীয় সভাপতি মহাশয়, কংগ্রেস মি'লত মন্ত্রী সভাকো এঁয়া প্রথম বাজেট ইস্. আসাম ভেলোমে পেশ ক'া গয়া হয়। মৈনে বহুত আনন্দ দিল্কে সাথ কহতাছ' কি এঁয়া বাজেট আগেকো বাজেটসে আছি ছায়। কোঁও কে মুখে মালুম হ'তি ছায় কি গরীব কিসাণ খেতি গৃহস্থী কি লিয়ে বহুত পয়সা রাখা গিয়া ছায়। গিয়া মাল্কা বাজেট দেখ'নেসে মালুম হোগা এগ্রি কালচার নতুন কামকে লিয়ে সি ফ্. ২,৬৪২ রূপয়া রাখা থা। লেकिन ইস্. কংগ্রেস মিলিত মন্ত্রী সভাসে ২০,২৬০\ রূপয়া রাখা ছায়। তোভি ইস্. বাজেটকো বিপক্ষ দলকো সদস্যলোক নিন্দিত কর রহে ছায়। ইস্. লিয়ে মৈনে ভাঙ্কব ছতাছ'। ইণ্ডাস্ট্রী ডিপার্টমেন্টে পোরানে লক্ষ কর'নেসে মালুম হোগা কি গিয়া মালমে নয়া স্কীমকে লিয়ে ২,১০০\ রূপয়া রাখা গিয়া থা। লেकिन ইস্. বাজেটমে ১৪,২৭৫\ রূপয়া রাখতে ছয়ে ভি বিপক্ষদল কেবল নিন্দিত কর রহে ছায়।

সভাপতি মহাশয়, মৈনে দেখাচ্' কি ইস্. মন্ত্রী সভাকো ওজেসে মেয়া শ্রমিক ভাই লোগোঁকো বালক বালিকা কালিয়ে ও শিক্ষাকে লিয়ে বাগানমে জাগা জাগা স্কুল খোলা গিয়া ছায়। ইস্.মে মেয়া শ্রমিক ভাই লোগোঁকে বহুতসে উৎকার মিলেগি।

পাহাড়মে বাস কর'নেওয়'লা গরীব লোগোঁকে লিয়েভি ইস্. মন্ত্রী সভা যেতনা তৎপর হো রহে ছায়, আগে মন্ত্রী সভা এতনা নাহি কিয়ে থে। গরীব কিসাণকো খাজনা বহুত মাক হোগিয়া ছায়। মেয়া পুরা বিশ্বাস ছায় কি এঁয়া মন্ত্রী সভাকো ইচ্ছা এঁয়া ছায়— গরীব কিসাণোঁকে লিয়ে হরংরাহানে ফয়দা পছ'সনে কি লিয়ে ধনীলোক আউর সমর্থবান লোগোঁকো ট্যাক্স লাগানেকে লিয়ে বন্দবস্ত কর রহে ছায়। মেয়া বিনীত নিবেদন এঁয়া ছায় ইস্. মন্ত্রী সভাকো মাননীয় সদস্যগণ সমর্থন করে। টৈ এতনাহি নিবেদন কর'কে মেয়া বক্তব্য সমাপ্ত করতাছ'।

Maulavi Sayid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this year's Budget Session and the provisions in the Budget estimates remind me of the picture of a person sucking acid drops to neutralise the effect of rinsing his mouth with a strong solution of alum. I develop my point about this picture in this way. During the time of the previous Governments, it was customary to send the Budget estimates to the hon. members at least one month before the session (*A voice:* question) and even in times of difficulty, never less than 21 days have been given to members to study the budget figures. This year, I, living in Shillong at the headquarters of the Government, received the Budget estimate volumes on the 20th February. My friends who live in the corners of the province must have received those volumes at least three days later. In short, most of the members did not get the Budget estimates even 15 days before the Session began. Yet in previous sessions we were criticised by hon. members who are now in and behind the Government benches that we had not given them sufficient time. In other budget sessions, hon. members may remember about three days were allotted for non-official business. This time, under a popular Government who claimed more days for non-official work while in opposition, we have been given only one day. (*Hear, hear.*)

During budget sessions, in the last two years Sir, we had heard many things. I remember that the Court Fees and Stamp (Amendment) Acts, which will have their lives till the end of the year, were supposed to be very obnoxious and oppressive taxation measures. Yet under the present popular Government, those measures are now considered as the geese which lay the golden eggs. I think none of the hon. members have noticed one sentence at page 21 of the Budget Memorandum that, instead of doing away with these Acts, the Government are going to extend them for three years more, as sufficient eggs have not yet come from the geese. I will read that part of the Budget Memorandum. "It was expected that with the gradual lifting of the economic depression the revenue under this head would have reached a more normal figure. Despite, however, the additional revenue resulting from the Assam Stamp and Court Fees (Amendment) Acts, 1936, which were introduced from the 1st of January 1937 for a period of three years, the result has been disappointing. The severe floods of 1938 have also affected the revenue under this head, with the result that the revised estimate shows a decrease of Rs.120,000 as compared with the original estimates for the current year. The budget generally follows the revised estimate and provides for the extension for a further period of three years of the Stamp and Court Fees (Amendment) Acts, 1936."

