

Proceedings of the Third Session of the Assam Legislative Assembly assembled after the Second General Election under the Sovereign Democratic Republican Constitution of India

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 10 A.M. on Thursday the 3rd April, 1958.

P R E S E N T

Shri Dev Kanta Borooah, B.A., LL.B., Speaker in the Chair, the Eight Ministers, the two Deputy Ministers and Seventy Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

STARRED QUESTIONS

(To which oral answers were given)

Venture High School at Kakapathar

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa)
asked :

*135. Will the Minister-in-charge of Education be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government is aware that a Venture High School has been established by the local people at Kakapathar and there is no other High School within a radius of about 10 miles ?
- (b) Whether Government is aware that this is the only High School serving the need of Secondary Education of about 50,000 population of that area and departmental recognition has been given up to Class VIII (eight) ?
- (c) Whether Government is aware that over 90 per cent of the students belongs to backward communities, out of which 20 per cent are tribals ?

- (d) Whether Government is aware that the School Managing Committee has been running this educational institution with great difficulties in absence of Government aid ?
- (e) Whether Government is aware that there is a Girls' hostel of this Institution with inadequate accommodation and an improved type of hostel is of an urgent necessity ?
- (f) Whether Government is aware that most of the girls in the hostel belong to most backward communities ?
- (g) Whether Government propose to sanction a non-recurring grant for a Girls' hostel there without imposing any rigid condition of public contribution ?
- (h) Whether Government is aware that this institution has been running with a deficit budget ?
- (i) Whether Government propose to sanction recurring grant to this institution with retrospective effect from 1st March 1957, with a view to bridge over the differences in the School budget ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister, for Minister, Education) replied :

135. (a)—Government are aware that there is a Venture High School at Kakapathar.

(b)—Departmental recognition has been given upto Class VIII. Figures regarding population of the area are not readily available.

(c)—Exact information not available at present.

(d)—The School is reported to have a monthly income of Rs.341.75 nP. against the monthly expenditure of Rs.247.50 nP.

(e)—There are 15 girls in the Girls' Hostel and Government have no information if the accommodation has been inadequate.

(f)—Government have no information.

(g)—The question may be considered subject to availability of funds.

(h)—Please refer to reply against Question (d) above.

(i)—The question may be considered when the School fulfils the requirements of eligibility.

†**Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa):** Whether the Government know that in this school the M. E. Section was amalgamated with the High School Section and there was a huge deficit in its monthly budget?

†**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** Our Inspector's report is that the school is not in deficit at the moment. As I replied in (d), the school has a monthly income of Rs.341.75 nP. against a monthly expenditure of Rs.247.50 nP.

†**Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA:** As no Government aid has yet been given, how is it possible for the school to run without being deficit?

†**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA:** The School raises a monthly donation of Rs.100 from private sources.

†**Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA:** Whether the Government know that the Inspector of Schools inspected the school last year in the early part of September but sent his inspection report to the Director of Public Instruction and others only on 26th December, 1957 thus giving no time to appeal against his non-recommendation for University affiliation in 1957 according to the procedure of the Education Department?

†**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA:** I require notice to reply to this question.

Golaghat-Chikarighat Ali in Golaghat Subdivision

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon) asked:

*136. Will the Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government are aware of the heavy traffic on Golaghat-Chikarighat Ali in Golaghat Subdivision?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that this road connects Golaghat with Dimapur and Manipur?
- (c) If so, when Government propose to complete the asphaltting of the road?

- (d) Whether it is a fact that Government recommended the asphaltting of the road in the last Road Communication Board Meeting under a Central Government Scheme ?
- (e) If so, whether Government received the sanction from the Central Government ?
- (f) Whether Government propose to asphalt the said road within the current year ?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH [Minister, P. W. D. (Roads & Buildings Wing)] replied :

136. (a)—Yes.

(b)—No. This road connects Golaghat with Chikari-ghat *via* Dergaon on the South Bank of the River Brahmaputra. Golaghat is actually connected with Dimapur and Manipur by Golaghat-Dimapur-Kohima-Mao-Imphal Road.

(c) to (e)—As per recommendation of the Assam Road Communication Board, held in December, 1956, the proposal for asphaltting certain miles of the Golaghat-Chikari-ghat Road was included under the 225 lakhs Programme, to be financed out of the Central Road Fund (Ordinary Reserve). The Schemes, as a whole, were sent up to the Government of India during January 1957 ; but their (Government of India's) approval and sanction has not yet been received. Government of India have been last reminded on the 3rd March, 1958.

(f)—It is not possible to start any work prior to the receipt of Government of India's approval and sanction.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon): Whether Government are aware that the Public Works Department has already taken up two miles of this road for asphaltting ?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: Yes, according to the programme perhaps they have taken.

Shri DANDESWAR HAZARIKA (Morongi): May I know from Government how many miles of this road have been recommended for asphaltting ?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: I have not got that information with me at the moment.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon): Whether Government are aware that this road is necessary for the Assam Co-operative Sugar Mill, Assam Police Training College, the Border Security Force and other departments of the Government?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH [Minister, P. W. D., (Roads and Buildings Wing)]: Admittedly this is one of the most important roads in the subdivision.

Shri RAJENDRA NATH BARUA (Golaghat-East): In reply to (b) it has been said "No", but if we take into consideration the road from Dergaon to Golaghat, it does connect Golaghat with Dimapur and Manipur.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: This is a matter of opinion.

Self-help grant to Dibrugarh School Board for construction of Lower Primary School Buildings

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa) asked:

*137. Will the Minister-in-charge of Education be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether it is a fact that certain sum of money has been allotted this year to Dibrugarh School Board for construction of Lower Primary School buildings on self-help basis of 50 per cent?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that when 50 per cent self-help was called for from the public, Government meant help may be either in cash or in kind?
- (c) Whether it is a fact that the Dibrugarh School Board imposed condition on the self-help grant that the School Managing Committee should deposit Rs.1,500 in Postal Savings Bank account and to produce pass books in order to qualify to receive a grant of Rs.1,500?
- (d) Whether Government is aware that some of the School Managing Committee which have collected building materials (such as timber, bricks, etc.), will be required to sell these and deposit the sale proceeds in Savings Bank to qualify themselves to receive the self-help aid?

- (e) Whether Government is aware that schools situated in villages may not get this grant even after selling building materials and depositing the sale proceeds in postal account as another conditions imposed by the School Board is that school situated on main roads or Trunk Road would get preference for such grants ?
- (f) Whether Government propose to issue instructions to the Dibrugarh School Board that self-help may be either in cash or in kind or both in cash and kind ?
- (g) Whether Government propose to issue instructions to the Dibrugarh School Board to treat all Lower Primary Schools (whether it is situated on Trunk Road or in the interior) equally ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister, for Minister, Education) replied :

137. (a)—No. Not yet allotted.

(b)—Originally the intention was that the School's contribution should be in cash. It has since been decided that the contribution may be either in cash or in kind.

(c)—As above.

(d)—Government is not aware.

(e)—Government is not aware.

(f)—This will be done, if it is finally decided to sanction the grants.

(g)—Government will consider the suggestion.

†**Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa)**: Whether the Government know that by that resolution of the School Board, only the wealthy pockets would be benefited and the people who are prepared to contribute in kind and labour would be deprived of this benefit ?

†**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA**: In order to remove that difficulty it has been decided that the contribution would be either in cash or in kind.

†**Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI (Golakganj)** :
I want to know whether this 50 per cent which the State Government is offering is a contribution of the Central Government and the remaining 50 per cent should be contributed by the Local Bodies ?

†**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister)** :
I have not followed this question. Actually whatever is paid by the Centre is paid through the State Budget. All expenditures are made in the State after they are passed by this august House. Therefore I do not understand what the hon. Member means by this question.

†**Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI** : Whether the first 50 per cent is paid by the Central Government and the remaining 50 per cent should be contributed by the Local Bodies ? Is that the advice of the Central Government ?

†**Mr. SPEAKER** : Perhaps the hon. Member means that 50 per cent of the expenditure is paid by the Central Government and the other 50 per cent is advised by the Central Government to be contributed by the Local Bodies and not by the public.

†**Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister)** :
I do not think there is any such instruction.

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table).

Amount sanctioned as relief to families affected by cyclone

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon) asked :
459. Will the Minister-in-charge of Revenue be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether any amount of Government grant has been sanctioned as relief to families affected by cyclone during the course of the last three years ?
- (b) If so, how much was sanctioned to each Subdivision during the said period and how the money was utilised ?
- (c) The principle and procedure adopted in granting relief to families affected by cyclone during the period ?

†Speech not corrected.

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue) replied:

459. (a)—Yes.

(b)—A statement showing the amounts sanctioned Sub-divisionwise for last three years is placed on the Library Table (please see Library Register Nos. S13). The amounts sanctioned were issued as gratuitous relief to the affected people either in cash or in kind, in undertaking Test Relief Works in issuing Cattle Loan, Seed Loan, Distress Loan and Rehabilitation Loan, etc.

(c)—Necessary relief was issued in individual cases on merit, i. e., in consideration of the extent of loss sustained, number of dependents, purchasing power, etc., etc. of the respective families.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon): Sir, may I know whether Government received any petitions from the people of Ahotguri in Golaghat Subdivision for relief due to storm damage in 1957?

Shri HARESWAR DAS: I have no papers with me to show that the petitions referred to by the hon. Member were received.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA: May I know from the Honourable Revenue Minister whether Government had given any distress loan to the Golaghat Subdivision due to several reports submitted by the S.D.O., Golaghat in 1956-57?

Shri HARESWAR DAS: Distress loans were given according to the demand of the local officer.

Relief to the Flood-affected and eroded People of Mariaholla of Bokakhat Mouza in Golaghat Subdivision

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon) asked:

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

(a) Whether he has lately received any representation from the Questioner as to rehabilitate and to give relief to the flood-affected and eroded people of Mariaholla of Bokakhat Mauza in Golaghat Subdivision?

(b) If so, what action is being taken on the said representation ?

(c) Whether it is a fact that the Subdivisional Officer has not taken any action for rehabilitation of those eroded people ?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue) replied :

460. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The matter was duly enquired into by the local officers. It is reported that no properties or cattle of the people of Mariaholla were lost due to flood and erosion as they could shift to a safer place in the same locality before any damage could be done. They have, however, been given gratuitous relief in kind. Besides, Test Relief works were undertaken for repair of Mariaholla Ali Road to give benefit to these eroded people.

(c)—No.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon): In reply to 460 (c), the answer is No. May I know from the Government whether they have received any representation from the flood-affected and eroded people of Mariaholla ? Such representations were received by the Subdivisional Officer from the people of Mariaholla.

Mr. SPEAKER: I want clarification from the reply to Question No. 460(c) as given by the Government. Whether by giving the reply as 'No' it means that the S. D. O. has taken any action.

Shri HARESWAR DAS: Yes, Sir, he has taken action.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA: Whether Government had taken any steps to rehabilitate the people of Mariaholla ? The people of Mariaholla also submitted several applications to the Government and also the Questioner.

Shri HARESWAR DAS: Sir, this is the report. I am reading the report. "The S. D. O. himself along with the M. L. A. of the Constituency and other officials visited the eroded area more than once and contacted the affected people who demanded in Borjuri Grant and also in Ikrajan T. E. where lands are not available for settlement. This fact was known to the questioner who has been requested to persuade these eroded people to abandon the habit of sticking to the riverine areas and to take allotment of land at Fallan-gani (Reclamation) Project."

But, Sir, the eroded people liked to live in the riverine area and they refused to go there.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA (Dergaon): May I know from the Honourable Revenue Minister whether it is a fact that the case of Borjuri has not yet been decided by the S.D.O. and Borjuri land is not Government land and it is a garden land?

Shri RAMNATH DAS [Dergaon (Resarved for Scheduled Castes)]: May I know from the Honourable Revenue Minister whether the people affected by erosion have refused to go to Borjuri?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue): In Borjuri there is no land available for settlement. It is tea garden land.

Shri NARENDRA NATH SARMA: Whether it is a fact that there are 2,000 acres of land in Borjuri?

Shri HARESHWAR DAS: It is high land and the people do not like to go there. At Fallangani (Reclamation) Project or at Jamuguri, Murphulani and Thuramukh tea garden which are requisitioned lands none came forward to accept allotment. In Fallangani Development Project as many as 300 to 400 families can still be provided with lands with rehabilitation loan which will be sanctioned by the Government.

Shri RAMNATH DAS: May I know whether there is any difficulty in requisitioning land from Borjuri Grant?

Shri HARESWAR DAS: There is no difficulty. If land is requisitioned, the question of appeal arises, which is to be examined. Whether it is a surplus land or necessary for the economy of the garden is to be examined. Then the question of cost of land and allotment to people come in. But the people who live in riverine area refuse to go to high land, the land remains fallow and Government have to pay compensation.

Shri RAM NATH DAS: May I know from the Honourable Minister whether the Subdivisional Officer has taken any step to requisition any land.

Shri HARESWAR DAS: There is no land in Ekrajan T. E. available for settlement. In Borjuri area also some people were shown land but they refused to go there.

Fire at Tihu Town

Shri SURENDRA NATH DAS (Patacharkuchi) asked :

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

- (a) Whether Government is aware that a fire broke out at Tihu town last year in October or so ?
- (b) Whether it is a fact that some shops with big buildings have been gutted down ?
- (c) Whether the value of properties lost was more than two lakhs of rupees ?
- (d) Whether the victims received any financial help or loan from the Government ?
- (e) If so, what was the amount sanctioned for the sufferers to construct their houses ?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue) replied :

461. (a)—Yes.

(b)—Yes.

(c)—Approximately rupees two lakhs.

(d)—Yes.

(e)—A sum of Rs.30,000 was sanctioned as Rehabilitation Loan to 22 fire affected businessmen of Tihu Bazar.

Dr. SRIHARI DAS (Barpeta) : Whether it is a fact that some shops with big buildings have been gutted ? What was the number of shops that were gutted down ?

Shri HARESWAR DAS: The total number of persons affected were 31 and 22 got relief.

Dr. SRIHARI DAS: Whether all these 22 business men have their shops gutted ?

Mr. SPEAKER: I do not think that details should be given in reply to supplementaries of Unstarred Questions.

**Kismat Hashdaha Venture M. E. School in Dhubri
Subdivision**

Shri TAMIZUDDIN PRODHANI (Dhubri) asked :

462. Will the Minister-in-charge of Education be pleased to state—

(a) Whether he has received lately any representation regarding recurring grants of the Kismat Hashdaha Venture Middle English School in Dhubri Subdivision?

(b) If so, whether any recurring grant-in-aid has been sanctioned for the aforesaid institution?

(c) If not, whether Government propose to sanction recurring grant for the said institution immediately?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister, for Minister, Education) replied :

462 (a)—Yes.

(b)—No.

(c)—Under consideration of the Government.

Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI (Golakganj): Sir, may I know from the Government whether they have received any representation from the people of the locality to give some sort of grant to Kismat Hashdaha Venture M. E. School which is situated in a backward corner of the district and which has been running by the people of the locality for more than 10 years with their own contribution?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA: Yes. The school was established in 1948 and it received recognition in 1953, and before that the school was not recommended for grants, I suppose on account of inadequate number of students in the school. Even now, I mean, on 30th June 1957 the enrolment in the school was—Class IV—35, Class V—13 and Class VI—16. Therefore, the D. I. of Schools could not recommend the school for any grant.

Now, the D. I. of Schools has sent proposals to Government for their consideration to give some grant to the school. This is under consideration of the Government.

**Separation of Factory Department from Labour
Department**

Shri MOLIA TATI (Doom Dooma) asked :

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

- (a) Whether it is a fact that Government have decided to separate the Factory Department from Labour Department ?
- (b) If so, when Government arrived at such a decision?
- (c) Whether Government propose to promote the Deputy Chief Inspector of Factories to the post of Chief Inspector of Factories ?
- (d) Whether the present Deputy Inspector of Factories is a technically qualified person ?
- (e) When the appointment or promotion of the Chief Inspector will be done ?

Shri KAMAKHYA PRASAD TRIPATHI (Minister, Labour) replied :

463 (a) & (b)—No, the Factory Department and the Labour Department were always separate. What is now intended is to appoint a whole-time Chief Inspector of Factories and to relieve the Labour Commissioner so that he can devote more time to Labour matters. The above decision was taken on 7th February 1958.

(c)—Government have decided to fill up the post of Chief Inspector of Factories by departmental promotion on the recommendation of the Assam Public Service Commission.

(d)—Yes

(e)—Soon.

Starting of a Girls' High English School at Lala in Hailakandi Subdivision

Shri GOURI SHANKAR ROY (Katlicherra) asked :

464. Will the Minister-in-charge of Education be pleased to state—

(a) Whether Government is aware of the public demand to start a Girls' High English School at Lala in Hailakandi Subdivision ?

(b) Whether any enquiry has been made by the Department in this regard ?

(c) If so, what are the findings ?

(d) Whether Government propose to take any action to meet this public demand ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister, for Minister, Education) replied :

464. (a)—No.

(b)—Yes, on receipt of a question to this effect in the last session of the Assembly by the hon. Member, an enquiry was made.

(c)—The girl enrolment in the upper classes of the school does not justify a separate Girls' High School at Lala.

(d)—Not at present.

***Shri GOURI SHANKAR ROY:** Is it not a fact that the Inspectress of Schools after visiting the Lala High School last year recommended to start a separate High School for girls in that area ?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA:** The present enrolment of the High School is 81 out of which 21 are girls. Therefore, for 21 girls student I do not think, the Inspectress of the Schools recommended to start a separate high school for girls.

System of Teachers Training Examination

Shri ABDUL HAMID CHOUDHURY (Karimganj-South) asked :

465. Will the Education Minister be pleased to state—

- (a) What is the system of Teachers Training Examination in vogue at present ?
- (b) Whether the answer papers are available for scrutiny after publication of the Examination result ?
- (c) Whether any certificate is granted as a matter of course to the passed candidates ?
- (d) If not, whether Government propose to take necessary measures to effect automatic issue of such certificates ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister, for Minister, Education) replied :

465. (a)—(1) The Assam Secondary School Teachership Certificate Examination for male teachers.

(2) The Assam Primary School Teachership Certificate Examination for male teachers.

(3) The Assam Primary and Secondary School Mistresses Certificate (Junior and Senior) Examinations.

(4) Training of Teachers for the Basic Training Courses—Junior and Senior.

(5) Diploma Course in the Post-Graduate Training College, Jorhat.

(6) Training for the degree of B. T. of the Gauhati University.

(b)—No.

(c)—Yes.

(d)—Does not arise.

***Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI (Golakganj):** May I know, Sir, whether the primary school teachers completing 15 years of service is exempted from the Teachers Training Examination ?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** I require notice of this question.

***Shrimati KOMOL KUMARI BARUA (Katonigaon):** May I know from the Government whether there is any examination to test the merit of the L.P. school teachers ?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA:** Some examination is held and their merit is decided according to the result of that examination.

***Shrimati KOMOL KUMARI BARUA:** Who are the examiners of that test examination ?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA:** I want notice of this question.

Bridges over the Hoknar and Naljra rivers on the Sorbhog-Kahitana Road

Shri BIRENDRA KUMAR DAS [Patarcharkuchi (Reserved for Scheduled Tribes)] asked :

466. Will the Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department be pleased to state—

(a) Whether bridges will be constructed over the Hoknar and Naljra rivers on the Sorbhog-Kahitana Road ?

(b) If so, when ?

(c) Whether they have been surveyed and by whom ?

(d) If not, will they be surveyed immediately ?

(e) Whether rainy weather bridges will be constructed till the construction of all weather bridges ?

(f) If so, when ?

* Speech not corrected.

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH (Minister, P. W. D.) replied :

466. (a) & (b)—These are not included in any scheme. The proposal will be placed before the next Assam Road Communication Board meeting for their consideration and works will be taken up if and when this is recommended by them and funds are available for the purpose.

(c) & (d)—Do not arise in view of reply to (a) and (b) above.

(e) & (f)—Single boat ferries are maintained at these crossings.

No temporary bridge during rainy season could stand the floods, these being hill streams.

Shri GHANASHYAM TALUKDER (Sorbhog): May I know whether any temporary bridges will be constructed during the winter season ?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: If the hon. Member means fair weather bridges then that question will be examined.

Re: Erosion of Palasbari Town by the Brahmaputra

Shri KHOGENDRA NATH BARBARUAH (Amguri) asked:

467. Will Minister-in-charge of Flood Control be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government are aware that Brahmaputra erosion has taken away a substantial part of Palasbari town in Kamrup District ?
- (b) If so, what is the amount of loss in property ?
- (c) Whether Government has any plan for protection of Palasbari from such erosion ?

M. MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY [Minister, P. W. D. (Flood Control and Irrigation)] replied :

467. (a) —Yes.

(b)—About Rs.20 lakhs.

(c)—No.

Trucks and buses plying on the Shillong-Tamabil Route

Shri LARSINGH KHYRIEM [Jowai (Reserved for Scheduled Tribes)] asked :

468. Will the Chief Minister be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether the Government is aware that the trucks and buses maintained by Company plying on the Shillong-Tamabil Route are in a very bad condition ?
- (b) Whether Government have received a representation from the member, District Council, of the Dawki area addressed to the Subdivisional Officer, Jowai and a copy of which was sent to the Chief Minister, Assam, dated 9th January 1958 urging Government to nationalise the said road ?
- (c) If so, what action has been taken by Government on it ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister) replied:

468. (a).—All the vehicles belonging to National Transport Company, Limited, carry fitness certificates. But recently a report has been received from Subdivisional Officer, Jowai about the unsatisfactory service rendered by the Company.

(b).—Yes.

(c).—According to the phased programme of State Road Transport Nationalisation Schemes under the Five Year Plan, the Shillong-Tambil Route was to be taken over for nationalisation in 1957-58 but due to financial difficulties the route could not be taken over for nationalisation. The matter is still under consideration of Government.

Shri LARSINGH KHYRIEM : Are Government aware that although the vehicles carried fitness certificates there is breakdown as a result of which the passengers are left stranded ?

Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA (Minister T. A. D.) : Government is not aware of this fact. I have learnt it for the first time from the questioner himself.

Shri LARSINGH KHYRIEM (Jowai Reserved for Scheduled Tribes): Are Government aware that during the rainy days people used umbrella inside the bus (*laughter*) ?

Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA (Minister Tribal Areas Department): Government are not aware of this fact, Sir, but if he wants the matter will be enquired into.

Panitola High School in Dibrugarh Subdivision

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa)
asked :

469. Will the Education Minister be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether all the Aided High Schools have been allotted additional recurring grants to enable them to honour the model scales as recommended by the Pay Committee ?
- (b) What was the recurring aid sanctioned to Panitola High School in Dibrugarh Subdivision in 1956 and what additional amount was sanctioned in that year to enable the school Managing Committee to honour the model scale ?
- (c) Whether Government is aware that the amount sanctioned in 1956-57 was grossly inadequate to meet the additional cost involved consequent on the recommendation of the Pay Committee ?
- (d) What was the minimum recurring aid to a full-fledged Government Aided High School according to 1949 schedule ?
- (e) Why there was a departure from this schedule in granting recurring grants to a number of University affiliated High Schools generally situated in under-developed and backward areas and inhabited by other backward classes ?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister for Minister Education) replied:

469. (a)—No. Additional grants for the purpose is sanctioned only to those schools which are eligible for the same according to the conditions laid down by Government.

	Rs.
(b)—Recurring grant	150 per mensem.
Hindi grant	60 " "
Non-recurring grant for maintenance ...	100 " "

310 " "

Additional amount sanctioned for pay Rs 150 " " (from 1st October 1956).
scale.

(c)—No such report has been received.

(d)—Rs. 520 for a high school with 8 sections and Rs. 455 for a High School with 7 sections.

(e)—Full grants were sanctioned to High Schools existing in 1949, after that date, this could not be done due to paucity of funds.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA** (Saikhowa): It appears from the answer that the monthly aid to a High School with 8 section is Rs. 520. But in its place if Rs. 310 is given to a High School do Government know that the teaching staff had to sacrifice monthly Rs. 2,107?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA**: The answer is there to question (b). This could not be done due to paucity of fund. Therefore, it is quite natural that when the amount is inadequate, the institution had to run at great sacrifice of the teachers.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA**: Are Government aware that even after the introduction of the model scales from the 1st October, 1956, a sum of Rs. 1,000 was given less in that year to honour the model scales?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA**: That will be enquired into. But in answer (b) it is given here that besides Rs. 310 an additional amount of Rs. 150 has been sanctioned per month. So, the total amount comes to Rs. 460.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA**: Is it known to the Government that after that there was a deficit of about Rs. 200 per month?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA**: That is already admitted here that full grants could not be given before October.

Kakapathar High School in Dibrugarh Subdivision

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa)
asked :

470. Will the Education Minister be pleased to state—

- (a) Whether Government is aware that Kakapathar High School in Dibrugarh Subdivision is situated at a distance of about 10 miles from the boundary of North-East Frontier Agency and there is no other High School within a radius of about 15 miles?
- (b) Whether a memorandum, dated 30th November 1954 from the Kakapathar Kandriya Kisak Sabha addressing the Chief Minister of Assam urging Government aid for this Kakapathar High School was received by the Government?
- (c) Whether there is a proposal to sanction a recurring aid to this Kakapathar High School with effect from this financial year?
- (d) Whether there is a proposal to grant a recurring grant for improvement or construction of buildings for this Kakapathar High School?

Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister for Minister Education) replied:

470. (a)—Distance of the School from the boundary of North-East Frontier Agency has not been ascertained. The nearest High School is at Doom Dooma at a distance of 12 miles.

(b)—No. A memorandum, dated 22nd June 1957 addressed to Chief Minister by Robin Moral and Rajymai Deka (on behalf of the public of Kakapathar area) was received and necessary action is being taken.

(c)—No.

(d)—No. Inspector of Schools, Upper Assam Circle has been requested for a report about the school.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa):** Sir, in answer(d) it is stated that a report has been called for from the Inspector of Schools, Upper Assam Circle about the Schools. Is Government aware that an inspection report has already been sent by the Inspector of Schools vide his Memo. No. 36648-20, dated 26th December, 1957? I have got a copy of this report with me.

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister)** That report has not reached us as yet.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA :** In reply to a previous question it was stated that there was no deficit. Is Government aware that the monthly income of the school is only Rs. 500 where as payment to teachers is Rs. 900 and this information was supplied to the Director of Public Instruction in the month of February last personally by me ? A copy of it is available with me (laughter).

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA :** I can only give the information which I have received from the Department. According to what has been supplied to me, I find that the Inspector's report says that this schools fee income was Rs. 341 and the expenditure Rs. 247.50. May be the hon. Member has mentioned about the Middle English section.

Mr. SPEAKER: This question relates to High School.

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** It is not a full-fledged High School, it is recognised only up to Class VIII. The confusion probably is about the Middle English Section which receives grant from the Government. Recognition has been given only upto Class VIII, and so it is not a full-fledged high school.

(Shri Devendra Nath Hazarika stood up to put further supplementaries).

***Mr. SPEAKER :** The hon. Member will bear in mind that this is an Unstarred Question and, therefore, detailed supplementaries as I have said time and again, would not be in order.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA :** I want to ask a question about a policy matter.

***Mr. SPEAKER :** Then he will have to take advantage of other devices in the procedure.

* Speech not corrected.

Taking over of roads by Public Works Department in South Kamrup

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur) asked :

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

(a) Whether Public Works Department has decided to construct or take over the following roads in South Kamrup and if so, when ?

(i) Batarhat-Simina Road ;

(ii) Kukurmara-Banghsar Road ;

(iii) Chaygaon-Gumi Road ;

(iv) Loharghat-Lengta Road ;

(v) Sikarhat-Gorgora Road ;

(b) What were the amounts sanctioned for the construction of these roads in 1956-57 and 1957-58 ?

(c) Who are the contractors that were given the task and how much of these roads have been completed ?

(d) What amount has been sanctioned for the coming year over these roads ?

(e) When are these roads expected to be completed ?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH [Minister, P.W.D. (Roads and Buildings Wing)] replied :

471. (a)—Yes, except Sikarhat-Gorgora Road which has been included in the Additional Petrol Tax Programme of Rs.40 lakhs sent to Government of India and their approval to the proposal is awaited.

The first four roads have been taken up in 1957 and work thereon is in progress.

(b)—Amounts sanctioned during 1956-57 and 1957-58 are given below :—

Name of the Roads		1956-57	1957-58
		Rs.	Rs.
Batarhat-Simina Road	... ..	9,500	36,500
Kukurmara-Banghsar Road	... ..	3,000	20,000
Chaygaon-Gumi Road	... ..	1,000	30,000
Loharghat-Lengta Road	... ..	...	10,000

(c)—Informations are given below :—

1. Batarhat-Simina Road Name of the Contractors

Progress 70 per cent

For Earthwork—

1. Padma Kanta Kalita.
2. Abdul Hussain.
3. Siba Ram Kalita.
4. Joy Charan Kalita.

For Bridges and Culverts—

5. Shri Uzir Ali.
6. „ Ram Charan Choudhury.
7. „ Rajendra Narayan Thakuria.

2. Kukurmara-Banghsar Road.

For Earthwork—

Progress 6 per cent.

1. Shri Girindra Kr. Bora.
2. „ Arun Ch. Kalita.

3. Chaygaon-Gumi Road For Earthwork—
Progress 36 per cent. 1. Shri Gauri Kanta Das.

2. „ Keshab Ch. Das.

3. „ Dambarudhar Dekka.

4. „ Siba Ram Kalita.

For Bridges and Culverts—

5. Shri Phanindra Narayan Thakuria.

6. „ Hoy Ram Das.

7. „ Ram Charan Chaudhury.

8. „ Siba Ram Kalita.

4. Loharghat-Lengta Road.

Progress 26 per cent.

For Earthwork—

1. Shri Aditya Ch. Thakuria.

2. „ Joy Ch. Kalita.

3. „ Hari Ch. Kalita.

For Bridges and Culverts—

4. Shri Dinesh Ch. Kalita.

5. „ Kamini Kanta Das.

6. „ Aditya Ch. Thakuria.

(d)—The amount proposed to be sanctioned for the year 1958-59 are given below :—

Name of the Road	Amount proposed to be sanctioned in 1958-59		
			Rs.
1. Batarhat-Simina Road	14,000
2. Kukurmara-Banghsar Road...	20,000
3. Chaygaon-Gumi Road	20,000
4. Loharghat-Lengta Road	20,000

(e)—In 1959-60 except Sikarhat-Gorgora Road,

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur): With regard to (b), what is the estimated total cost of construction of these four roads including the construction of the bridges?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH [Minister, P. W. D. (Roads and Buildings Wing)]:

(1) Batarhat-Simina Road Rs. 60,000

(2) Kukurmara-Banghsar Road (1.5 miles)... Rs. 50,000

(3) Chaygaon-Gumi Road (3 miles) Rs. 60,000

(4) Loharghat-Lengta Road ... Rs. 67,000

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : Have the Government any information whether the amounts allotted for 1957-58 have been actually spent?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH: The bulk of it has been spent, excepting for the Kukurmara-Banghsar Road where much money could not be spent due to a dispute about the alignment of this road.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: So far as bridges on the Chaygaon-Gumi Road are concerned, have Government information that not a single bridge has been constructed during this period?

Shri DEBESWAR SARMAH : May be perhaps for the reason that earthwork has not been completed.

Speaker's ruling regarding removal of the word "clownish" from the speech of M. Moinul

Haque Choudhury, Minister, Food and Agriculture, in replying to Food Debate

on 27th March, 1958.

Mr. SPEAKER : The questions are over.

The hon. Member for Barchalla has drawn my notice to certain personal references made by the Hon'ble Minister for Food and Agriculture while replying to the food debate on the last Private Members' day. He also pointed out the use of the word "clownish" by the Minister with reference to him. The hon. Member has written to me that he felt hurt and humiliated and has sought my protection. I have gone through the speech by the Hon'ble Minister for Food and Agriculture as well as the speech by the hon. Member for Barchalla in reply to which the Hon'ble Minister made these references. It is for the hon. Members to decide the language they would like to use and the emphasis they would like to put in their speeches but nothing said in this House must run counter to parliamentary practice, custom and manners without which no discussion in this House can be either effective or fruitful. When I brought it to the notice

of the Hon'ble Minister for Food and Agriculture, he assured me that he had no intention to hurt the feelings of the hon. Member for Barchalla, and he agreed that the use of the word "clownish" was both unfortunate and unparliamentary. Ordinarily, the use of unparliamentary words should be brought to the notice of the Chair at the earliest opportunity during the day so that this may not form part of the record, but as it was not brought to the notice of the Hon'ble the Deputy Speaker, who was in the Chair on that occasion, it did not attract his attention. I, therefore, direct that this word may be removed from the record. As I have said I cannot too much emphasize the necessity of maintaining a parliamentary climate in the debates of this august House because only in such an atmosphere various problems confronting the State and the country may be discussed with the objectivity and seriousness they deserve. There is no doubt that this House has maintained a degree of decorum and brought to bear upon its discussions a measure of high seriousness which can compare favourably with any Legislature in this country. I am sure no Member, irrespective of the side he belongs to, would do anything that will in any way detract from the dignity of this Assembly, which, in the final analysis, is the dignity of the hon. Members themselves".

Short notice Resolution to move the Government of India to bear entire expenses for protection of Dibrugarh town

Mr. SPEAKER : We shall now take up short notice Resolutions. Before I call upon Shri Nilmoney Barthakur to move his Resolution, I would like to bring to the notice of the House the rules of procedure in this behalf. It is very clear in Rule 122 that discussions on a resolution shall be strictly limited to the subject of the resolution and Rule 125 enjoins "No speech on a resolution shall, except with the permission of the Speaker, exceed fifteen minutes in duration."

Provided that the mover of a resolution, when moving the same, and the Minister concerned when speaking for the first time, may speak for thirty minutes or for such longer time as the Speaker may permit."