Hon. members may remember that the greatest administrative blot in the province of Assam was supposed to be continuance of the posts of Commissioners by the Government benches. As a matter of fact it was said that, unless the vote carried in the House with the help of the Hon'ble Ministers were carried into effect, the heavens will fall over our heads. Now it is calmly put down in the Budget estimates as one of the necessities of the administration, although shelter is taken by the words "special responsibility of the Governor". I could add instances of such kind of *volte face* between the then oppositionists and the present Government. As I have got very short time and I have been given the privilege of summing up the discussion on the Budget, I will not add any further instances. This Budget presented by a Finance Minister belonging to that great organisation of the Congress which have undertaken to wrest independence of India from the British Imperialism, ought to have made its stand firstly for the independence of Assam's finance from the hands of the Central Government. I read and read the speech of my hon. friend the Finance

Minister to find out if he has ever proposed to fight for our genuine grievances on account of our non-sharing in the excise duty on petrol and kerosene, and relief from our share of the frontier defence force the Assam Rifles. I looked in vain for such protests in the Budget presented by a valiant member of the same great organisation. I found rather that he is introducing tax upon tax in order to increase his resources to start schemes which have been classed as fetish of the Congress programme. The very first item of our Congress Ministry programme is the prohibition of opium. I think, it would have been much better for the present Cabinet not to embark on prohibition programme of opium now. Everybody knows that we have had the system of prohibition as regards opium from the year 1928. I will quote their own words from the Budget Memorandum itself. At page 19, the hon. members will find that "in the year 1928-29 on the recommendation of the legislature, Government adopted a policy which aimed at the gradual extermination of opium habit. Rations have been annually reduced by 10 per cent. in each year. The effect of this policy is seen in the fact that the revenue which was Trs.38,26 in the year before its adoption (1927-28) fell to Trs.11,84 in 1937-38 and is expected to fall still further in the current year to Trs.10,40." This can be further elaborated by the fact that in a population of 90 lakhs there are hardly 30 thousand opium eaters in this province. I can say for the edification of the hon. members that about the year 1927-28 the annual consumption of opium in Assam was little over thousand maunds but now it has been reduced to about 180 maunds. The hon. members will find it in the latest Excise report for 1937-38 which was published only a month ago. I am reading from paragraph 23 at page 7 of that report. "The pass system under which no person is allowed to possess opium without a pass was in operation throughout the province during the year. At the beginning of the year there were 39,447 (revised) permanent and 1,586 temporary passes with monthly rations of 18 maunds 27 seers 12 tolas. Four hundred and thirty permanent and 441 temporary passes were issued on medical grounds during the year and deducting the passes cancelled on account of deaths, transfers of consumers from the province, and reduction of rations below four annas, the total number of pass-holders at the close of the year came to 32,314 permanent and 743 temporary with a monthly ration of 16 maunds 9 seers 32 tolas 7 annas". I want to draw the attention of the House to the fact that within the year of report, there was a drop of over seven thousand opium consumers in the province. Therefore, I argue that if we are to take on an average that figure of the year then at the end of the year 1938-39, there would be another drop of about seven thousand consumers. I wonder whether the hon. members who support this prohibition scheme have calculated the fact of trying to save this 25 thousand opium addicts. It has been said by the Hon'ble Finance Minister in his speech that this scheme is going to cost the province five lakhs sixty-seven thousand. I say, Sir, that instead of losing this amount on account of prohibition which is unwarranted, if it could be spent for the purpose of spreading primary education then at least 3,150 primary schools could be established in the province on the basis of one Teacher per school, at rupees fifteen per mensem who is allowed under our rules to teach 30 students at a time. In other words, with the expenditure of this amount, we could bring light of education however rudimentary or primary it may be, to one lakh of our ignorant boys and girls. I would appeal to the members of the House to seriously consider whether the eradication of this habit of a few thousand opium addicts would not be better achieved by the spread of education among them rather than forcing these people to give up this habit. Everyone

knows that as soon as the ration of a consumer is reduced to annas 4 in a month, the pass is cancelled. No new passes are also given to persons below the age of 50 years. Therefore, I say that this evil habit would surely come to an end in course of five years. There is no need to spend these five lakhs of rupees. As was pointed out by one hon. member from the European group, the result of prohibition will be that the revenue of the province will be depleted and diverted into underground channels. The purpose which the Ministry has in view would be best served by propaganda by means of cinemas and lantern lectures among the opium-eaters.

We heard before that the only panacea for all our evils is want of compulsory primary education. This money expended for prohibition as I have already shown, would have met the requirements of compulsory primary education, to some extent and the expansion of education amongst the masses to a very great extent. My friends have forgotten their promise of starting compulsory primary education very early when they have come to power. This time they have proclaimed that they have put in quite a big amount under primary education. But I have scrutinised the figures and I am sorry to say that their much-vaunted advertisement of their intention of increasing primary education does not go a little more than what the so-called re-actionary Government of 1937-38 provided for primary education. I have got the present figures as well as those in Budget Memorandum of the year 1937-38, when I took over charge of the administration. In that year, when we expected a deficit of previous year to the tune of Rs.38 lakhs, we provided a sum of Rs.53,400 for spread of primary education, of which full Rs.50,000 was placed in the hands of local bodies to start new schools among the masses and reserved $\frac{1}{4}$ th of that for backward classes. Now, I find the sum that has been really provided by my hon. friend for the same purpose is only Rs.58,000. At a time when money was very scarce and when there was no question of augmenting the provincial finance by means of loan, the provision made was as good as the provision made after credit has been taken into the Budget for a loan of half a crore of rupees. Some of my hon. friends may say that the sum provided is really Rs.88,000 as shown in the Budget Memorandum, but as has been pointed out by various speakers during the debate, most of these sums which are shown in the Budget Memorandum at page 46 consist of items which represent only paper expenditure. At page 46 is a list of items meant for primary education; out of that only items Nos. 1, 2, 8 and 9 are really meant for spread of primary education by means of starting new schools. Taking up of 65 Mission Schools by Government is only diverting the money from the Mission to Government hands. The Mission was so long paid for maintaining these schools. So this step does not go in the direction of extension of primary education, but it is only changing hands of management.