I would, therefore, urge upon the hon. Members to observe these two rules strictly because they are more or less obligatory and the discretion left to the Speaker in respect of extending the time limit is extremely limited.

***Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh):**
Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move the Government of India to bear the entire expenses incurred by them in taking measures for the protection of the Dibrugarh Town, thereby absolving the Government of Assam of their liability to pay fifty per cent of the said expenses.

(At this stage the Speaker left the Chamber and the Deputy Speaker presided)

Sir, the people of Assam are very much familiar not only with the might but also with the power of erosion of the mighty Brahmaputra. That great Generalissimo began his march on the town of Dibrugarh in 1940-41. During that period there was an alien Government on our shoulders, who were interested in the protection and promotion of their own interests rather than the interest of the people. So, no measures were then taken to check that erosion. After the great earthquake of 1950, erosions again started from 1951 and a good part of the town of Dibrugarh was washed away. The measures that had been taken by the State Government then proved ultimately to be unsuccessful. The whole question was referred to the Central Government and the Central Government directed that an experiment should be conducted at the River Research Institute at Poona to evolve a method of checking erosion. But that time in August 1952, the Iyengar Committee visited Dibrugarh and they recommended, on the basis of the experiment at Poona, that a stone revetment of 4½ miles length should be constructed on the bank of the river Brahmaputra facing the Dibrugarh town. To meet the cost of this revetment, it was suggested that half of the money will be given by the Centre as grant and half will be borne by the State Government but this money will be advanced by the Central Government with interest repayable in 10 years, and the revetment was to start in front of the Bishop's House and it is best known to the Engineers that the revetment was started in front of the Circuit House and it was taken up there with the approval of the River Research Station, Poona. But, Sir, in 1950 erosion again took place creating great havoc to the beautiful town of Dibrugarh and with it the revetment and a good part of the town were washed away by the river Brahmaputra. The people of Dibrugarh town were panicky

and shaky. There was insecurity in their minds. The State Government approached the Central Government for help. The Central Government then decided that the beautiful town of Dibrugarh in the frontier region of the State should be saved and therefore measures should be evolved for stopping erosion of the town. Accordingly, a panel of Irrigation Engineers were invited and on the opinion of Engineers both within the country and outside it was decided that some stone spurs and some wooden spurs would be built along the bank of the river in the town area which will check the velocity of the current and stone revetment would be built for greater part of the bank in the town and on the basis of the recommendation of the Iyenger Committee that 50 per cent of the expenditure which would fall as the State's share would be realised from the people who would be benefited by the revetment by levying a cess. But, Sir, after the failure of the revetment we do not understand why the question of this levy again comes in. We have seen that a Bill was passed in this House and also an amendment was brought to this House last year which sought to include a greater area of the town of Dibrugarh into the purview of the parent Act. But it is really surprising that in bringing this Bill before the Legislature no reference was made with the elected representatives of this town, *i. e.*, the Members of the Municipal Board and also the people were not consulted. According to the rate of the levy that in Belt (a), which is the nearest portion of the river bank of the town a high per cent of the present valuation of the residence with the landed property will have to be paid annually. Now, as defined the present valuation of the landed property with building will have to be paid by the owner in 20 years time at the rate of 5 per cent of the value of the property. We do not know how much amount have been spent upto 31st March, 1958 on the stone spurs, revetment, etc., for the protection of the town from erosion, but I think the total expenditure will be little more than rupees three crores. But from the cess in 20 years a sum of little less than rupees three and half crores will be collected. This is the highest amount of levy in the world and highest in India that by this levy the entire valuation of the property which will be benefited will be paid in 20 years. This levy is really wrong and is unprecedented in India because, Sir, in the first instance it has been decided to meet the expenditure of the town protection from the pool of the Second Five Year Plan. Now, the finances of the 2nd Five Year Plan are from the borrowings from inside the country, borrowing from outside the country, deficit financing, *plus* usual taxation. If we take all the sources of finance for the 2nd Five Year Plan and when

people of All-India have to pay a part of the finance by way of high taxation and in this the people of Dibrugarh along with the people of the country have been paying for the finance. Betterment levy on the mighty irrigation projects Bhakranangal, Damodar Valley, Tungabhadra and other such big projects which have brought under cultivation hundreds and thousands acres of land or if by some irrigation project the yield can be increased to 30 maunds per acre then this is understandable that a levy may be imposed on the people benefited by these projects but if you look to the history of Dibrugarh you find that the people have lost their homesteads, their land and after they have lost and the people who have suffered so much now when the Government by protection measures have gave them security they are charged this betterment tax. But is it not the duty of the Government to go to the aid of the people when there is a flood, there is a fire or there is famine? On the same analogy the people of Dibrugarh suffered from erosion and it is the bounden duty of the Government to give protection to the suffering people and if so how can they ask for this tax from these people who have already suffered so much? If a road is constructed, if a school building is established or a irrigation project is taken up—all of which will go to the benefit of the people—there would not be any objection for payment betterment tax. On what principle this tax was levied I do not understand. A huge sum of money was spent for the second project which was undertaken later on, which has no connection with the revetment of the first revetment which was blown off by the river.

Then, if we see the incidence of taxation on urban population it is seen that it is the highest. I am quoting from the Report of the Taxation Enquiry Commission (1953-54) Volume I, page 68, paragraph 9 :—

“As an area becomes more urbanised not only (1) expenditure level rises but (2) the proportion of cash to total expenditure increases, and (3) the proportion of tax to cash expenditure also goes up as a result of a change in the pattern of cash purchases in the direction of more highly taxed articles; the tax element in urban areas increases and the incidence of taxation is higher as a combined result of all this increases. The higher contribution to indirect taxes by urban areas is commonly ascribed mostly to the third factor.”

Now, Sir, therefore, there is no doubt that Dibrugarh if most highly urbanised area and therefore, the incidence of

taxation in that area is the highest. Now, this is taken from the All-India phenomena but if we look to Dibrugarh from the sphere of contribution of taxation it pays to the Central Government we see that Dibrugarh alone pays two third of the Income-tax, Super-tax, and other Central taxes of all the amount paid by Assam and if we look to sales tax, agricultural income tax and other State taxes, we see that Dibrugarh pays the highest amount compared to all other Subdivisions of Assam.

Then again the Taxation Enquiry Commission has also observed in paragraph 13 page 69:—"The incidence of both Central and State taxation is higher in the urban sector for each expenditure group, because of the higher incidence of sales tax, Central excise and import duties. It may be noted, however, that of these three major tax items, the rural-urban disparity in incidence is least under Central excise; it is larger for import duties and is highest in respect of sales tax. Urban incidence of sales tax is over two and half times rural."

So, Sir, from these reports which have been published particularly the Finance Taxation Enquiry Committee Report, we find that the incidence of taxation is highest. This betterment levy comes as the last straw on the camels back for the people who have lost their properties, who have lost their homesteads, who have to abandon their dwellings and go to the hill sides. If somehow the people can build their homes again, this betterment levy is going to be levied on them. So it would be very difficult for the people to bear this high rate of taxation. By this Resolution it is sought to relieve the people of Dibrugarh from this levy.

Sir, in some cases when Central Ministers visit Dibrugarh, representations were made on behalf of the people that the Central Government will absolve the State Government from payment of 50 per cent of the expenditure so that betterment levy may not be imposed on the people. I was a party to one of these representations and I know that in most cases the Central Ministers agree with the grievance of the people that the incidence of taxation here is the highest. Moreover, Sir, in this Betterment Act we find certain provisions which act as a deterrent to improvement of the houses. I am quoting from this Act. In section 9 for example, it says—"If after the levy of the fee and publication of the list mentioned in section 5(3) any change to any property affecting its valuation occurs, whether by demolition, construction or reconstruction of any building or otherwise, the owner thereof shall give notice of

such change to the Collector within the prescribed time and the Collector shall revise fee which will become payable accordingly from the next financial year". So, Sir, this means that if any change is sought to be made for the improvement of a house, and if that house happens to be a thatched house and it is decided by the owner to reconstruct it, or to make some improvement to it, then the rate of taxation will go higher up, that acts like a deterrent to improvement of dwelling houses or essential properties. So this is against the basic principle of the Directive Principles of the Constitution and it denies social justice to the people. From any angle you look at it, whether from the angle of giving real betterment to the people, or if we give scope for the economic reconstruction of the people, this levy will act as a deterrent.

Now, Sir, it has been decided by the planners of the Second Five Year Plan that primary consideration is to be given to the productive activities of the people; even for that purpose this tax will act as a deterrent on the productive activity of the people of Dibrugarh which is one of the premier industrial towns in the State.

Sir, we have calculated out that instead of levying this fee on the people, let the people be allowed to live in houses built by Government at moderate rent and I think that will be cheaper in the long run. Let the Government who have given this curse to the people act as Zaminders. In that case the incidence of taxation will be lower. Now, in accordance with the last debate on the amending Bill last year that Government gave a commitment to pay 50 per cent of the expenses, therefore, Government will have to levy this fee on the people. Now my request is that our Government should move the Central Government to revise their decision and to remit payment of the share of the expenditure. My Resolution simply seeks to request the State Government to move the Government of India to remit the share that we have to pay to the Centre for these protection measures of Dibrugarh town. It is a modest request on the Government and I do not think there would be any difficulty on the part of our Government to move the Central Government as envisaged in my resolution. Moreover, Sir, the sum involved is also a small one, it is something like 1 crore 36 lakhs. This amount of 1 crore 36 lakhs is not going to upset the whole Plan, but on the other hand it would be a relief to the people of the area to a great extent because even the people who have not derived any benefit from these protection measures will also be forced to pay the tax. It is a

matter of great regret that those people who get no facilities from these protection measures will have to pay this tax simply because they happen to live in that prescribed area.

With these few words, Sir, I commend my Resolution to the acceptance of the House and I believe there will be no difficulty on the part of Government to accept it and to request the Central Government to absolve the State Government of their liability to pay fifty per cent of the expenses.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Resolution moved is that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move the Government of India to bear the entire expenses incurred by them in taking measures for the protection of the Dibrugarh town, thereby absolving the Government of Assam of their liability to pay fifty per cent of the said expenses.

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I rise to speak a few words on this Resolution. Sir, it is known to the people not only of Assam but also of India as a whole that Dibrugarh had to face a great calamity in recent years. This calamity is not the fault of the people of Dibrugarh, but it is the fault of nature itself. After the great earthquake of 1950 the course of the Brahmaputra and other rivers in Upper Assam have been changed and became turbulent and as a result we had to face great difficulties in Upper Assam. Not only the town of Dibrugarh suffered but other towns and important places also. For example, we could not save the town of Sadiya which has been entirely washed away. Now, Sir, when Dibrugarh town had to face this difficulty, we are glad that Government came forward to help us with rivetment and other town protection measures. Because our resources are limited the Central Government was moved to come and help us. The Central Government agreed to help us to protect the town of Dibrugarh on a 50-50 basis. That arrangement was that the Central Government will bear 50 per cent and the State Government 50 per cent of the expenses. Sir, I do not know how this arrangement of paying 50 per cent of the expenses came on the people of Dibrugarh and people of adjoining villages. The total cost of town protection scheme is over 2 crores—it is in fact 2 crores 33 lakhs.....

Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh): The hon. Member is quoting accounts of which date, Sir? The accounts of 1958 have not yet been worked out.

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa): I am giving approximate figures. It may be more also, I cannot say it may be 2 crores fifty lakhs. Now the people of Dibrugarh town and the adjoining villages within the radius of five miles are to pay Rs. 1 crore and 16½ lakhs. hon. Member from Dibrugarh, Shri Borthakur, has rightly indicated that it is the highest taxation in India, nay, in the world. Sir, I have got no difference of opinion with him. Our Government should come forward to give relief to the people from this discriminatory treatment. We call it discriminatory because this town has been protected not only in the interest of the Dibrugarh people alone but in the interest of entire Assam. The House may be aware that this Dibrugarh town and the district pay about 1/3rd of the revenue of the entire State. Although this measure of taxation is limited to a radius of five or seven miles around the town, the people of the entire district feel that the people of other places of the State will not allow only the Dibrugarh people to bear this highest taxation in the world. So, Sir, we the representatives of the district are at one with Shri Borthakur when he says that the Dibrugarh people should be given some amount of relief from this taxation measure. Sir, it may be argued that at the time when there was erosion of the town, Dibrugarh people agreed to pay 50 per cent of the cost of construction of the rivetment. There might be some arrangement like that. But I am yet to know with whom that arrangement was made, whether that arrangement was made with any people of representative character. Even if it is stated now that the arrangement was made with people of representative character, my reply will be that a drowning man catches even at a straw. At that time the people of Dibrugarh were in great distress and I do not think it will be justified to take advantage of that weakness and impose such a heavy taxation on the people. I repeat, Sir, it cannot be a justice done to them if the people of other places now want to take advantage of that weak moment. Sir, when the town has been protected, it is giving protection not only to the people or properties of Dibrugarh town alone. A large number of buildings of the Central Government and of the Railways as well as buildings of this State Government have also been saved. The Assam Medical College which caters to the medical needs of the entire State has been saved in the interest of Assam as a whole. Dibrugarh is a great commercial centre of the State. Buildings and other properties of various commercial firms of this great industrial centre have also been saved not only in the interest of the people of Dibrugarh alone but that of the entire State. Sir, this provision of taxation appears to be very

high and the incidence of this taxation measure is falling on the people of Dibrugarh so heavily that I am afraid, Sir, the people of Dibrugarh will have to declare bankruptcy in the very near future. For example, if a poor man has a house worth Rs. 10 thousand and some landed property worth Rs. 10 thousand—total value being Rs. 20 thousand that may be in zone "A". For this Rs. 20 thousand, the owner will have to pay Rs. one thousand per month as tax or fee to the Government. Now when the average income of our middle class people, of the people of the lower income group, being what it is, it is perhaps, nowhere more than Rs. 100 per month in the average, how can it be possible for him to pay such a huge amount as tax or fees? So I do not think that this levy is at all a justifiable one. Therefore, Sir, I call upon the people of Assam to share this tax equally with the people of Dibrugarh town which has been protected in the interest of the entire State. Sir, Dibrugarh town is not a separate unit entirely isolated from the rest of the State. It is a part and parcel of Assam. Nor does the Government have declared it to be a separate pocket inhabited by people different from the rest of the State. If the people of the other places of the State turn a deaf year to the sufferings of the Dibrugarh people and do not feel inclined to extend their helping hand to them in their distress, then I am afraid, Sir, the feeling expressed in certain quarters that the Dibrugarh people have been treated on a separate footing, will only be justified. Sir, already in my district a feeling is growing that Dibrugarh Subdivision has not been treated impartially and equally with the other parts of the State. So, Sir, I thank Shri Borthakur for bringing forward this Resolution and thus affording an opportunity to the hon. Members of this House to ponder over the matter and to decide on the issue as they feel just and proper. Of course, I do not know how far it will be justified to move the Government of India to bear the entire expenses of the Dibrugarh protection work when the scheme was adopted by the Government of Assam on 50:50 basis—50 per cent to be borne by the Government of India and 50 per cent by this State. Nor do I know why for the Dibrugarh alone we should now go to the Centre. There are many other such schemes executed on 50:50 basis with the Central Government in different parts of the State. But those people of other parts of the State have not yet come forward with such a proposal. Perhaps, in those areas such levy has not been imposed. Palasbari may be cited. At least no representative of this House coming from other parts of the State has come forward with any such Resolution. I do not propose to speak any more, Sir. I only request the

State Government to think over the matter very carefully and give some effective relief to the people of Dibrugarh from the clutches of this iniquitous and heavy taxation measure.

With these few words, Sir, I would like to conclude.

Srimati LILY SEN GUPTA (Lahowal) : মাননীৰ উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, ডিব্ৰুগড় টাউনবাগী সকলৰ ওপৰত Betterment tax ব হেৰুৱাই যি সময়ৰ উত্তৰ কৰিছে— সেই সম্পৰ্কে এই বিধান সভাৰ সদস্যসকলে অসম চৰকাৰৰ লগত আলোচনা নকৰাকৈ থকা নাই। যোৱা বছৰৰ বাজেট অধিবেশনত এই সম্পৰ্কে মোৰ এটি প্ৰস্তাৱ আছিল আৰু সেই প্ৰসঙ্গত এই সদনৰ অন্যান্য সদস্যই এই সমস্যা সম্পৰ্কত অংশ গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। সেই মহা প্ৰলয়ঙ্কাৰী ভূমিকম্প আৰু তাৰ পিচত হোৱা পুৰল বানপানীয়ে যেতিয়া ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰৰ পাৰ ভাঙিবলৈ আৰম্ভ কৰে—তেতিয়া ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে ধন-জন দি ইয়াক বন্ধা কৰিবলৈ ইমান সংকটৰ মাজতো যাজি-পাৰি আছিল আৰু সেই সময়ত এই সম্পৰ্কত টেকগুব কোনো কথা আমি শুনা নাছিলো। এই পাৰ বন্ধা কামত কিমান টকা খৰছ হ'ব, সেই কথা তেতিয়াৰ আমাৰ Engineer সকলৰ ধাৰণা নাছিল। সেই সময়ত আমি শুনিবলৈ পাইছিলো যে এই সম্পৰ্কত চৰকাৰে ৫০ লাখ আৰু বাইজে ৫০ লাখ টকা খৰছ কৰিব লাগিব। ইমান টকা যাতে নগৰ খৰছ নহয় তাৰ কাৰণে ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগী বাইজে নিজে এই Spur নিৰ্মাণ কামত সজীৱ ভাবে অংশ গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। সাধাৰণ বাইজৰ লগত স্থানীয় স্কুল কলেজৰ ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰী, ডিব্ৰুগড় মেডিকেল কলেজৰ ছাত্ৰ-ছাত্ৰী আৰু চাহ-মজদুৰ সকলে চৰকাৰৰ এই কামত অংশ গ্ৰহণ কৰিছিল। ইয়াত কাম কৰোঁতে অসম শাখা ৰাষ্ট্ৰীয় মজদুৰ কংগ্ৰেছৰ নেতৃত্বত অন্যান্য মজদুৰ-সজ্জ, বিশেষকৈ কেবল ডিব্ৰুগড় চাৰ্কলৰ পৰা ১,০০০ শ্ৰমিকে দিনে ৭/৮ ঘণ্টাকৈ শ্ৰম দান কৰিছিল। ইয়াৰ উপৰিও ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ যিবিলাক বিদ্য পুলাৰ, মিল মজদুৰ আছিল—তেওঁবিলাকৰ সম্ভৱ পৰাও শ্ৰম দান কৰা হৈছিল। প্ৰথমবাৰ্ষিকত এই দৰেই ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰ সংৰক্ষণৰ জটিল আৰু সংকটাপূৰ্ণ কাম আৰম্ভ কৰা হৈছিল আৰু ভাতিবণ নিবিৰ্ৰশেষে মুনিহ-তিবোতা লৰা-ছোৱালী ডেকা-গাভৰু সকলোৱে শ্ৰম দান কৰিছিল।

উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, এই ৫০ লাখ টকাৰ কাম কৰোঁতে আমি দেখিবলৈ পাইছিলো যে বন্ধপুত্ৰৰ পুৰল সোঁতে ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ Spur ৰ এটা ডাঙৰ অংশ খহাই নিলে আৰু এই টকা পানীৰ বুকুত মিলি গ'ল। তাৰ ফলত এই টকাৰ পৰা ডিব্ৰুগড় চহৰ বাগীৰ কোনো উপকাৰ নহ'ল আৰু সেই কাৰণে, ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগী বাইজে এই টকা পাচত বহন কৰাটো যুক্তি সঙ্গত বুলি নাভাবো। তাৰ পিচত ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগী বাইজে সদায় অন্যান্য জিলাতকৈ বেচি কৰ দি আহিছে।

আমাৰ ডিব্ৰুগড় বাইজে সদায় বেচি কৰ দিয়ে। কিন্তু ইমান বেচিকৈ কৰ দিয়া স্বত্বেও ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে চৰকাৰৰ পৰা সেই অনুপাতে কাম পোৱা দেখা নাই। বাইজক বন্ধা কৰিবৰ কাৰণে যদি চৰকাৰে এটা Spur বান্ধিছে তাৰ বাবে দুখীয়া বাইজৰ পৰা কৰ আদায় কৰাটো কোনোমতেই সমৰ্থন কৰিব নোৱাৰি। আমাৰ ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে সদায় দুখ কৰে যে ইমান বেচি কৰকাটল দিয়া স্বত্বেও তেওঁলোকক চৰকাৰে এই betterment tax ৰ পৰা বেহাই নিদিয়াটো নিতান্ত অন্যায় হৈছে। তেওঁলোকৰ কোনো প্ৰতিনিধি মজীয়াত নথকাৰ কাৰণেই ইমান অৱহেলা কৰা হৈছে। (Voices—ভয় নাই, এইবাৰ মজী হ'ব।)

Spur বন্ধাত যিসকলে শ্ৰম দান কৰিছিল সেইসকলৰ শ্ৰমৰ মূল্য নিকপন কৰি সেই অনুপাতে এই betterment tax বেহাই দিয়াৰ ব্যৱস্থা কৰিব লাগে। এই

শ্রমৰ মূল্য এনেভাবে নিৰূপন কৰিব লাগে যাতে ইয়াৰ বাবে বাইজেও ষাটি নেখায় আৰু চৰকাৰৰো বিশেষ হানি নহয়। গতিকে এই প্ৰস্তুত এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ সদনত পাছ কৰি কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ দয়া কৰণা ভিক্ষা বিচাৰি যাব নোখোজো। অসম চৰকাৰে যেন ইয়াৰ বিহিত ব্যৱস্থা কৰে।

ইয়াকে অনুৰোধ কৰি মই বক্তব্যৰ সামৰণি মাৰিলো।

Shri SARBESWAR BORDOLOI (Titabar) : মাননীয় উপাধ্যক্ষ

মহোদয়, বন্ধুবৰ শ্ৰীযুত নীলমনি বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই যিটো প্ৰস্তাৱ এই সদনত উত্থাপন কৰিছে, সেই প্ৰস্তাৱটোৰ উদ্দেশ্য বৰ ভাল। কিন্তু এনে এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ আজি এই সদনে গ্ৰহণ কৰিলে প্ৰকৃততে ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজে সহায় পাবনে নেপায় তাত মোৰ সন্দেহ হৈছে। প্ৰস্তাৱত কৈছে যে অসম চৰকাৰে শতকৰা ৫০ ভাগ টকা নিদি গোটেই টকাটো কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰেই দিব লাগে বুলি কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ কৰিব লাগে। যদি এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ মতে কাম নহয় তেনেহলে ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজেই গোটেই টকাটো ভৰিব লাগিব। গতিকে আমি যদি ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজক প্ৰকৃততে সহায় কৰিব খোজো তেনেহলে এনেকুৱা ব্যৱস্থা কৰিলে বেচি ভাল হ'ব যে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰে যদি অসম চৰকাৰক শতকৰা ৫০ ভাগ টকা বেহাই নিদিয়ে তেন্তে অসম চৰকাৰেই সেই টকা দি বাইজক বেহাই দিব লাগে। সেই কাৰণেই এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো মই ব্যক্তিগত ভাবে সমৰ্থন কৰা উচিত নহয় বুলি ভাবিছো কাৰণ ইয়াৰ দ্বাৰা প্ৰকৃতপক্ষে ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজক সহায় কৰা নহ'ব। এই কৰব হেচাৰ পৰা ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজক অসম চৰকাৰেই হওঁক বা কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰেই হওঁক বেহাই দিবই লাগিব। আমি শুনাত এই কৰব আকাৰ ইমান বেচি হৈছে যে সেই বোজা ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজে বহন কৰা অসম্ভৱ। পৰিয়াল বিলাকে তেওঁলোকৰ অংশ ২০ বছৰত আদায় কৰিব লাগিব। দুখীয়া পৰিয়ালবোৰে নিজকো ভৰণ পোষণ দি কেনেকৈ এই কৰব বোজা বহন কৰিব? কাৰোবাৰ হয়টো সম্পত্তি আছে, কিন্তু তেওঁলোকেও সেই সম্পত্তিৰ পুৰা মূল্য কৰ হিচাপে দিব লাগিব। ডিব্ৰুগড়ত অসম চৰকাৰৰ ঘৰ-সম্পত্তি আছে আৰু কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰো ঘৰ-সম্পত্তি আছে আৰু এই দুই চৰকাৰে তেওঁলোকৰ অংশ দিব লাগিব। অৱশ্যে চৰকাৰৰ পক্ষে তেওঁলোকৰ অংশ দিয়াটো সম্ভৱপৰ হ'ব পাৰে। কিন্তু দুখীয়া বাইজৰ পক্ষে কেতিয়াও সম্ভৱপৰ নহয় আৰু আমিও তাক সমৰ্থন কৰিব নোৱাৰো। গতিকে আমি যদি ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজক সহায় কৰিব খোজো তেনেহলে এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো কেতিয়াও সমৰ্থন কৰিব নেলাগে। মোৰ বোধেৰে অসম চৰকাৰেই এই টকা দি বাইজক সহায় কৰা উচিত। মই অৱশ্যে ক'ব নোখোজো যে বাইজে একেবাৰে ক'ব দিব নেলাগে। তেওঁলোকেও নিজৰ শক্তি অনযায়ী অংশ এটা দিব পাৰে।

মই শ্ৰীমতী সেনগুপ্তৰ কথাটো সম্পূৰ্ণ সমৰ্থন কৰো যে যি সকলে এই spur বন্ধাত শ্ৰমদান কৰিছিল সেই শ্ৰমৰ মূল্য নিৰূপন কৰি তাক কৰব পৰা বাদ দিব লাগে। ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া বাইজৰ এই শ্ৰমদানে সেই spur বন্ধাত যথেষ্ট সহায় কৰিছিল। গতিকে সেই সাহায্য অনুপাতে মূল্য নিৰূপন কৰি বাইজক ক'ব মাফ দিয়া নিতান্ত দৰকাৰ।

আমি যদি গোটেই টকা কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰেই দিব লাগে ব'লি এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ লৈ তেওঁলোকৰ ওপৰত হেচা দিওঁ, তেনেহলে অন্যান্য ৰাজ্যতো হয়তো এনে ধৰণৰ ঘটনা ঘটিব পাৰে আৰু সেই সকলেও আমাৰ দৰেই কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ ওপৰত হেচা দিব আৰু তেতিয়া আমাৰ প্ৰস্তাৱটোৰ সুবিধা অন্য ৰাজ্যও ল'ব। আমি যদি এনেকুৱা এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ লৈ ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ওপৰত হেচা দিওঁ; অন্যান্য ৰাজ্যতো হয়তো এনে ধৰণৰ ঘটনা আছে, সেই সকলেও আমাৰে নিচিনাকৈ কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ ওপৰত হেচা দিব তেতিয়া আমাৰ Case টো strong নহ'ব।

এই খিনিতে কবলগীয়া হৈছে যে আমাৰ ৰাজ্যৰ আন আন ঠাইত ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰ আৰু তাৰ উপনৈ বিলাক নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰিব লগীয়া হলে তাতো যদি Betterment Tax বহুৱাই দুখীয়া বাইজৰ ওপৰত কৰব হেচা দিয়ে তেন্তে ই তেওঁলোকৰ এটা ডাঙৰ আৰ্থিক সমস্যা

হৈ পাবিব। আজি যেমিবা আমাৰ ডিব্ৰুগড়বাসী বাইজৰ কিছু অংশ ঘৰতাপন মানুহ
বুলি গণ্য কৰি এটা বাৰতা কৰিছে; কিন্তু নাজুৰী বা পলাশবাৰীত যেনেকৈ গৰা
খহাইছে, তাতো নিয়ন্ত্ৰণ কৰিলে সেই দুখীয়া বাইজে কৰৰ বেজা যেন কৰিব পাৰিবনে ?

গতিকে ডিব্ৰুগড় বাইজক এই কৰৰ হেচাব পৰা বেচাই দিবলৈ অসম চৰকাৰে
ভাৰত চৰকাৰৰ ওপৰত হেচা দিব নালাগে। তাতো যদি ভাৰত চৰকাৰ বাস্তি নহয়
তেন্তে তাকবীয়াটক এটা কৰ বাইজৰ ওপৰত নজৰাৰ লগে যাতে দুখীয়া বাইজে সেই
কৰ দিবলৈ সন্মত হয়। নাকী অংশ অসম চৰকাৰে দিব নাগে।

সেই কাৰণে নই বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াক অনুৰোধ জনাইছো যেন তেখেতে এই
প্ৰস্তাৱটো উঠাই লয়।

Shri JOGA KANTA BARUA (Jaipur): Mr. Deputy
Speaker, Sir, there was erosion in Dibrugarh Town. People
in panic agreed to pay Rs. 50 lakhs as betterment tax for the
estimated cost of Rs.1 crore. A revetment was constructed.
But it was washed away and a big part of the town went
into the Brahmaputra.

Dibrugarh people consented to pay Rs.50 lakhs as better-
ment tax for the revetment which they hoped will save Dibru-
garh. But when that revetment was washed away and a good
part of the town which will be worth at least Rs.50 lakhs if not
more, then the agreement ends here.

Then our magnanimous Prime Minister came forward to
fight the Brahmaputra. No agreement was made with the
people. A new protection work was constructed and a dyke
also. The whole operation costs Rs.2.33 lakhs.

Then the Centre demanded Rs.2.33 lakhs minus Rs.50
lakhs i.e. Rs.1.83 lakhs from our State Government and advised
our State Government to realise this amount from Dibrugarh
by a betterment tax. Our Government had no way out
but to accept this advice. A legislation was brought
for this betterment tax at least to satisfy the Centre. At
the same time our Government realised that remaining
portion of Dibrugarh cannot pay this huge amount and why
the remaining part of Dibrugarh alone should pay this amount.
Had not the Brahmaputra been obstructed at this point,
it would have washed away not only Dibrugarh with the Assam
Medical College worth Rs.1 crore but the whole of Assam
would have been threatened. Had we not fought the Brahma-
putra in Dibrugarh, where had we the confidence to fight the

Brahmaputra at all. So the protection work is an all Assam question, not of Dibrugarh alone. So our Government went on persuading the Centre to give up the demand for Rs. 1·83 lakhs. And as a result the Centre consented at half of Rs.2·33 lakhs *i. e.*, Rs.1·16½ lakhs up till now.

Our Government are still pursuing the matter and waiting for an opportune moment. Through their effort, the Second Finance Commission has granted an additional amount of Rs. 4·4 crores. Can we not reasonably hope that they will be successful? Even if they fail in that I hope they will surely pay the whole or a greater part of it considering that it is an all Assam case and not of Dibrugarh alone, and on the consideration that Dibrugarh cannot pay such an amount.

Taking advantage of this strategic position the Opposition Party made capital out of it. And this Resolution is a part of the same propaganda. By this Resolution the Opposition party tries to show that our Government have done nothing in the matter but his Resolution alone will save Dibrugarh.

I would ask who has constructed this protection work and saved Dibrugarh—it is the Congress Government alone. This Government is fighting to remit this tax. And if anybody be successful in remitting this tax it will be this Congress Government and Congress Government alone and nobody else. So this Resolution is quite useless. It is only a trick to play on the imagination of the people. So I oppose it.

Shri MOHANANDA BORA (North Lakhimpur):
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak a few words on the Resolution moved by my hon. Friend, Shri Nilmoney Borthakur. I also come from the same district of Lakhimpur. The question of Dibrugarh revetment is not a question of Dibrugarh alone, but it is practically a question of Assam. So far I know, all other hon. Members from Dibrugarh, under the leadership of Shrimati Padma Kumari Gohain, the President of the Dibrugarh District Congress Committee, are moving in this matter from a very long time. Now the matter is in the process of correspondence, so far I could learn, between the Government and the Centre. Moreover, this question regarding revetment and embankment is not a question of Dibrugarh town or Lakhimpur district alone, but it is a question of the whole State. So far as I know, in the whole of our State many embankments are constructed from loans taken from the Central Government and so the question of taxation is not

alone of Dibrugarh. It is a question of all other places also. In my North Lakhimpur subdivision, I know, before the general election a notice was served to the people who were benefited by the embankments constructed from the loan and grants to pay a betterment tax or fee. But that was subsequently stayed for the time being. So far as I know, for the town protection, for the whole State there were 5 schemes including the Dibrugarh town, and for the rural areas also several schemes of the same nature were taken and the expenditure for them being met exclusively from the loan and grant from the Central Government, but ultimately it was decided that the people who were going to be benefited by those projects should have to pay some amount. We are moving the Government on this account.

Sir, I beg to state in this regard that in the budget speech our Minister for Embankment expressed a feeling that the Lakhimpur District was getting the highest allotment for embankments. I may bring to the notice of the Minister that it is the Lakhimpur District which was completely devastated by earthquake and the subsequent floods of all the local rivers. So, Sir, it is natural that the State Government should come to the rescue of this District—which was devastated by the great earthquake and the subsequent high floods. For this reason, Sir, our Government should not feel that the Lakhimpur District is getting the biggest share.....

M. MOINUL HAQUE CHOUDHURY (Minister, Flood Control): Sir, my Friend completely misunderstood me on this point. I was justified in saying that the money was distributed on district basis and I pointed out that the Lakhimpur District had got the highest amount according to the necessity. I am at one with my Friend that the money should be distributed according to necessity.

Shri MOHANANDA BORA (North Lakhimpur): I thank the Minister for this and I hope he would like to help our District still more when it suffered a lot and is still suffering owing to that great earthquake and high floods.