I congratulate, therefore, the Hon'ble Finance Minister not for his budget proposals, but for telling the world at large and also the public in Assam their actions and protestations in the past were meant for the public and not for their own merit (*Hear, hear*). I congratulate him—rather I thank him—for making the following statement in his budget speech:

“There is groaning poverty, ignorance and disease in the rural areas. It has been the persistent complaint that our masses had long been crying in the wilderness unheard and uncared for reliefs in all these directions”.

After the enunciation—or the diagnosis—of the disease I thought that the Doctor of Finance would produce some remedy for all these evils.

I will take the first of these three enumeration of grievances. The first is that our masses are suffering under a groaning poverty. To remove the

poverty of the masses, in my opinion, three courses were open to him. First, to reduce the burden of taxation upon them in any shape whatsoever. Most of my friends have already told the House that this has not been done. Even the solemnly declared 50 per cent. reduction of revenue is not there in the Budget. The second item by which the groaning poverty of the people would have been lessened was by bringing cheap credit to their grasp. That could be done by intensifying the co-operative credit movement. Hon. members will look in vain for any expenditure under Co-operative System in the budget proposals. The third item which could go a long way in the direction of reducing poverty was by extension of the Debt Conciliation Boards. There is nothing whatever in the Budget for that purpose. Therefore, I say that those hon. members, who have criticised the proposals of the Hon'ble Finance Minister, were justified in saying that the pledges given have not been fulfilled.

The next grievance of the masses according to the Hon'ble Finance Minister is ignorance. As regards removing ignorance, I have already shown that money which could very well go to remove ignorance is going after a fetish.

Lastly I take up diseases in the rural areas. I looked up to the estimates thrice to find what provision has been made under Public Health or the Medical Department, and I see that not a single extra anna over previous budget provisions has been provided for combating diseases. As against these what have we got? We have got the different taxation measures. I find at page 16 of his printed speech, that the Finance Minister expects the Agricultural Income-Tax to bring 25 lakhs, the tax on petrol and lubricants 4 lakhs, tax on amusements, cinema and betting $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs, the tax on the articles of luxury mentioned in the Finance Bill, and duty on foreign liquors $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. So, the people—whether he is a poor man or a rich man—of this Province are going to be taxed to the tune of 32 lakhs. It has been asserted in various places of his speech by the Hon'ble Finance Minister that none of these taxation measures will touch the poor, these measures attempt in getting money from the rich to be spent for the poor. Some hon. members have already shown that the Agricultural Income-Tax, whether it goes from the tea planter or the Zemindar, is ultimately bound to percolate in some shape or other to the poor people. A tea planter will not be a businessman worth his salt and pay if he cannot transmit the burden of taxation on the commodity price, which the poor people shall have to pay. Similarly *abwabs* and exactions are not unknown to our Zemindar friends; what they will have to pay they will surely realise by some means from their tenants, the peasantry. Therefore, it is an illusion to say that the Agricultural Income-Tax will not touch the poor. The tax on petrol and lubricants is bound to hit poor traveller very much. Thanks to the better roads and improvement of communications, I find that motor buses are plying from one end of the country to the other giving the people of the rural areas a speedy and cheap means of transport. By taxing petrol and lubricants and also putting on a duty, under the provisions of the proposed Finance Bill, on motor cars, the cost of travelling will be increased to a considerable extent. It will tell on this industry, as those who are responsible for introducing this kind of transport cannot but charge a higher rate upon the passengers. So the poor people in the rural areas where these buses ply will be hard hit. This measure has a repercussion on our general Budget also, for everyone knows that we get a share from the extra excise duty of two annas per gallon of petrol levied by the Centre, and that share is distributed according to the consumption of petrol in the province. From

a small beginning of our original share about 4 years ago of 1½ lakhs, the present share or the present income of the Provincial Government from this source has come up to very nearly 5 lakhs.

What amuses me most is a tax on amusement. We Indians, everyone knows, lead the dullest of dull life. We have no parties, social or picnics. We do not know what are the charms of week-ends. We do not know the benefits of such pleasure (The Hon'ble Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed—Race courses). I am coming to that soon. We have no clubs—nothing of the sort. The only amusement which the people indulge in, is going to cinemas. Some people like me do not go to cinemas. But when I was taken there once or twice, I have found that eleven parts out of twelve of the audience were poor people who sit in the third class. About a dozen or so of the audience go to the first class. Therefore, who will pay this amusement tax? It is the poor people who patronise the four anna tickets of the cinema.