Regarding the Resolution moved by my Friend, Shri Bor-thakur, I want to bring to his notice that on this financial matter if we insist on this Resolution to the Central Government then it would not be fair and sound. If we send this Resolution to the Central Government then they might give us some consideration and in the long run every Member of this

Assembly will try to bring in the same nature of Resolution and if we adopt such a procedure then there will be no end of it in asking for financial help from the Central Government. Regarding the distress suffered by the people of our District and the grant of relief to them I am at one with him. But on this financial matter we should not try to approach the Central Government with a Resolution of this kind. On that point I oppose the Resolution. I hope my Friend will be pleased to withdraw this Resolution. If we adopt this Resolution in this House then another Member may also bring in a Resolution of the same nature next time while our subdivision has already received more than one crore from the Central Government for embankment projects and also for the fact that our people cannot pay any tax on this account.

With these words, Sir, I oppose the Resolution on principle and I support the argument that Dibrugarh subdivision be given some more relief.

Shri HIRALAL PATWARI (Panery): माननीय उपाध्यक्ष महोदय !

इस प्रस्ताव पर कुछ बोलने का विचार मेरा नहीं था। किंतु प्रस्ताव पर अपना विचार प्रकट करते हुए हमारे कुछ माननीय सदस्य इस तरह की बातें बोल रहे हैं कि इस पर न बोलना मैं अनुचित समझता हूँ। इसलिये मैं भी सोच रहा हूँ कि मुझे सदन के सामने अपना विचार प्रकट करना चाहिये। सदन की सेवा में जो प्रस्ताव रखा है उसके जरिये केन्द्रीय सरकार से यह अनुरोध किया जा रहा है कि डिब्रुगढ़ शहर को ब्रह्मपुत्र नदी के कटान में जो खर्च हुआ है वह केन्द्रीय सरकार ही वहन करें। यह एक बड़ा ही महत्वपूर्ण तथा आवश्यकीय प्रस्ताव है। किंतु हमें आश्चर्य हो रहा है कि हमारे कुछ सदस्य इस प्रस्ताव की विरोधिता कर रहे हैं और साथ ही आपत्ति कर रहे हैं यह प्रस्ताव सदन में पेश नहीं करना चाहिये। मैं नहीं समझता हूँ कि इसमें आपत्ति करने का क्या कारण है ?

Shrimati LILY SEN GUPTA (Lahowal): किसने आपत्ति की है ?

Shri HIRALAL PATWARI : जनता के हित के उद्देश्य से ही इस प्रस्ताव को लाया गया है। इस से तो जनता को टैक्स के बोझ से उद्धार करने का उपाय अवलम्बन किया जा रहा है। आपको मालूम है कि इस सदन के एक कानून के जरिये टैक्स लगाया गया है। यह कानून है *Betterman Tax Act* इस सदन में ही यह Act पास हुआ है। किंतु हमें यह देखना है कि हमारी जनता में टैक्स देनेका साधर्म्य कितना है। और यह हमने देखा है कि हमारी जनता किसी किसम की टैक्स देने में असमर्थ है। हमारी माननीय सदस्या श्रीमती लीली सेनगुप्ता ने साफ़ जवाब में कहा है कि डिब्रुगढ़ की जनता यह टैक्स देने में बिल्कुल असमर्थ है। इसलिये यह प्रस्ताव हमारे डिब्रुगढ़ के प्रतिनिधि श्रीनीलमणि बरठाकुरजीने यह प्रस्ताव सदन में रखा है। इस प्रस्ताव के जरिये केन्द्रीय सरकार से यह अनुरोध किया जा रहा है कि डिब्रुगढ़ की रक्षा (*Protection of Dibrugarh town*) का सारा खर्च केन्द्रीय सरकार ही वहन करें।

इसमें हमें क्या आपत्ति होनी चाहिये? सरकार की जनता की सहायता करनी चाहिये। हमें भारत सरकार से यह मांग करनी चाहिये कि वे डिब्रुगढ़ की जनता की सहायता करें। और इस Protection Work में जितना खर्च हुआ है, उसे केन्द्रीय सरकार ही वहन करें! हमें बड़ा आश्चर्य ही रहा है कि ऐसे एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रस्ताव पर भी कुछ सदस्य आपत्ति कर रहे हैं।

श्रीमती सेतगुप्ता ने कहा है कि ब्रह्मपुत्र नदी के कटान से डिब्रुगढ़ शहर को बचाने का काम हो रहा था, तब १२ हजार श्रमिकों ने अपना श्रमदान किया था। इस श्रम का भी तो मूल्य है। ये सब facts और figures देखकर यह प्रस्ताव सदन की सेवा में उपस्थित किया गया है। यह श्रम नहीं दिया जाता तो और बहुत से रूपया खर्च होते। इन सभी बातों को दिखाने हुए हमने केन्द्रीय सरकार के पास जनता की मांग पेश कर रहे हैं। हमें आशा है कि सरकार इस प्रस्ताव को ग्रहण करेगी। इससे जनता का विशेष उपकार होनेवाला है। इससे जनता का लाभ होगा। इसलिये इस प्रस्ताव के लिये किसी को कोई आपत्ति नहीं होनी चाहिये।

कुछ सदस्य इसमें पार्टी का सवाल उठा रहे हैं। उनका म्याल है कि नाम कमाने के लिये ही विरोधी दल के सदस्य यह प्रस्ताव पेश कर रहे हैं। इसमें पार्टी का सवाल नहीं उठाना चाहिये। कांग्रेस पार्टी के सदस्य सोच रहे हैं कि हमलोग नाम कमाने की कोशिश कर रहे हैं। यह बात किसी के दिल में उठनी नहीं चाहिये। कांग्रेस ने अच्छा नाम किया है और इसीलिये जनता ने कांग्रेस के हाथों में देश के शासन का भार सौंपा है। अगर कांग्रेस अब बुरा काम करे तो इन ५ सालों के अन्दर ही कांग्रेस को इससे हाथ धोना पड़ेगा। अगर कांग्रेस जनता की सेवा करने में असमर्थ हो, वह जनता का कल्याण न कर सके तो जनता कांग्रेस पर विश्वास छोड़ देगी और इसी तरह विरोधी पार्टी अच्छा काम करें तो जनता की आस्था लाभ कर सकेगी। जनता का हित ही हमारे समाज, देश और सारे राष्ट्र का हित है। गणतान्त्रिक देश में सभी पार्टियों का महत्व है। अगर देश में एक ही पार्टी हो तो उसकी गलतियों को दिखानेवाला कोई न रहेगा। सरकार की बुराइयों की समालोचना करना, और सरकार को सही रास्ते पर चलने का काम विरोधी पार्टी किया करनी है। और इसीलिये विरोधी पार्टी का महत्व भी है। ऐसा नहीं होना चाहिये कि विरोधी पार्टी कोई अच्छा काम करें या कोई अच्छा प्रस्ताव लावे तो उसकी विरोधीता करें। ऐसी महत्वपूर्ण बातों में हमें पार्टीवाजी का सवाल नहीं उठाना चाहिये।

अभी केन्द्रीय सरकार ने राजस्थान में ४२४ मील लम्बा एक नहर खोदने की योजना बनाई है। उससे राजस्थान की तमाम जनता का लाभ होगा। अब हमें भी केन्द्रीय सरकार के पास अपनी मांग पेश करनी चाहिये और उन्हें convince करना चाहिये कि हमारी जनता इस टेक्स का बोझ उठाने में असमर्थ है। इस लिये उन्हें ही यह सारा खर्च देना चाहिये। मैं सोचता हूँ कि किसी को इसके लिये आपत्ति नहीं होनी चाहिये। सदन के सभी सदस्यों को इस प्रस्ताव का हार्दिक समर्थन करना चाहिये।

***Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS (Karimganj-North):**

Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, I should like to make a few observations regarding the Resolution which has been moved by my Friend Mr. Borthakur. I cannot understand why there should be a question of this party or that party. It is not a question of Congress *vis a vis* the Opposition, but it is a question of contract. This Dibrugarh protection scheme is not a new thing to this House. Some years ago this question was brought before this House and we also discussed it in our budget discussions. The scheme that was forwarded to the Government of India at that time envisaged that so much of the cost would be borne by the Centre and so much by the State and the State in their part would realise the money by levy of a betterment tax from the person who would be benefited by this scheme. We discussed this scheme in this House when I was in the Opposition also, and we all agreed to this scheme. So, this was in the nature of a contract. Now after completion of this work I do not know how any gentleman can come forward to waive or sever that contract. If I remember aright, when the scheme was adopted we heard that many important and rich persons, who would derive benefit, were very eager that Government should incur a heavy expenditure; they were very eager to save their property even by payment of some betterment tax. That was the argument placed before the House from all sides, particularly from some representatives of Dibrugarh. Now, after this work has been completed, I cannot understand why there should be a demand for wholesale remission. If there be any particular case of any poor man who cannot pay betterment tax, his case can be considered in an isolated manner. But why should there be a wholesale reduction or remission of taxes?

Then, Sir, we have to consider another point in this connection. We know, Sir, that both in the rural and urban areas, where flood protection and erosion-protection schemes were undertaken by the Embankment and Drainage Department, Government did not give any legitimate compensation to the persons whose lands have been acquired for this purpose. In some cases, I know that for a bigha of land which would normally fetch a price of rupees four to five thousand Government paid only Rs.2 or Rs.3 thousand, one-twentieth or one-thirtieth part of the land revenue! This law was extended to the whole of Assam, as a result of which the poorer sections of the people living near the river side and whose lands were acquired for flood protection work by the Embankment and Drainage Department were practically robbed of their land. This is one thing. Then, Sir, according to the

scheme of the Government bunds were not constructed on the edge of the river, but 500 or 600 yards away and in some places even 3 or 4 furlongs away, and as such the persons living on the river side were left inside the bund to face flood and erosion. This means they had to suffer in two ways. They were practically robbed of their land and were also left at the mercy of the river. Now, Sir, if we compare their lot with the people of Dibrugarh, we find that in Dibrugarh if half of the property was gone the other half was saved. But in the case of the former their whole property was gone and they were left to be inundated by flood. So, Sir, in a matter like this we have to take a decision for the State as a whole and no special emphasis should be given to any particular area. The Minister rightly said that this money was not distributed on area or population basis. If that were so, when two crores of rupees have been spent for Dibrugarh, I could ask why not spend another crore for Cachar or my Friend, Mr. Goswami, could say "why not spend two crores for Gauhati?" Government took the decision according to necessity with regard to allotment of funds. We do not grudge that two crores have been spent for the protection of the area which was eroded by the Brahmaputra, but in granting any remission we should also consider the sad plight of other people whose property was taken away and who were left to the mercy of the river. This is my submission, Sir.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I had no intention to take part in the discussions on this Resolution. I thought it was a very innocuous Resolution and the House would accept it without any opposition. But now I find that we are divided in this House and, therefore, it has become imperative on my part to express my opinion on the Resolution.

Various extraneous matter have been brought in this connection and I do not think, it was necessary to bring them. As for instance my lady Friend, Shrimati Lily Sengupta, said that she moved a similar Resolution once before or she raised this matter before in this House. Well, there is nothing to be proud in this. If somebody did so it is well and good and if somebody now moves in the same direction there should be no objection, if it is in line with her line of action already taken.

My Friend, Shri Joga Kanta Boruah, taking advantage of the position of the Opposition expressed some remarks which was not suitable. The hon. Members are all sober people and should not indulge in cheap remarks. He could pass such a remark because this Resolution came from a Member of the Opposition. Sir, the Chief Minister has in his speech asked for the co-operation of all sections of the House and.....

***Speech not corrected.**

***Shri JOGA KANTA BARUA (Jaipur) :** On a point of personal explanation, Sir, I did not say anything bad. What I said was that as Government had already taken measures to reduce the miseries of the people, the Resolution is not necessary.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI(Rampur) :** I was really astonished to find that a party spirit politics have introduced in such a resolution, which was innocuous. My erstwhile colleague, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, has given a legalistic argument that we are bound by contract between the Central Government and State Government.

***Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS (Karianganj-North) :** And we are to depend on the decision of the House.

***Shri HARESWR GOSWAMI :** And it is in this decision of the House that my Friend, Mr. Das, while he was a Member of the Opposition opposed that piece of legislation.

***Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS :** The scheme was accepted by the House.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI :** But the fact remains that Shri RanendraMohan Das opposed this Bill as a Member of the Opposition. The records are there and it can be seen. For the last 6 years I have been sitting in this House and I personally know that when the Betterment Levy Bill came to the House the Opposition as such opposed it. Whatever might be the decision of the House, we are entitled to review a decision if situation warrants and the contract between the Central Government and the State Government are not such that for enforcement of the same the Central Government will go to court. It is only for understanding that such an agreement was entered upon and therefore legalistic implication should not have been brought in here in this matter.

Sir, we find that after taking into consideration all fact it is necessary for the Central Government to be moved for taking the entire burden of this project and in doing so there should be no harm. We are not bound by every letter of the contract. After all we are entitled to discuss the matter anew and move the Central Government to take the whole burden of expenditure. After all what the Resolution says ? It says

:"This Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move the Government of India to bear the entire expenses incurred by them in taking measures for the protection of the Dibrugarh town, thereby absolving the Government of Assam of their liability to pay fifty per cent of the said expenses."

Now, Sir, it has been also argued that some people are still suffering for such erosion, etc. Whereas the people of Dibrugarh have been relieved from the suffering by the construction of the revetment. We never said that revetments should not be constructed. Let revetments be constructed, if possible. Here, it is an achievement, it is technological achievement also because at one time we thought that Dibrugarh was gone and we never expected that Dibrugarh would be saved and when the Prime Minister was speaking standing on the bank of the river Brahmaputra near the spot of the blown off revetment he appealed to all and said that this beautiful town of Dibrugarh should be saved by all means. At that time, we thought that he was talking like King Canute. Fortunately, we have saved this town and it is a major achievement for which we are all proud. In this matter about a sum of rupees three crores was spent and till the revetment was built, many houses and valuable lands were eroded and many people lost their property. We are not demanding compensation for them for all the property eroded; if we would have done that then Shri Ranendra Mohan Das would have been justified in saying that people who have been benefited by the construction of the revetment should pay. We are of course concerned with the people of Palasbari, Nahorkotia and other places where hundreds of acres of land were eroded by turbulent rivers. We would not mind providing them with revetment if possible, but here in this case we find that the town of Dibrugarh has been saved. Now the next question that arises is: should people bear the burden of this tax? If I have been able to go through the history of the betterment tax, I have been it is doubtful whether betterment tax can be levied in this case also. Betterment tax can be levied on those people who are benefited by some irrigation scheme, canal system and some electric dam by which you can improve your cultivation, reclaim waste land, can make unfertile land fertile, can produce more than you were producing, etc.

Sir, in the history of betterment tax, for the time, we have seen that a town which is saved from erosion by construction of revetment the people living in that town should be forced to pay a betterment tax. Is it justified when most of these people living there have lost property worth thousands of rupees? There is already the burden of high incidence of taxation, high cost of living, high cost of essential commodities and besides all these if this levy is imposed the people of Dibrugarh will have immense miseries. Sir, what we want by this Resolution? We want that the Central Government should be moved for absolving the Government of Assam of the

50 per cent of the expenditure for the revetment. We have a right to move the Central Government for this. After all the Central Government is like the parent or guardian of the State Government and the State Government has got every right to move the parent or guardian for the favour. If they give this it is all right, but if they do not give we will have to find out ways how this can be levied on the people without harassing them. If the Resolution is accepted, the Central Government will be moved. We should not have any objection to move the Central Government and the Central Government should not have the objection to yield to this Resolution.