My friend speaks of betting tax. I think in Assam there are only three race meetings (The Hon'ble Mr. Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed—four). In Shillong, probably there will be complication. The race course is outside the British territory. That matter has been gone into in my time. Then there are race courses in Jorhat and Dibrugarh. (A voice:—Jorhat is dwindling). I do not know how many race meetings in a year are there at Dibrugarh and Jorhat and what is the turn over of the totalizer. The tax that they will pay upon this betting will bring the Government a very small amount. So I find from a consideration of this factor that these taxation proposals will hard hit the poor people and the time is very inopportune of all times, the more so—when most of our districts were visited by devastating floods last year. My friend has himself admitted about the poverty of our populace. At page 12 of his printed budget speech he says: "We have a series of agricultural measures under our consideration to enable the cultivators, who form the bulk of our population to get a better return for the labour out of the land and a better price for the produce of the soil". I think, Sir, if any measure ought to receive the most preferential treatment it was the Department of Agriculture. But here my friend has not provided any money for giving the hungry millions a better return for agriculture. Though there is provision for two items—one, cattle nutrition—12 thousand rupees and the other, agricultural survey or introduction of Dong system—15,000 rupees, those who cared to look to page 95 of the Budget Memorandum, would find that money for cattle nutrition is coming not from provincial coffers, but the scheme is going to be financed practically, by the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research. So the credit does not go to my friends of the Cabinet.

I thought my friends of the Treasury Benches were starting irrigation division, but I find this is not so. There is no such provision in the Public Works Department Budget. This item I find in the Agricultural Budget. It is nothing. My Colleague in the last Cabinet Maulavi Abdul Matin Chaudhury had called from the Agriculture Department over some 180 schemes of small irrigation and embankment and probably the Hon'ble Minister is going to find finance to take up some of these schemes.

Then it is proposed to take a loan of Rs. 50 lakhs, to cover deficits which we have got to pay. There is no doubt that we must make some arrangement for paying it. Whether a loan of a sum of half a crore is the best way is a matter which requires very serious thought. I do not say that my friend the Finance Minister has not given careful attention to it. I will throw out a suggestion. He proposes to start a sinking fund of Rs. 2 lakhs and 15 thousand annually to pay off the loan in 20 years. This will make a millstone round the neck of the Assam Finances for the next 20 years. It will

mean that the future budgets will be deprived of a sum of 2 lakhs 15 thousand annually for new schemes. If we could devise some method, some way, not to take loan it will be a great saving to the province. While I was in office I had considered the subject from the point of view of utilising the provident fund subscriptions that each year we get from our public servants. From the Budget Memorandum of the year 1937-38, I find that the total subscriptions to the provident fund were Rs. 15,11,000, and the disbursements during that year were Rs. 7,78,000 or there was a surplus from income of over 7 lakhs. This year also I find from the Budget Memorandum at page 12 the estimate of Rs. 15,57,000 on the receipt side, while the estimated expenditure is Rs. 10,71,000—this covers withdrawals and temporary advances during the year. There were some very heavy withdrawals recently on account of retirements and deaths of some highly paid officers—owing to the retirement of Dr. Hutton and Mr. Prichard, and the unfortunate death of our Chief Engineer Mr. Shaw, even so there was a surplus of over 5 lakhs of rupees in this fund. Hon. members know full well that to the subscribers to this fund we have to pay 4 per cent. interest. My idea is—(I make this suggestion in a spirit of friendliness) whether a separate fund could not be started with the surplus of this provident fund, and instead of borrowing in the open market, which at the least will bear interest at 3 per cent. we utilise this money, and for the balance we borrow for short terms by means of treasury bills where the interest is only $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. or 1 per cent. I, therefore, request my hon. friend to seriously consider whether he should take this loan this year at all. In the first place there are two difficulties; and it was on account of that last year, although I had made provision in the budget for paying interest on a loan of Rs. 35 lakhs, for brokerage to the Reserve Bank this was not done. We will be competing in the open market, and if richer provinces with big budgets of income extending over 10 and 16 crores get money at 3 per cent. can we get over loan at the same rate of interest since our total income is less even than the income of the Corporations of Calcutta and Bombay. If we do not get the money at 3 per cent. our credit will be shaken for the future. Therefore my advice—and advice gained by experience—is that the Ministry should be very chary of borrowing at the present juncture in the open market.

Sir, I must thank the Hon'ble Finance Minister for allowing me this opportunity to sum up the budget debate. What I have said is from a genuine conviction, and not, to use the words of my hon. friend Mr. Mookerjee, from any sense of disappointment or anything of that kind; I have had enough, and more than enough, of administrative experience, and my experience is at the disposal of my friends opposite so long as they really work for the welfare of the poor. *(Applause from all sections of the House).*

Finance Minister's reply on Budget discussion

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for the manner in which he has summed up the speeches of the hon. members on the Opposition side, and the hand of co-operation and friendship which he has extended to me and to other members of the Cabinet (*Hear, hear*). I wish the same spirit, the same line of criticism had been shown and adopted by other members of his party. When we are on the threshold of democracy, where we are expected to have a working of

party system, criticism against the showing of proposals of the Government are legitimate and natural, for without such criticism the points of view of the people, who do not hold the same opinion as we do will not be brought to our notice, I think that unless we give full consideration to all the grievances and points of view which are brought to our notice we will not be doing fair justice to the people and to the administration of the province. Therefore, Sir, not only we welcome the criticisms which are constructive and which are advanced to help us in the administration, but also we thank the hon. members for their such co-operation.