Shrimati PADMA KUMARI GOHAIN (Moran):

মাননীয় উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়, ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰ গৰা খহনীয়াৰ পৰা বক্ষা কৰাৰ বাবে যি চৰকাৰী টকা ব্যয় হৈছিল সেই সম্বন্ধে আজি মোৰ বন্ধু শ্ৰীযুত নীলমণি বৰঠাকুৰে এটা প্ৰস্তাৱ দাঙি ধৰিছে। সেই প্ৰস্তাৱত কোৱা হৈছে যে ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰ বক্ষা কৰিবৰ বাবে যি টকা খৰচ কৰা হৈছিল সেই টকা যি অংশ ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া ৰাইজে দিব লাগে তাক দিবলৈ তেওঁলোক অসমৰ্থ, সেই কাৰণে অসম চৰকাৰে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ কৰিব লাগে যাতে গোটেই টকা কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰেহে দিব লাগে। এই প্ৰস্তাৱটো মই বিৰোধিতা কৰো। কিন্তু মই ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ সদস্য শ্ৰীযুত বৰঠাকুৰৰ প্ৰস্তাৱৰ যিটো উদ্দেশ্য সেই উদ্দেশ্যটো সমৰ্থন কৰিছো। মই আজি নহয়—আজি বহু দিনৰ আগৰে পৰা চৰকাৰক সদায় কৈ আহিছো যে ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে এই অতিবিভক্ত কৰ কেতিয়াও দিব নোৱাৰে। অৱশ্যে এসময়ত এই কৰ ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে দিব বুলি স্বীকাৰ কৰিছিল, কাৰণ তেওঁলোকে ধাৰণা কৰিছিল যে এই কামত প্ৰায় এক কোটি টকা খৰচ পৰিব আৰু তাৰ আধা টকা অৰ্থাৎ ৫০ লাখ টকা ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে দিব বুলি প্ৰকাৰান্তৰে স্বীকাৰ কৰি লৈছিল। সেই সময়ত ডিব্ৰুগড় চহৰৰ পৰিধি এতিয়াতকৈ বহুত ডাঙৰ আছিল, আৰু তাত আছিল অসংখ্য চৰকাৰী অফিচ, স্কুল ইত্যাদি। আৰু বহুতো ডাঙৰ মানুহ আৰু ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ ঘৰ। তেতিয়া ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে ভাবিছিল যে ইয়াৰ হেচা বেছিকৈ পৰিব চৰকাৰী অফিচ আৰু ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ অৱস্থাপনা মানুহৰ ওপৰত, দুখীয়া ৰাইজৰ ওপৰত বেচিকৈ নপৰিব, হয়টো ২৫ লাখমান টকাৰ অংশ ৰাইজে ভৰিব লগা হ'ব পাৰে। সেই টকা ৰাইজে দিব পাৰিব বুলি আশা কৰিছিল। কিন্তু প্ৰকৃতিৰ কোপ দৃষ্টিত পৰি চহৰৰ প্ৰায় আধখিনি খহনীয়াই খহাই লৈ গল আৰু লগতে লৈ গল চৰকাৰী অফিচ বোৰ আৰু ডাঙৰ ডাঙৰ মানুহৰ নদীৰ পাৰত থকা ডাঙৰ বিলাসী ঘৰবোৰ। গতিকে এই টকা ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে দিব লাগেনে নেলাগে সেই কথাটো এতিয়া আইন সম্বন্ধীয় কথা হৈ পৰিছে, আৰু ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে যে দিব লাগিব তাৰো কে নো বাধ্য বাধ্যকতা নাই। কথাটো এতিয়াও আলোচনা কৰা হৈ আছে। কিন্তু ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ বৰ্ত্তমান নগৰ বাগীয়ে এই টকা দিয়া কোনো প্ৰকাৰেই সম্ভৱপৰ নহয়। টকাৰ পৰিমাণ প্ৰথমতেহে ৫০ লাখ মান হ'ব বুলি অনুমান কৰা হৈছিল। কিন্তু এতিয়া টকাৰ পৰিমাণো প্ৰায় দুগুন হ'ল। এতিয়া আৰু এই যি অতিবিভক্ত টকা ব্যয় হ'ল—তাৰ পৰিমাণ চাই আগৰ দিব লগাত বেছি হ'ল গতিকে সেই টকা দিয়া অসম্ভৱ। আমি চৰকাৰক সদায় কৈ আহিছো যে ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীৰ যি সদস্য তাক একল ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ বুলি নধৰি গোটেই অসমৰে সদস্য বুলি ধৰা উচিত। আসাম মেডিকেল কলেজ গোটেই অসমৰে কলেজ একল ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ নহয়। এই কলেজটো বক্ষা কৰা মানে অসমৰ এটা সম্পত্তি বক্ষা কৰা হৈছে। ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰত চৰকাৰী সদৰ কাৰ্যালয় আছে আৰু তাক বক্ষা কৰা মানে এখন চৰকাৰী সদৰ ঠাই বক্ষা হৈছে। ডিব্ৰুগড় জিলাই আটাইত কৈ বেছি ৰাজহ চৰকাৰক দিয়ে। গতিকে এইটো গোটেই অসমৰে

সমস্যা বুলি ধৰি লবলৈ চৰকাৰক বহু প্ৰকাৰে কৈ আহিছে। আৰু আৰি বাবে বাবে চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ কৰিছে। টকাটো চৰকাৰে দিব লাগে বুলি, আজিও মই সদনত চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ জনাও যেন এইটো সমস্যা অসমৰ সমস্যা বুলি গ্ৰহণ কৰি লয় যেন। শ্ৰীযত বৰঠাকুৰৰ প্ৰস্তাৱত অসম চৰকাৰে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক টকাটো দিবলৈ অনুৰোধ কৰা বুলি কোৱাত মই বিবোধিতা কৰিছো। প্ৰস্তাৱটো গ্ৰহণ কৰিলে সদনত এনে কুৱা প্ৰস্তাৱ গৃহীত কৰাৰ এই সদনৰ উদাহৰণ হৈ থাকিব। সেই কাৰণে মই বৰঠাকুৰৰ এই কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ কৰিবলৈ দাঙি ধৰা প্ৰস্তাৱৰ বিবোধিতা কৰিছো। অসম চৰকাৰক অনুৰোধ কৰো যে, এই টকা অসম চৰকাৰে দি ডিব্ৰুগড়ীয়া ৰাইজক ডিব্ৰুগড়বাসী ৰাইজৰ কৰ দিব নোৱাৰা অৱস্থালৈ টাই কৰৰ পৰা বেছাই দিব। চৰকাৰে পুনৰ বিবেচনা কৰি চাব লাগে।

Shri INDRESWAR KHAUND (Bogdung): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, I rise to speak a few words on this Resolution. It is known to all, Sir, that Dibrugarh town is at last protected. We are grateful to the Central Government and specially to the Prime Minister for their kind assistance in this regard. We are also grateful to others who have shown sympathy with us in this calamity. But Sir, we cannot be happy over the fine legislation that has been enacted recently for imposing tax or laying fees on the people of Dibrugarh in order to realise half of the expenditure that was incurred in protecting the town of Dibrugarh. Of course it is a fact that there are some rich people at Dibrugarh but all the people are not rich. There are people who are very very poor indeed, so much so that I think they will have to sell out their whole property and belongings in order to pay this tax. So, Sir, we believe that this piece of legislation is not welcomed by our people and we are not happy over it.

Not only that the people of Dibrugarh are unhappy over this piece of legislation but also we believe the people of entire Assam are not happy. But at the same time we are also not happy over the Resolution that has been brought before the House to-day. Because Dibrugarh is a part and parcel of Assam, if Dibrugarh had been lost to the erosion of the Brahmaputra, it would have been a loss to the entire State to that extent. Protection of Dibrugarh town does not mean protection of the people of Dibrugarh alone. Because the protection was undertaken for the safety of the life and property of many others, apart from those of the people of Dibrugarh. It means the protection of many tea gardens, many valuable properties belonging to the Centre as well as to the State Government. These tea gardens are common property of us

all. We are all benefited by these tea gardens. We are all benefited by the Dibrugarh Medical College. Protection of this valuable property, as has been rightly referred to by some other previous speakers, will continue to benefit the whole State. There are also other valuable landed and other properties belonging to Central and State Government which have been protected as a result of construction of Brahmaputra revetment. The people of the entire State are common benificerics of these valuable properties which have been saved by the revetment. I therefore do not see why the State Government should not take some measures for giving relief to the people of Dibrugarh. So I think instead of going to the Central Government over and over again, we should urge upon the State Government to think over the matter and give some relief to the people of Dibrugarh. Dibrugarh Subdivision has been contributing a major share towards the revenue of the State. Prosperity of Dibrugarh is the prosperity of the whole State. So, we do not think that only Dibrugarh people should pay for the protection of the Dibrugarh town. I am, therefore, of the opinion that our State Government has also got some responsibility in this matter. If we accept the principle now that we should approach the Central Government for any measure of help to be given to the people of Dibrugarh, then the people of Dibrugarh will be led to believe that the State Government wants to shirk its responsibility towards the people of Dibrugarh, the State Government does not think that Dibrugarh is a part of Assam and so on. So, Sir, let not the Dibrugarh people be led to believe that it is only the Central Government and not the State Government that alone come to the rescue of the people at their distress. As a matter of fact, the Dibrugarh people cannot pay, are not in a position to pay the fees although Dibrugarh is admittedly inhabited by many rich people. But there are many poor people also whose number far exceeds the number of the rich. There are people who are not in a position to make their both ends meet. These people cannot even manage to pay their usual land revenue let alone such a heavy imposition as the betterment fees. I am therefore at one with the Mover of the Resolution that this tax be exempted. But for that we do not want at the moment to approach the Central Government with it over and over again. So we urge upon the State Government to consider the matter and give some relief to the distressed people of Dibrugarh.

Thank you, Sir.

Shri MOHIKANTA DAS (Barchalla): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Lady Member of this House from Dibrugarh, Mrs. Gohain, has given a very good suggestion. Sir, there is no difference of opinion about the fact that the burden of the betterment tax being levied on the people of Dibrugarh is becoming very heavy. There is no dispute about that and I am sure, all the Members of the House share this feeling equally. This Resolution has two parts. One part is about relief, and this is the main point of the Resolution of Shri Barthakur. Now wherefrom the relief is to come? Mr. Barthakur has suggested that the relief should come from the Central Government. Now the hon. lady Member has suggested that it will create a precedent and invoke similar other applications from different parts of the State such as Palasbari and Bhoroli where protection works have been done at Bhoroli, we have spent a good deal of money for revetment there. For Palasbari also we have spent a lot of money. There may be many other such places. Now for all these things, if we move the Central Government, in my opinion, Sir, it will not be a happy thing for this August House. What is wanted is relief to the hard-pressed people of Dibrugarh. Now, Sir, in such matters every action of the Government is governed by certain rules, certain procedures which they have got to follow. We may have certain Act or a certain rule for a certain purpose, but it may not be applied in respect of certain areas because of certain circumstances which do not justify the application of these rules or provisions. Therefore it has been suggested that in view of the hardship caused by the erosion of the Brahmaputra to the people of Dibrugarh, they should be given some relief. Our speeches may be construed by some interested party, that we are opposing any relief to be given to the people of Dibrugarh. That is, I am sure, never the intention of any of the Members of this House. Not only the Hon. Members from Dibrugarh, but every one of us in this House, is anxious to see that the brothers and sisters of Dibrugarh who are hard-pressed may get some relief. In this respect we are all agreed with Shri Barthakur. The next thing is how to get this relief? Therefore it has been suggested by the hon. Members from this side of the House that the case of hardship of the Dibrugarh people should be placed before the State Government who have given due and very sympathetic consideration to similar other petitions from other parts of the State. Therefore, I submit, Sir, the best procedure will be to approach our State Government with the request to consider the difficulty of the Dibrugarh people so that their distress may

be relieved. Mrs. Gohain said that some agreement was entered into at the time when the people of Dibrugarh were rather face to face with the ravages of the mighty Brahmaputra. Their hearth and homes were about to be eroded away. Therefore, they were compelled to enter into an agreement. But since then many houses have been washed away and the position became worse. Therefore all of us are very much sympathetic towards those people in distress at Dibrugarh. But I entirely differ from those Friends who call it a matter of party politics or something like that. Any way, I do not give any importance to it. I would only request my Friend, Shri Barthakur, to ponder and think whether it would be advisable to bring such a matter before the House for the purpose of moving the Government of India for sanctioning this sum.

Similar things may come to this House, and it will be difficult to accede to such Resolutions at every time. In different parts of the State we have many revetments or things like that and Government will have to give the the same consideration to them. Sir, I fully agree with my Friend, Shri. Borthakur that some relief should be given to the people of Dibrugarh in this matter. I agree with the suggestion of Mrs. Gohain that instead of moving the Government of India we may request the Government of Assam to consider the hardship of the Dibrugarh people and give the relief as desired. Our main intention is to give relief to the Dibrugarh people. I hope my Friend, Sir Borthakur, will accept our suggestions and withdraw his Resolution after hearing the view points of the Minister-in charge. It will create a precedent if we make a special case for Dibrugarh people alone. The best thing is to ask our State Government to consider the matter and give some relief. In this matter we all—Congress and non-Congress—are unequivocal and we are anxious that the people of Dibrugarh get some relief. In view of what I have stated, I hope my Friend, Sir Borthakur, will see his way to withdraw his Resolution.

Shri SARAT CHANDRA GOSWAMI (Kamalpur) :
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in connection with this Resolution as tabled by my Friend, Sri Borthakur, I want to make a few observations. It has been said by some hon. Members here that the protection of Dibrugarh is not only a problem for the protection of the people of Dibrugarh alone being Dibrugarh a part of our State, it is the duty of the people of the whole State to protect it. Again it has been said that when there was a large scale erosion and the people were extremely

panicky, so a suggestion might have been made by the people of Dibrugarh to the Government to come forward and expend a huge sum of money 50 per cent of the entire cost of which would be borne by the people of Dibrugarh. As a matter of fact every one will say so whenever there is such a panicky situation. Then again it has been said that there was a contract between the Government of India and the State Government and that we are bound by that contract. Here I am not going to discuss about the legal side of the question. But I think that we must take the problem as an all-Assam problem. If we take a view of the whole of Assam where there are similar cases, then it is a difficult problem. Had it been only for Dibrugarh alone, and the 50 per cent of the amount would have been only Rs. 1 crore 77 lakhs, it would have been an easy matter for the State Government to bear the expenses. But we are to face the problem on the basis of all-Assam background. As a matter of fact there are many other projects carried out with loan taken from Central Government which comes to about 200 crores or so as it is said. So what will happen to the State Government if they are to bear the entire burden? Is our State capable of bearing the burden? That is also an important aspect of the question. I am not going to say that we must not give any relief to the people of Dibrugarh. As a matter of fact the Act—The Betterment Act—was passed in this House which provided that considering the condition of the people of Dibrugarh who had been affected by this erosion, Government of India came forward to pay 50 per cent of the total cost of the revetment. If it was a contract, it was a gentlemen's agreement as we may call it. It cannot be said that it has been imposed on the people of Dibrugarh. It has been further said that money, houses and properties have been washed away by the river Brahmaputra and yet the people are to pay the tax. Well, if the holdings have been washed away by the river, the holdings cannot be taken out of the river bed and nobody is going to be taxed for that. It will be levied according to the terms of the Act.

Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh) : That Act provides that taxes will be imposed even on the people who are not benefited.

Shri SARAT CHANDRA GOSWAMI (Kamalgur) : I understand it is only on the holdings and not on the persons.) The tax will be levied in respect of buildings that have been protected by means of the revetment.

Therefore I request my Friend, Shri Borthakur, to withdraw his Resolution and at the same time I request the Government of Assam to re-examine if the rate of taxes as has been imposed can be further broken up according to the paying capacity of the people of Dibrugarh and the benefits they have derived therefrom.

With these words, Sir, I request my Friend, Shri Borthakur, to withdraw his Resolution.

Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH (Teok) : উপাধ্যক্ষ মহোদয়' আমাৰ বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই অনা প্ৰস্তাৱৰ আলোচনাত যোগ দিবৰ মোৰ ইচ্ছা নাছিল, কিন্তু আলোচনা এনেভাবে চলিছে যে তাত দুআঘাৰ কথা নকৈ নোৱাৰোঁ। প্ৰস্তাৱটো আৰু প্ৰস্তাৱৰ উদ্দেশ্য যে অতি সৎ তাত কোনো সন্দেহ নাই। ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰত ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ গৰা খহনীয়াই যি অৱস্থাৰ সৃষ্টি কৰিছিল সেই অৱস্থাত গোটেই অসমৰ মানুহেই ব্যাকুল হৈ উঠিছিল। ডিব্ৰুগড় এনেকুৱা এখন টাউন যিখন টাউনৰ লগত অসমৰ অধিকাংশ মানুহৰে অলপ নহয় অলপ সম্বন্ধ আছে। সেইফালৰ পৰাও ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ গৰা খহনীয়াত অসমবাসী বৰ ব্যাকুল হৈ উঠিছিল আৰু ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ বন্ধাৰ কাৰণে সকলোৱেই দিশুবৰ ওচৰত প্ৰাৰ্থনা কৰিছিল।

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : আমি আকৌ দুই বজাত বহিম।

Adjournment

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

After unch

Shri HARINARAYAN BARUAH (Teok) : যি হওক দিশুবৰ অনুগ্ৰহত ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰ বন্ধা পৰিল। ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ লগত অসমৰ অধিকাংশ লোকৰ সম্বন্ধ আছে বুলিয়েই ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ প্ৰতি আমি লক্ষ্য ৰাখিব লাগে এনে নহয়। এই সদনৰ কৰ্তব্য যে দেশৰ যেই কোনো অঞ্চলত বিপৰ্য্যয় ঘটিলে সেই অঞ্চলৰ জনসাধাৰণক সহায় কৰা। আমাৰ ডিব্ৰুগড়ৰ দৰে গোৱালপাৰা, পলাশবাৰী, নগাঁও, কাছাৰ, শিলচৰ ইত্যাদি অন্যান্য অঞ্চলৰ কথাও ভাবিব লাগিব। সেই ফালৰ পৰা চালে বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ প্ৰস্তাৱৰ যিটো উদ্দেশ্য সেই উদ্দেশ্যৰ লগত বিৰোধিতা থকাৰ কোনো কাৰণ থাকিব নোৱাৰে আৰু বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ প্ৰস্তাৱৰ উদ্দেশ্যৰ লগত মোৰ নিজৰ কোনো বিৰোধিতা নাই, কিন্তু আমি ইমান সহজ আৰু সবল কথাৰ লগত ৰাজনীতিৰ কথা টানি অনাৰ কি কাৰণ থাকিব পাৰে বুজিব নোৱাৰোঁ। আমি যদি এনে উদ্দেশ্যক ৰাজনীতিৰ লগত মিহলাই পেলাও তেতিয়া ৰাইজৰ কেতিয়াও আমি কল্যাণ সাধন কৰিব নোৱাৰিম। সেই ফালৰ পৰা আমি ৰাইজৰ অভাৱ অভিযোগ বিলাক দূৰ কৰা ক্ষেত্ৰত কেনেকৈ ৰাজনীতি জড়িত কথা নানি তেওঁলোকৰ কল্যাণ সাধন কৰিব পাৰোঁ সেই মনোভাৱ লোৱাহে উচিত হব। সেই কাৰণে মই এই প্ৰস্তাৱৰ আলোচনা প্ৰসংগত ৰাজনীতিৰ কথাটো বাদ দিব খোজোঁ। কিন্তু ইয়াৰ ভিতৰত এটা কথা আছে সেইটো হৈছে আমাৰ ভিতৰত এটা বুজা পৰাৰ কথা। এই বুজাপৰা কথাটোৰ ভিতৰত যদি ভাবি চোৱা হয় তেনেহলে বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াৰ মনৰ লগত আমাৰ মনৰ সামঞ্জস্য ক'ত সেইটো বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়াই নিজে বিচাৰি উলিয়াই লব পাৰিব। শ্ৰীযুত পাটোৱাৰী ডাঙৰীয়াই কৈছে এই সদনত আমাৰ পক্ষৰ পৰা প্ৰস্তাৱটোৰ বিৰোধিতা কৰা হৈছে। কিন্তু এইটো কথাৰ দ্বাৰা আমাৰ প্ৰতি

অতি অন্যায় বিচার কৰা হ'ব। প্ৰস্তাবটোৰ মূল উদ্দেশ্যৰ লগত আমাৰ কোনো নিবোধিতা নাই। এইটো ভাবিব লগীয়া কথা যে যেতিয়া ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ পৰাঞ্চলীয়াই প্ৰকাণ্ড অটোমটো বগবাই দিছিল, প্ৰকাণ্ড গছ বগবাই দিছিল, মানুহ ভৱত অস্তমান হৈছিল, যেতিয়া কিণু ব্যবস্থাৰ প্ৰয়োজন হৈছিল, তেতিয়া এই সদনত এখন বিল উপস্থাপিত হৈছিল আৰু সেই বিলৰ গুৰুত্ব উপলব্ধি কৰি সদনে পাচো কৰিলে আৰু যি আইনো হ'লগৈ। আজি সেই আইনখন সদনৰ সদস্য সকলক উঠাই ল'বৰ কাৰণে বা সংশোধিত কৰিবৰ কাৰণে প্ৰস্তাব আনিব পাৰিলে হয় কিন্তু তেনে কোনো প্ৰস্তাব বা সেই ধৰণৰ দাবী আজি অহা নাই। আজি যি প্ৰস্তাব আনিছে সেই প্ৰস্তাবৰ লগত বহুত কথা জড়িত আছে, যিবোৰৰ বিষয়ে আমি ভাবিব লগীয়াত পৰিছো। সেইটো হৈছে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰে ডিব্ৰুগড় নগৰ বন্ধাৰ কাৰণে যিটো ব্যবস্থা লৈছিল বা যিটো ধাৰ অসম চৰকাৰক দিছিল সেই ধাৰ টো পৰিশোধ কৰাৰ যিটো ব্যবস্থা আছে, সেই ব্যবস্থা থকা স্বত্বেও এতিয়া যদি আমাৰ চৰকাৰে সেই ধাৰ খিনি বেহাই দিবৰ কাৰণে কৰ তেতিয়া কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰে হয়তো ভাবিব পাৰে যে নগৰ প্ৰতিবন্ধাৰ কাৰণে অসম চৰকাৰে টকা ধাৰে বুজিছিল, আৰু সেই টকাবে নগৰ বন্ধাও কৰিলে, কিন্তু এতিয়া আকৌ সেই ঠাইতে ধাৰ বেহাই দিব লাগে, গতিকে কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰৰ মনত এনে ভাব হ'ব যে ধাৰ লোৱাৰ সময়ত পৰিশোধৰ ব্যবস্থাত সন্মতি দি অসম চৰকাৰে ধাৰ লয় আৰু পৰিশোধ কৰাৰ সময়ত বেহায় বিচাৰে। কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰে এনে মনোভাব ললে ৰাজ্যৰ ক্ষতি হ'ব। এনেকুৱা এটা যদি মনোভাব কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰে ল'ব লাগে তেনেহলে আমাৰ বাইজবক্ষতি হ'ব।

(দিন দিন বুলি পাচত দিব নোৱাৰাত কৈ মোলাৱাই ভাল voice).

সেই নিমিত্তে মই ক'ব খুজিছো যে এই কালৰ পৰাও এই কথা চিন্তা কৰি চাব লাগিব যে ডিব্ৰুগড় বাইজৰ ওপৰত যি ক'বৰ নোজা পৰিব সেই ক'ব ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগী বাইজে দিব পাৰিবনে নোৱাৰে? এই সম্বন্ধে শ্ৰীযুক্ত গৌৰীশঙ্কৰী আইদেৱে এটা ভাল কথা কৈ গৈছে।

যি সকল ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীয়ে ঋণ পৰিশোধ কৰিবলৈ গাত লৈছিল তাৰ ভিতৰত বহুত ধনী ধনী ব্যবসায়ী লোক আছিল আৰু তেওঁবিলাকৰ ঘৰ বাৰী ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ পাৰত আছিল আৰু এতিয়া সেইবিলাক নদীৰ বুকুত জাহ গাল।

(সময়ৰ সংকেট ধৰনি)

উপাধক্ষ মহোদয়, মই চমুৱাই আনিছো। এনে অৱস্থাত যদি এতিয়া সেই 'টেক্স দিয়াৰ পৰা ডিব্ৰুগড় বাগীক বেহাই দিয়া হয় তেনেহলে, এই টকা কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক অসম চৰকাৰে দিব লাগিব। এতিয়া কথা হৈছে, অসম চৰকাৰে তেনেকৰিলে সেই টকা দিবনে নিদিয়? এনে অৱস্থাত আনহাতে অসম চৰকাৰে এইধাৰ কেন্দ্ৰীয় চৰকাৰক পৰিশোধ কৰাত যুক্তি যুক্ততা আছে কাৰণ, অসম চৰকাৰৰ যি বিলাক সম্পত্তি যেনে 'ক'ৰ্ট বিল্ডিং', জেইল, মেডিকেল কলেজ, পুৰণা মেডিকেল স্কুলৰ ঘৰ—ইয়াত চৰকাৰৰ লাখলাখ টকা সোমাই আছে আৰু এই বিলাক সম্পত্তি ব্ৰহ্মপুত্ৰৰ পাৰতে আছে। জনসাধাৰণৰ ঘৰ বাৰী বন্ধা কৰিবলৈ যাওতে যি ব্যবস্থা চৰকাৰে হাতত লোৱা উচিত—ঠিক তেনে ব্যবস্থাই চৰকাৰী সম্পত্তি বন্ধা কৰিবলৈও হাতত লোৱা উচিত। সেই দৃষ্টি কোণৰ পৰা চালে অসম চৰকাৰে এই ঋণ পৰিশোধ কৰাৰ ব্যৱস্থাটো হাতত লোৱাত একো অযুক্তিকৰ হ'ব নোৱাৰে। এতিয়া কথা হৈছে—যদি আজি চৰকাৰে এই দৃষ্টি ভঙ্গীৰ পৰা প্ৰস্তাবটো মানিও লয়, তেনেহলে

এনে ক্ষেত্ৰত ভবিষ্যতে অন্য বকমৰ অসুবিধাৰ সৃষ্টি হ'ব পাৰে। সেই কাৰণে, ডিব্ৰুগড় বাসীৰ কৰ কাটল দিয়াৰ ক্ষমতা বেতিয়া কমি গৈছে—চৰকাৰে এনে এটা উপায় উদ্ভাৱন কৰিব লাগিব যাৰ দ্বাৰা আমাৰ দেশৰ ভবিষ্যতৰ অনিষ্ট নহয় আৰু বৰ্ত্তমান বাইজ সকলোও যেন কৰ কাটলৰ পৰা মুক্তি পায় আৰু তাৰ লগতে এই সম্বন্ধীয় যি আইন এই পৰিষদে পাচ কৰিছিল তাৰো মৰ্য্যদা থাকে।

(সময়ৰ সঙ্কেট ধবনি)

ইয়াকে কৈ মই শ্ৰীযুক্ত বৰঠাকুৰ ডাঙৰীয়া আৰু তেখেতৰ পুস্তাবৰ সমৰ্থক শ্ৰীযুক্ত গোস্বামী ডাঙৰীয়াক এই বিষয়ে চিন্তাকৰি চাবলৈ অনুৰোধ জনাওঁ।

Shri ABDUL MATLIB MAZUMDAR (Hailakandi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to express my views with regard to this Resolution. I have noticed that the discussion at the beginning was mainly confined to the hon. Members from Dibrugarh, but gradually it has spread far and wide. That is but natural. We must feel for each other ; at least at the time of calamity we must stand together. We therefore cannot allow the hon. Members or for that matter our brethren living there to suffer alone. If we do not act in that way it will be difficult for us to maintain the integrity of our State. I remember when the matter was discussed on the floor of this House at the beginning there was a trend in the discussion of the hon. Members and specially of the Opposition Members that the expenditure which the protection work would involve should be the burden of the whole State and there was no serious opposition to that view at the time. There was one thing at the beginning. The estimate for this protection work was about one crore and the 50 per cent being 50 lakhs of rupees was then thought would not be a very heavy burden on the people of Dibrugarh as it then existed. But conditions and circumstances have since changed a great deal. A large portion of the town that was existing at that time has since been washed away and the position has become quite otherwise. Now we find that the expenditure has gone up to more than 3 crores, and the 50 per cent would be more than one crore. If I remember aright it is 3 crores and about 30 lakhs. So this 50 per cent would go up to more than that, it would be about one crore and 60 lakhs.

There is a feeling everywhere, not only on the side of the Opposition from which the Resolution comes, on the other side also it is felt that this burden would be very heavy on our brethren of Dibrugarh, nay even of the whole district. There is no doubt that Dibrugarh as it exists at present, if they are to bear the taxation of one crore and several lakhs, certainly after this erosion this burden would be heavy for

them—we all feel it. From the trend of discussion on this side it is felt that the approach should not be made in the way in which the Resolution proposes. It is also understood that the Central Government is not willing to budge from the position that it took at the beginning regarding that 50 per cent share of the whole cost. After hearing all the discussion I feel the State Government find it difficult or improper to approach the Central Government with a request to meet the whole burden. There is no other alternative that the burden should be borne by the State, as it appears from the trend of the discussion in the House and when we all are of the opinion that the burden will be too heavy for the people of Dibrugarh to bear. On the other hand, Sir, when the Central Government do not come forward to share 50 per cent, which was left to the people of Dibrugarh to bear, then, as I have said, it should be the burden of the State Government itself. Considering from that point of view I do not find any difficulty for Mr. Borthakur to withdraw his Resolution because his purpose has been served when he finds that the House feels that the burden is too heavy to be borne by the people of Dibrugarh, and so necessarily the burden will fall on the State Government itself. Now it will be the duty of the State Government to find out ways and means to meet the burden either by approaching the Central Government or by some other way. This will be up to them only.

With these words, Sir, I request Mr Borthakur to withdraw his Resolution.

***Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh):** Sir, I am very glad to find that a large number of hon. Members have participated in the discussion on this Resolution. That itself reflects the popular interest on this issue. From the general discussion and argument on this issue there is no two opinions regarding the imposition of the levy on that people of Dibrugarh. There is also no two opinions the people will be very much hard hit if this levy is imposed at all. But if the State Government can give us an assurance that the entire 50 per cent of the expenditure can be borne by the State Government without disturbing or curtailing the nation building programme of our State then I will be glad to withdraw my Resolution. I know that whenever there was the question of taking over all the venture

schools the State Government came with their usual reply that they had no fund. Knowing the financial position of the State how hon. Members like Mr. Bordoloi and Mr. Barua can suggest that the State Government can bear the share or burden in executing the scheme for the protection of the town of Dibrugarh. The other arguments advanced by some of the hon. Members of the House is that State Government be requested to write off the amount. But there is already a contract that 50 per cent of the amount would be borne by the State Government and the other 50 per cent by the Central Government, and that the State Government's share would be collected from the people concerned through the levy of a cess and to that effect proper legislation will be brought about. So, an assurance that there would be no such action in this connection shall have to be entered into. The first phase of the scheme in 1952-55 was quite different. Because after that time, by about 1954, a good part of the town as washed away or swallowed by the river Brahmaputra and therefore the whole situation has been changed now, and the expenditure that was incurred in that small revetment scheme became a wastage. In this connection I would like to refer to the Audit Report of 1953-54—page 3. For Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works we find here that a sum of 50 lakhs was drawn as a supplementary grant and in that year it could not be spent and 74.4 per cent of the money was surrendered. In this report of the Public Accounts Committee we find a reference to that effect. I am reading the relevant portion: "The Secretary, Public Works Department (Flood Control) replied that the Iyengar committee came in August 1952 and recommended a boulder revetment and the Department started collection of boulders. Then Shri Man Singh of the Central Water and Power Commission came in April 1953 and suggested change of the design. The matter was then under correspondence with the Central Water and Power Commission about finalisation of the design and it was only in October 1953 that the design was finalised and naturally, therefore, a big sum amounting to Rs.22 lakhs had to be surrendered. The saving of about Rs.11 lakhs and odd, under "9A.—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment, etc., was due to that". In the Public Accounts Committee a question was raised about the spending of Rs.3,83,394 which became a wastage and the answer was that the money was spent only for collection of materials, and that those materials were utilised for some other works. For the purpose of constructing the revetment the entire amount afterwards became a wastage. Now, if 50 per cent of that money which became a wastage is going to be realised from

the people then it will be very unfair and it will not be a social justice.

Now about making of request to the Central Government, I think it will be very just and proper. We should request the Central Government for this cause, because Assam has been badly neglected both in respect of the First Five-Year Plan and the Second Five-Year Plan. I am quoting certain figures in this respect to show how our State has been treated compared with other State of India:

For the years 1951-56 the ratio of figures are as follows:—

Andhra and Madras	...	..	...	149.8 crores
Bihar	...	...	..	21.0 „
Bombay	...	...	...	156.2 „
Madhya Pradesh	...	...	...	42.5 „
Orissa	...	...	...	18.3 „
Punjab	...	...	...	31.8 „
Uttar Pradesh	...	...	...	105.3 „
West Bengal	...	...	...	74.6 „ and
Assam got	..	...	..	21.0 „

And out of this allotment for Assam 96.8 per cent was spent. Now, this is the share we have received from the Centre for the Second Five-Year Plan:—

Andhra	...	...	...	..	...	116.2 crores
Bihar	...	...	...	...	...	192.9 „
Madhya Pradesh	...	...	...	...	...	123.3 „
Madras	...	...	...	...	...	170.3 „
Orissa	...	...	...	...	...	97.3 „
Uttar Pradesh	...	...	...	...	...	248.16 „
Punjab	..	...	..	...	...	126.2 „
West Bengal	...	..	...	..	...	152.5 „ and
Assam got	...	...	...	...	...	56.4 „

This is the Central share which Assam has received for the whole plan period. Excepting the Umtru Hydro-Electric project we have no major project during the plan period. Therefore, Sir, in all fitness of things this small amount of 3 crores of rupees should be borne entirely by the Centre. We have already been neglected and therefore if the real position is properly placed before the Centre then I think Centre will be sympathetic. While moving my Resolution I have already stated that in this connection we met the Central Ministers and they were very sympathetic to us and I have no doubt that if a request is made the Centre will reconsider the position.

I would now like to say a few words regarding the other factors which some of my Friends mentioned. I am very surprised that my Friend, Shri Jogakanta Barua, raised a political question. If I have understood him aright, that because of the levy of the betterment fee the political parties, particularly the parties of the Left—he meant the Communist Party—possibly took advantage of it. I think, Sir, he is entirely wrong. He must have referred to the result of the last General Election. If we just analyse the results of the last four General Elections, we find that it is not on a particular issue that people vote. The people take into consideration several factors, they take into account the integrity and ability of the candidate and the services rendered by him to the people. They also see the political party to which he belongs. These are the two basic factors on which the people voted in the General Elections. Therefore, the people of Dibrugarh did not vote on this particular issue, *viz.*, the levy of the betterment fee. If this is his contention, I am prepared to throw my gauntlet and resign my seat ; I am prepared to fight the election on broad national issues and not on this particular issue of betterment fee. If he has got the strength, let him accept my challenge. What he said was entirely wrong. It was unjustified criticism, to say the least.