Sir, if I were to sum up the speeches of the hon. members, I shall find that I have only to bring them for the purpose of reply in five or six classification. First of all, we have been criticised for the few taxes which we propose to impose. Secondly, we have been rebuked for adopting the same hackneyed budget. Thirdly, we have been condemned for not doing anything for ameliorating the condition of the masses. Fourthly, we have been taken to task by some hon. members for having ignored the interests of certain communities. Lastly, a number of local grievances have been brought to our notice. I propose to deal with each of these items separately.

Let me first take the question of taxation. We have been told that if we impose a tax on an income of Rs.2,000 from agricultural source we shall be taxing the poor. Sir, the hon. Mr. Mookerjee in his speech has very elaborately met this criticism by giving an exposition of the economic position, and by stating that if we had poor people with a net income of Rs.2,000 in our province there would not be any cry for helping them. We have secondly been told that even if this tax would be realised from the tea planters or the zamindars, it will ultimately be transmitted to the poor people. The hon. Leader of the Opposition, in support of his arguments, has stated that as tea is a saleable commodity, the tax would fall on the consumers and would therefore hit the poor. Even this position is accepted that the price of tea will rise with the imposition of tax it will necessarily mean an increase in the net income of a tea planter—a state of affairs, which, instead of helping the planter, it will bring more tax to the Government, will be avoided by him. Secondly in this connection it may also be taken into consideration how far the people are prepared to consider this commodity as one of the necessities of life. A tax will hit the poor only when it is assessed on a commodity which is essential for one's existence. Sir, a tax on tea by no stress of imagination, can be said to fall on the poor of our province for major portion of tea produced is exported. As I have already explained in my budget speech that this kind of tax, in whatever form we may impose it, will be opposed by a certain section of the House. But I can assure the hon. members that there is no justification to think here that the tax as we propose to impose on agricultural income will by any means be a tax the incidence of which will fall on the poor people of our province. They will have to bear the burden neither directly nor indirectly. The hon. Leader of the Opposition has also thrown out a suggestion in course of his speech that if the poverty and suffering of the people has to be mitigated, the burden of taxation on them should in the first place be reduced. Sir, revenue is our chief source of income and this is mostly realised from the poor people. To reduce the income from land revenue, which will imply the mitigation of the burden of taxation

of the poor, will necessarily require that we should substitute other methods of taxation the incidence of which may fall on those who can afford to bear it. I think, the taxation we have proposed will go a good way to supplement the aim common to all of us.

Further we have been told that if we impose a tax on petrol we shall be indirectly shifting the taxation on the poor people. The argument which has been advanced in support of this contention, is that the bus owners will be made to pay more for the purchase of petrol and they will realise ultimately the increased cost from the people who use the bus or go from one place to another. Let us take a concrete example. A bus owner will have to pay two annas more per gallon. One gallon of petrol will suffice from 15 to 20 miles and that bus will carry from 25 to 30 passengers. If on this we calculate we shall find that the amount which the bus owner will be realising from the persons as extra cost of petrol will in no case be more than one pie.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: May I know the type of the bus which can be run for 20 miles per gallon?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I think I am quite right in saying that the buses which usually ply on the road can very well go 15 to 20 miles per gallon. Sir, if the hon. members were to calculate they will not only find, but will also be convinced that the incidence of this taxation, if at all transmitted to the persons who use buses, will be less than a pie and I see no justification why the person, who use the buses, should not be prepared to bear this small fraction of taxation.

Thirdly, we have been told that the taxation on amusements and betting will also hit the poor people. Sir, I make no secret of this. If a poor man has money to go and spend it on race course to the deprivation of his family he should contribute a portion of that amount to the Government for being utilised in the interest of poor people. If however as a result of this tax the people are compelled to give up visits to race course, this Government will be the first to welcome the change. As hon. members will see we have graduated the tax on cinema goers. If a person can afford to pay four annas for the luxury of seeing the entertainment, I think, we are quite justified in asking him to pay two pice more which will be spent on expenditure which will go to mitigate the miseries of his fellow beings. Sir, there are very few poor people who even get four annas a day and those people can not and do not at all go to cinema. Only such people who either deprive themselves and their families of the necessities of life or who have sufficient funds at their disposal—go to cinema. If those persons can pay four annas to the proprietor, I think, it will be unjust for the hon. members of this House to plead for them and to say that they should not be charged two pice by the Government for the benefit of mitigating the miseries of needy people. Then, Sir, another form of taxation proposed by us which has not been so much criticised, is the turn-over tax. Some hon. members have objected not to the principle involved in the turn-over tax but to some items which have been included in the Finance Bill for the purpose of their sale tax. Well, Sir, these are things which we are prepared to consider when the Finance Bill comes for consideration before this House. If we are convinced that the incidence of a taxation on any of the articles suggested will fall on the poor we shall be prepared to exclude such articles from the purview and only of taxation and include only such articles the taxation on which will be borne by the rich people who can well afford to pay.

Sir, in this connection, I thank the hon. members of the planting group for their preparedness to support the proposal of tax on agricultural income. The only objection in this connection, which has been advanced on their behalf, is that they do not want to pay the tax twice. This objection has been brought to my notice not only on the floor of this House but also outside on more than one occasion. I, Sir, whenever this matter was referred to me, have made it clear times without number that I for one would not like any community or any individual to pay the tax twice. But, Sir, it is only fair that these gentlemen should first approach the country where that tax is needed even though the income is derived in this province. They should therefore first approach the United Kingdom for such relief. If however they fail to get such relief from that country I have now given them the assurance, which I am prepared to repeat here, that I shall approach the United Kingdom and try it some settlement can be arrived at satisfactory to all. But for the present I think, Sir, it is but appropriate and it will be in the fitness of things that they should first of all approach the United Kingdom for this relief as the United Kingdom has no right to take a tax from an income which is derived from our province.

Sir, we have been told that we have not done anything indispensable for the amelioration of the condition of the masses. We have been told that we have done no more than to provide the amount for primary and compulsory education similar to the one that was provided by the previous Government. In this connection the hon. the Leader of the Opposition took some pains in quoting the figures in support of his contention. He said that in 1937-38, when the Government was faced with a deficit of over thirty lakhs he took care to make provision of over 53,000 rupees for the advancement of primary education. Scientist as he is, he has analysed our figures and our statement and come to the conclusion that we have done nothing more than what he did, but I would beseech him, we have would beseech every member to look into my statement carefully, and I say whether or not we have really made any improvement or done much more than what was done by previous Government. Only for the purpose of Primary Education, we have made a provision of Rs.90,000 and not Rs.53,000 as has been mentioned by him. In addition to this we have made provision for the education of the under-represented and backward communities.

Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: Not separately. That has also been included.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: He will also find that provision has been made for the education in tribal areas which is not included in this Rs.90,000. This will show that with regard to education alone we have really done much more than what was done by the previous Government. Not only this, we have also given an assurance that we intend to tackle the question of primary education on an extensive basis but to do so we must work in an intensive form in selected areas. We have further decided to tackle the question of mass illiteracy and for this purpose an amount of Rs.35,000 has been provided. How that amount has to be spent and how the problem of mass illiteracy has to be tackled are matters under the consideration of Government. We would have welcomed a criticism and suggestions in this connection, but I am sorry to find that no one took the trouble of offering their suggestions.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI: Mr. Mookerjee will say that.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: I shall get an opportunity to do that.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Then, Sir, speaker after speaker accused me as for not looking to the interests of the Muhammadan community as far as education is concerned. I have been taken to task for making a small grant of Rs.500 or Rs 600 to the Sanskrit College and for not making any provision for the Muhammadan Education.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: On a point of information, Sir, what about the Wardha scheme?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: If the hon. member will have a little patience, he will also hear about it.

If the hon. members had taken care to go through the Budget, I am sure they would not have levelled such a criticism; or, at least, they would have seen the unsoundness of such a criticism. For the benefit of the House I would just quote the figures to contradict each and every statement of theirs and to show how incorrect it is to say that we have done nothing for the Muhammadan Education or that we have reduced the provision so made by the previous Government. Hon. members will find that during the last three years the expenditure on Muhammadan Education has increased from Rs. 54,000 to Rs. 65,000; and as compared to last year from Rs. 64,600 to Rs. 65,700. In the face of these figures can hon. members contradict or say that we have in any way ignored the legitimate claims of Muhammadans? They will find that during this year we have provided Rs. 1,080 more for the purpose of Muhammadan Education. It is unfair that these hon. members should have grievances against the provision of Rs. 600 made for Sanskrit Education. I would like to add here that during the last five years the amount spent for the special Hindu Education has remained stationary at Rs. 20,250; and it is in recognition of this fact that this Government thought proper that something should be done for the other community which is clamouring for the special consideration and has so long been ignored. The hon. members should realise, that, though the population of Hindus is greater, greater consideration has been shown to Muslim and more money has been provided for the Muhammadan Education.

Further, four new scholarships are being provided to the students from Madrassas.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Does that appear in the Budget? I find there is no special provision for scholarships.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: When I make these statements the hon. members must take our words to be true (Voices: No, no). While the previous Government failed to do anything in this connection, we are making provision for four Muhammadan scholarships for the High Madrasa students. Then, Sir, as my hon. friends here know, the Madrasa in Rangiya has for long been shouting and clamouring for a grant without receiving any consideration of the heads of the previous Government. But we have recognised the necessity of establishing such a Madrasa and we shall make provision for the same.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: May I enquire whether it falls within the constituency of the Hon'ble Finance Minister?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: It makes little difference whether it falls within my constituency or outside it, but the fact remains that we are not ignoring the claims of such deserving institutions

when they are brought to our notice. We are not in any way communal. We are here to look to the interests of every community.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE: From the valley question, Sir, he is going to the constituency question.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, these facts will convince the hon. members here that the accusations made by certain hon. members that we are not showing proper regard to the Muhammadan community are baseless and untrue.

Then there is another matter, Sir, which I would like to deal with in this connection. I have been accused of showing favouritism to my valley at the expense of the Surma Valley. In this particular case, I would ask the hon. member to ponder over the fact, when the question of relief to the flood-stricken people came up, whether this Government made any distinction between the people of one valley and the other. The fact that during the last few months I have sanctioned four lakhs of rupees for loans to the people of the Surma Valley will convince the hon. members here that, as far as we are concerned, we give no consideration either to the question of valley or to that of community; we are here to serve the people, and we shall serve them irrespective of caste, community or valley.

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: On a point of information, Sir.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: The Hon'ble Minister should be allowed to go on uninterrupted.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Then, Sir, we are criticised for making provision for the Wardha Scheme. We have been told that the Wardha Scheme is one which will benefit the Hindu community and not the Muslim community. Such general and vague criticisms have been levelled against us. But not one speaker has specially pointed out in what particular way the Muhammadan community is likely to suffer as a result of the adoption of this Scheme. Sir, the hon. members may not remember that the President of the committee who was responsible for preparation of the Wardha Scheme was a person of eminence of whom the Muhammadans should be proud of. The hon. members who spoke against the Scheme might not have an acquaintance with Dr. Zakir Hussain, but I have had the honour of knowing him when he was in England. If it would interest hon. members here, I may tell them that, not only in England but also in the Continent, he was recognised as one of the most brilliant men who ever went to England from India.

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: He has also written 'Inside India'.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Then, Sir, another important member of that committee was Kawaja Gulam Saiyduddin, of whom Aligarh has reason to be proud of and who, in recognition of his merits, has been given a responsible post in Kashmir as Director of Public Instruction. Sir, hon. members may not be acquainted with Dr. Zakir Hussain or Mr. Gulam Saiyduddin, but the fact remains that they are as good Muhammadans, if not better, as any one of those hon. gentlemen who have spoken against the Scheme. If these gentlemen, by being present in the committee, did not think that there was anything in the Scheme which would go against the interest of the Muhammadan community, I am not prepared to accept the statements made by propagandists.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Will it be a news to the Hon'ble Minister that one being a Shia and other a Kedieni Moslem, public has less confidence in their doings?

The Hon'ble the SPEAKER: Order, order, the difference between Shias and Shunnis in political outlook ought not to be brought into the discussion. We have already too much of such communal differences.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: All the same, Sir, they are Muhammadans. Sir, I wish the hon. members who have stated that no money should have been provided for this purpose or who are voicing the opinion on Wardha Scheme of some of their leaders outside this House, should have given us some constructive proposal for acceptance by this Government as a model on which our education should be based. I find, Sir, that they have not only failed to give us any specific instance whereby the interests of Muhammadans will suffer if this scheme is adopted by us, but also they have failed to give us any constructive suggestion or scheme which should be adopted as useful for the education of our children.

Then, Sir, we have been criticised for giving a small provision for what is called the Hindustani Prachar Samiti. I can assure the hon. members that the objection of Hindustani Prachar Samiti is to give instruction in the Nagri script as well as the Urdu script. If hon. members will be interested to know—I can only say this much—and I think hon. Maulvi Munawwar Ali will bear me out that it was I who fought out the case of Hindustani being one of compulsory languages before the Curriculum Committee. It was decided then that Hindustani should be taught both in Nagri and Urdu characters and that it should be open to the students either to take the Nagri character or the Urdu character. So, Sir, if this provision has been made, it has been made for the teaching of Hindustani not only in Nagri character but also in the Urdu character.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: Then will we have two sets of teachers?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: If in a particular school there are Muhammadan boys who would like to take up Urdu character, Government will make provision for such teaching.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI: I thank the Hon'ble Minister for the information.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, before I switch on to other subjects, I should like to state that, when the amount for secondary education will be distributed by the Hon'ble Premier, he will take into consideration the claims of the Muhammadan community as well as other backward communities. Another fact which should have been noticed by hon. members is that from the point of view of education we recognise immigrants among the Muhammadans as backward and therefore we have decided to give special consideration to them and a sum has been provided for the purpose.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD AMJAD ALI: Thank you.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: For this departure instead of being praised we have been blamed, and I leave it to the House to judge whether the criticism is reasonable and proper.

Then, Sir, our attention has been drawn to a number of things by the hon. Leader of the Opposition and I shall be failing in my duty if I do not take them into consideration in the course of my reply. He has complained against us for sending the Budget estimate so late. My information, however, is that the Budget estimates were despatched to all the members of the Assembly before the 20th February, 1939.

Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: I myself received it on the 28th February in Shillong.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: That means that the hon. members were in possession of the Budget 16 or 17 days before the Assembly Session actually began.

Maulavi Saiyid Sir MUHAMMAD SAADULLA: The Hon'ble Finance Minister should remember that the month of February consists of only 28 days. (*Laughter.*)

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I have taken that fact into consideration. We have followed the same principle as was done in previous years. Moreover, I think the hon. Leader of the Opposition will take into consideration the fact that we started preparing the Budget towards the beginning of November and we did our best to finish it as early as possible. I can assure him that in future years, the practice which was followed in previous years would continue.

Then Sir, he has criticised us for our intention of continuing the Stamp (Amendment) Act and Court Fees (Amendment) Act. But he will find, that we have introduced no such Bill. I am glad that now he also recognises the income from this source is detrimental to the interest of the people. He has advised us to give those amendment Acts up. We shall certainly take his suggestion into consideration (*Hear, hear.*). We have been asked by the hon. Leader of the Opposition to give up the Prohibition scheme and to spend the money, which we are going to lose as a result of introduction of this scheme, instead on the spread of primary education. It is here that we entirely differ from him. I wish he had put his suggestion into practice while he was in power and the money now to be utilised towards the Prohibition scheme had been spent by him on the primary education. I am sure, if we had not made a beginning in this most important direction, the hon. Leader of the Opposition would have been the first person to criticise us for our inaction. I think, Sir, eradication of opium habit is a problem which should be tackled first of all and so we have made a beginning in this direction. What we propose to do, I am sure, will be to the benefit of the people at-large. It may be remembered, that we are spending of the only to save vast number of people from ruin. Should we succeed in tackling this problem we shall not only be preventing people from getting money but also be instrumental in making the money, so far used towards the purchase of opium, free for being utilised in a more useful way on themselves and on other members of their family.

Then, Sir, we have been criticised for not playing our part properly in order to get our proper and adequate share from the Central Government. The hon. Leader of the Opposition will remember that I did make a reference to this matter in my Budget speech. The question as I see it is that so long as there is a Centre which is irresponsible both to the needs of the province and the people, we cannot expect to get any help from it. If, however, we really feel of the injustice done to us, such an injury necessarily call for a support and co-operation of all in combating the Federal Government which is intended to be thrust on us, and if we can successfully fight against it, I think, our problem will be partially if not wholly solved.

Now, Sir, I come to a number of questions which have been put to me by Mr. Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri. We have been criticised by him for making a provision for the Advocate-General. I wish he had given a little bit of thought to this problem. I only want to point out that under the Government of India Act, we have to retain an Advocate-General for the province and the present arrangement is that we have to pay Rs.3,000 a year to the Advocate-General of Bengal as his retaining fee. In addition to

this, it may be noted that for the six references, which we sent to him during last year, we shall have to pay him an amount of Rs. 12,000. Then, Sir, as the hon. members are aware, he came to this House year before last to give his opinion in connection with one cut motion and for such a luxury we had to pay him Rs. 4,200, over and above this we have to pay for his establishment by no means a negligible sum. Taking into consideration all these facts, the hon. members will realise that we are only trying to reduce our expenditure in this direction by providing for the appointment of the Advocate-General in our province.

Khan Bahadur Maulavi KERAMAT ALI : Are we to understand that the new Advocate-General whom we are going to appoint will not charge any travelling allowance or establishment charges?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : No, Sir, he will not get consulting fees.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : Will he be in Calcutta or here?

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Sir, it all depends on the person appointed.

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : My question is whether he will be here or in Calcutta High Court.

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : The Hon'ble Minister should remember the case of this hon. member at the time of filling up the vacancy (laughter).

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : I can say that by providing to have our own Advocate-General we are going to reduce our expenditure which has been so long unnecessarily incurred and I can give Mr. Chaudhuri this assurance that, when the question of appointment will come up before us, his case will also receive due consideration. (Loud laughter.)

Srijut ROHINI KUMAR CHAUDHURI : I was never a candidate for the Principal of Earl Law College. (Loud laughter.)

Mr. BAIDYANATH MOOKERJEE : The Hon'ble Minister is talking of future.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED : Then, Sir, we have been told that we have been showing undue favour to the Deputy Speaker, because we have provided for him a salary of Rs. 250 a month. I can only say that in this discussion we are following what has been done in other provinces. We do not see the justice of depriving him of the salary which the Deputy Speakers of other provinces are enjoying.

I can also assure the hon. members that by this extra provision the taxpayers are not going to lose much, because under the previous Act the Hon'ble Speaker was drawing Rs. 1,000 a month out of which Rs. 250 was contributed by him to the Congress Fund. But by bringing an Act now, we propose to reduce the salary of the Hon'ble Speaker to Rs. 750 a month, which means a saving of Rs. 250 a month (Srijut Rohini Kumar Chaudhuri :—That is a loss to the Congress). If the net result of the entire transaction is gone into, hon. members will realise that while the Deputy Speaker will get a salary of Rs. 250 a month, he will have to forego his salary of

Rs.100 per month which he has been drawing as a member of the Assembly. This means that on the whole there will be a net gain of Rs. 1,200 a year to the Province (*Hear, hear*). Sir, I want to add that we are not showing any undue favour to the hon. Deputy Speaker. He was punished by the previous Government for coming to our rank and for supporting the Congress Party from the very beginning, out of sheer spite he was given only one rupee per year. What we are now doing is to redress the injustice done to him at that time.

Sir, though I have taken quite a long time and I have not been able to reply to many of the points referred by the hon. members. Without going into details, I can only add that all their constructive suggestions and criticisms will be taken into consideration by us and when the grants are distributed by us the local grievances, which have been brought to our notice, will also receive our consideration.

Before I resume my seat I shall only add one more thing, and it is with regard to the extension of the Debt Conciliation Boards. If the hon. Leader of the Opposition will care to look into the Budget he will find that we have provided more money for this purpose and we propose to extend these Boards. After the Budget Session is over Government will consider where the activities of such Boards should be extended. (*Cheers from the Congress Benches.*)

Maulavi Dewan MUHAMMAD AHBAB CHAUDHURY: We want a reply from the Hon'ble Finance Minister about the Sylhet Medical School.

The Hon'ble Mr. FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: This will receive our consideration.

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 11 a. m., on Thursday, the 16th March, 1939.

SHILLONG :
The 29th April, 1939.

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