Then, Sir, my Friend, Mr. Das, said that there was a contract between the Government and the people of Dibrugarh and it was so very sacred and sacrosanct that it should be adhered to and because we agreed to bear 50 per cent of the cost it would be wrong to approach the Centre to bear it themselves. When this question was discussed, when the Amending Bill regarding levy of betterment tax was under discussion, Shri Das was on this side of the House and he

spoke in favour of requesting the Centre to drop this levy, but now in the meantime he has changed his coat. I do not know, Sir, whether he has changed his coat on this particular issue.

Then, Sir, another point mentioned by Mrs. Lily Sen Gupta should be borne in mind. The protection work was a success not only because some money was spent on it but because of the complete co-operation of the people. She flood-lighted this problem by stating that not only the people of Dibrugarh but also the people of the neighbouring areas worked for the success of the scheme, they even gave free labour. These people who sacrificed for the success of this particular project did not demand any reward or relief for them. They simply rendered voluntary labour in the greater interest of the country. So, this taxation is wrong not only on principle but also because the burden will be heavy. It is not the question that the people of Dibrugarh are praying for relief; they are praying that the injustice done to them should be removed, because the protection of Dibrugarh is not the protection of the people of Dibrugarh alone. The protection of Dibrugarh is the protection of the whole State. It is our duty to protect any part of the State which is threatened by any natural calamity. So, the question of relief or scaling down of the fee does not arise here. The whole levy should be borne by the Central Government.

Sir, there was another reference made by Shri Sarat Chandra Goswami that the people had agreed to pay this tax. I do not know, Sir, from where he collected this information. The people did never agree to it. At no time was there any agreement between the people and the Government that they would bear the cost of the project. I think he is misinformed.

***Shri SARAT CHANDRA GOSWAMI (Kamalpur):** I did not say like that.

***Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh):** No reference was made to the people by the State Government about this matter. If by people a Jalan or a Kanoi is meant that is a different thing. The then Chief Minister, Mr. Medhi, stated on the floor of this House that there was some agreement with the people. But I know, Sir, the people of Dibrugarh was kept in dark. Some agreement might have been made with a few persons in some cinema hall, but the people of Dibrugarh never agreed to pay this tax. The

people were prepared to co-operate with the Government in any measure which the State Government or the Central Government might take for the protection of Dibrugarh, but they did never agree to pay any tax because it is the duty of the State to protect people against flood, erosion, earthquake and all other natural calamities.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur):** Only those agreed who smile when you smile !

***Shri RAMNATH SARMA (Lumding):** We came to learn that in a public meeting held in Dibrugarh a Resolution was passed agreeing to this proposal.

***Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh) :** That is not a fact. The elected representatives of the people should have been consulted. The Dibrugarh Municipal Board and the Dibrugarh Local Board could have been consulted ; the leading persons of the locality could have been consulted and a public meeting could also have been held under their auspices. But nothing was done. As far as I am informed, the then Chief Minister, Shri Medhi, contacted a few marchants and it was afterwards stated that they had agreed to pay 50 per cent of the cost. If those persons agreed, let them pay, we have no objection to it, but it would be totally wrong to ask the people to pay.

Then, Sir, it is not a question of those who lost there home-
stead they should be given relief and those whose property
has been protected should not be. This is an entirely wrong
way of looking at things. It would be wrong to say that
because their property was saved due to these protective
measures they are under an obligation to pay this levy. Sir,
as I said before, this is the function of the State. If no scheme
was taken for stopping erosion at Dibrugarh the river might
have gone to the Naga Hills and the people all along its course
would have lost their hearth and home. Will you, therefore,
tax all of them for that propose ? This would be a fantastic
proposition. Sir, any development work which is undertaken
by the State leads to some improvement of the locality where it
is undertaken, but in the ultimate analysis the entire people of
the State derive benefit out of it. For that purpose, of
course, the State wants money and the State is collecting
money from different sources. There is a complete circle of
taxes, from which nobody can escape. If you have money,
you pay income-tax, if you heard it there is the wealth tax ;

if you spend it there is the expenditure tax ; if you die there is the estate duty. There is the complete range of taxes ; nobody can escape from them. If we go to cinema we pay tax, if we purchase cloth there is tax, if we purchase sugar there is tax, if we purchase a match box there is tax. At every point of human existence we are paying taxes. In fact, we are called upon to pay tax from birth to death and even after death and if the economic condition improves the quantum of taxes can be varied. But to ask people to pay tax because a particular bund or embankment was constructed in their locality is wrong in principle. It will lead to localism and fissiparous tendencies and would lead to the disintegration of the State and the country. Therefore it is wrong in principle. So, we oppose this principle of levying tax on a particular locality. If the tax is to be borne, let it be borne by the whole State. Therefore, I commend my Resolution for the acceptance of the House.

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the reply from the Government side will be given by my Colleague, the Revenue Minister. But I feel I should intervene in this debate just to express my reaction to this matter. Sir, while speaking about protection of Dibrugarh, we cannot but express our appreciation to our engineers for doing a very good job and it is indeed very good that this mighty river, at least at Dibrugarh town about which we are discussing, whatever is proposed in this Bill it was with the sanction of the House and the Members of the House are aware that in 1953 this House passed the Assam Betterment and Mooring Tax Bill, 1953 unanimously. I have gone through the proceedings and I have found that it was only Maulavi Muhammad Umaruddin who suggested at the introductory stage that this Bill should be sent to a Select Committee. The rest of the Members of the House including the Leader of the Opposition did not make any protest.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur):** Sir I was searching for the proceedings but I could not get it as the Chief Minister got it from the Library. All that I was saying is that at the introductory stage there was opposition to the Bill. At the amending stage some Members from Opposition spoke against it. When the Bill was introduced, one of the Members of the Opposition, Shri Ghana Kanta Gogoi, moved for sending this Bill for eliciting public opinion and he suggested

that the repayment period for levying the tax should be extended from 20 years to 40 years so that the levy also decreases

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister):** Here in the proceedings, I have seen only Maulavi Muhammad Umaruddin suggesting that the Bill should be sent to the Select Committee. After reading his speech, I thought I will find in the proceedings the Leader of the opposition strongly protesting against this Bill. I find nothing of the kind. In any case, we are now considering about Dibrugarh but we have to take an overall picture of the extent of development done. After all this money be it of the Central Government or State Government if the people cannot pay now Government can not take up schemes. Now, this Dibrugarh Protection scheme has cost about Rs.2,30,00,000. The cost of other schemes for protection of different places is given below:—

						Rs.
Nowgong Town	...	...	...	...	...	2.71 lakhs
Dhubri Town	...	...	...	...	...	2.86 „
Silchar Town	...	...	...	...	...	3.20 „
Karimganj Town	...	..	...	...	...	1.37 „
Naharkatia Town	..	...	...	...	...	1.67 „
Goalpara Town	...	...	...	...	...	3.18 „
Bilasipara Town	...	...	...	...	...	5.86 „
Jamuguri Town	...	...	...	...	...	16.50 „
Sualkuchi Town	..	...	...	...	...	4.13 „
Bhojo Town ...	...	...	...	...	...	1.30 „
Palasbari Town	...	...	...	...	...	13.2 „

When the Iyengar Committee actually recommended that 50 per cent of this Dibrugarh Scheme should be borne by the Central Government and 50 per cent by the State Government it was on the estimated cost of rupees one crore for the construction of the revetment and out of this rupees

one crore the Government of India wanted to give Rs.50 lakhs as grant and Rs.50 lakhs as loan. But, Sir, the scheme which have to be revised afterwards cost more than Rs.2 crores. Up till now there is no commitment from the Government of India that they would be given above Rs.50 lakhs. The Government of Assam has been representing to the Government of India in this respect and the subject is still under correspondence.

Now, Sir, this kind of loan which they are advancing to the State the Government of India raises loan either from World Bank or from the people. Therefore, this money have to be repaid either to the World Bank or to other money-lenders from whom the Central Government took it. Therefore, people of Sibsagar or Dibrugarh or wherever from they may be the Government have to pay this money. If condition of the people does not allow realising this money by some levy or tax, how can you expect Government to take up schemes?

Sir, whether a matter like this should be represented by a Resolution of this House or not should be carefully considered. I considered that the mandate of this House is very valuable. There was a time when there was great hue and cry in the State of Assam and this Government adopted a Resolution in this House unanimously for setting up the refinery in the State of Assam. That was a different time and fit for moving such a Resolution and you have seen the force of that Resolution that the Government of India accepted the recommendation of the House, but if you urge passing of such a kind of Resolution for the acceptance of the Government of India very frequently for putting pressure on them like this, I do not think, it will be a just occasion for this. Although, I appreciate the difficulties of the people that have been raised by the hon. Mover of the Resolution, my submission is this that the House on the other hand should utilise this privilege of passing Resolution for very important matters, and therefore, I feel for giving pressure to the Government of India for a few lakhs of rupees here and there, this House should not adopt Resolutions. Apart from this we must look to difficulties of not only of the people of Dibrugarh but we should look in the same way to the difficulties of the people of other places. By this Resolution if the hon. Mover means that this levy should not be there, I am afraid that you cannot develop either Dibrugarh or any other place of the State. If you want to develop the State you must have finance and for finance you must look to the people to pay it either by way of revenue, betterment tax or other taxes but the ultimate burden goes to the people.

Therefore, if the object of the proposal is to raise any tax from the areas that have been developed as a result of certain schemes, well, Sir, I am afraid I disagree with him. But I am quite prepared to consider any difficulty of any area in regard to these matters. So, Sir, as I have explained, my difficulty in accepting this resolution is that I strongly feel that this august House should resort only to those resolutions that deal with very important matters because the resolutions happen to be the resolutions of the people's representatives, they must carry great force. In recommending resolutions of the nature I mentioned, we have also to take into consideration the difficulties of the Government of India. Why it is so? Because after all, our policies are economically interconnected. Therefore, I submit, Sir, that it will be highly appreciated if the hon. Mover if this resolution should consider not to press it.

Now, with regard to this assessment, the details have got to be worked out and I can assure my hon. Friends that we from this side of the House would give our best consideration to see that there is no hardship caused to the people. Beyond that, I hope the hon. Mover of the resolution will not expect any assurance from our side. After all so far the resources of the State are concerned, they must be utilised for the good of the people in general.

So, Sir, I submit that I fully appreciate the difficulties that have been raised by my Friend, the hon. Mover of the resolution, and at the sametime in view of what I have stated, I hope the hon. Mover will see his way to withdraw this resolution.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur):** Sir, just to raise a point of order, I do not find here in the rules regarding reply and the procedure of giving reply. But as far I know, as soon as the mover of the resolution replies, then the Minister in charge only can speak, no other person should intervene between the replies of the mover of the resolution and the Minister-in-charge. On this point, Sir, I request you to give your direction.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I quite see the hon. Member's point and I have also previously thought about it when the Chief Minister wanted to intervene in this debate. But I think what the Chief Minister speaks is not a reply, but it is only a sort of giving some light and ideas about the resolution that we have been discussing now. The proper reply to the debate will be given by the Minister in charge. So I donot think that we are contravening the rules in this regard.

***Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI (Rampur):** No Sir, I am really thankful to the Hon'ble Chief Minister for saying so much. I am not interested about this, but there should be some procedure laid down also because as soon as the hon Mover of the resolution replies, he cannot have another chance to speak his point. Therefore, according to the procedure, it is the Minister-in-charge who should reply.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is all right. I shall not allow this to be a precedent.

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have full sympathy with the spirit of this resolution, namely, to give relief to the people of Dibrugarh. But, Sir, the resolution as it stands, on principle I am unable to accept it. The hon. Speaker gave a caution that in a short notice resolution, the speeches should be strictly within the scope of the resolution. But here I find that the speech, particularly of the hon. Mover of the resolution, has gone beyond the scope of the resolution. To me the major portion of his observations is irrelevant. For example, Sir, he has discussed the Assam Betterment Fee and Mooring Tax Act; how this Act comes within the scope of this resolution? This resolution seeks to recommend to the Government of India for writing off the entire amount, but in doing that the principle of this Act has been discussed. How the principles of this Act come at all within the scope of this resolution? Then, it has been said that the rate is very high. Does it mean that if the rate is low, Dibrugarh people will pay and my friend will withdraw his resolution? The question of rate is absolutely irrelevant for the purpose of this resolution. So I shall not reply to the irrelevant points.

Again, Sir, there is a misconception about the meaning of tax and fee. This Act has been described as an Act imposing taxes, and my Friend said that this Act imposed the highest rate of taxes in the whole of India. I have no idea about the rate of taxes prevailing in other States. But there is a difference between a fee and the tax. The difference between a fee and tax is this. A tax is money realised by Government for which Government gives no service, but a fee is money realised by Government for which Government renders service. It is a fee for service rendered. Here under this Act some fees are sought to be realised for service rendered, Government cannot make any profit out of it. But so far as a tax is concerned, take for example, sales tax, Government does not

give any service but the Constitution empowers the Government to realise tax. In this connection I have experience and I personally know that under the Calcutta Improvement Trusts Act double or treble the valuation of the property can be realised as betterment fee.

Then, Sir, some of the arguments advanced by my Friend are self-contradictory and defeat the very purpose of this resolution. Now he said that money has been wasted by this Government; if that be so, if you yourself are convinced that the State Government have wasted money, can you now request the Central Government to bear that waste?

Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh): Government does not mean a State Government at all.

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue): Anyway, this resolution seeks to ask the Central Government to bear this expenditure. Why one Government should bear the expenditure wasted by another? This defeats the very purpose of the resolution. This argument will not help my Friend.

Now, Sir, for the last one year, in every session, this matter is coming up in some form or other. So I propose to give a full history of the whole matter. Erosion of Dibrugarh began from a very long time and the State Government were taking measures now and then. But after 1950, the process of erosion was accelerated. This Government took certain measures. They spent several lakhs of rupees. But then it was found that the Brahmaputra could not be controlled. So at the instance of the Prime Minister a four-men committee was appointed towards the end of 1952. That committee is known as the Iyenger Committee. Mr. Iyenger was a senior, I.C.S officer of the Government of India. That committee was appointed under his chairmanship. That committee came here. Our officers co-operated with the members of the Iyenger Committee, and they submitted a report. They suggested construction of a revetment $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length and the total cost was assessed at rupees one crore. They recommended to Government of India to give 50 per cent of this amount as grant and 50 per cent as interest free loan. Now, the pattern of assistance given in such schemes by Government of India, generally is loan. But in this case, an exception was made for Assam. Government of India agreed to give 50 per cent as grant and 50 per cent as interest free loan provided

that this loan was realised from the people benefited in the shape of betterment fees.

Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh): The agreement was that State Government should bear 50 per cent only.

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue): I have got the letters, and I shall read it out to the House. Many people give many different version about the actual terms. So I want to place actual facts before the House.

I have already stated about the Iyenger Committee's report. Government of India accepted this report and agreed to implement their suggestions. Then with a view to ascertain the views of the people of Dibrugarh in respect of realisation of betterment fee, a special officer was deputed from here to Dibrugarh. A meeting was held in Deputy Commissioner's Bungalow on 22nd September 1952. All the leading gentlemen of the town were invited to this meeting, and there the principle of imposition of betterment fee was accepted. But the people there expressed the view that it was not possible to pay this 50 per cent.

Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh): Will the Hon. Minister be pleased to give me the size of the room in which the meeting was held?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Minister, Revenue): My Friend lives at Dibrugarh. If he so desires, he may please go there and see the size of the room for himself. This is not the question hour, and I am not under cross-examination.

Now, in that meeting the local people expressed the view that it was not possible to pay the 50 per cent in one year. So, they decided to spread it over for 20 years, 20 annual equal instalments. The Special Officer came and reported like this. It was then written to the Government of India. The Government of India agreed to this term of payment.

Then this Bill was introduced which later on became an Act. Now, pursuant to the Iyengar Committee's Schemes, about 1,500 feet long revetment was constructed, but it was washed away and along with it about 200 acres. The matter was referred to the Central Works and Power Commission. Some experts of the Central Works and Power Commission came and changed the pattern. They discarded that revetment and suggested construction of spurs and other measures. Then the

Prime Minister of India visited Dibrugarh on 4th September, 1954 and there the final decision was taken. The Central Works and Power Commission people were also there. The schemes of Central Works and Power Commission was accepted. Central Work and Power Commission estimated the cost at 2.6 crores. Ultimately it exceeded the estimated cost, and the total cost went up to Rs.2.33 crores. On 25th July, 1956 this Government wrote to the Government of India that the cost went up to Rs.2.33 crores and that neither this Government nor the people were able to bear it, and requested Government of India to treat the entire amount beyond 50 lakh of rupees as grant. The Government of India refused. I have omitted to mention, Sir, that sometime before at New Delhi our State Chief Minister had a consultation with the Central Finance Minister on 11th October, 1955 regarding this matter. There he represented to him that this huge cost could not be borne either by the State Government or by the people of Dibrugarh. So, pursuant to this discussions, the Government of India wrote to this Government calling for our suggestions in regard to this matter. This Government wrote to the Government of India on 25th July, 1957 in reply as I have already stated. So this Government had already agreed to accept this 50 lakhs of rupees as loan and requested the Government of India to treat the entire amount over and above that 50 lakhs of rupees as grant. The original arrangement of 50 per cent. as grant and 50 per cent. as interest free loan was based on the estimate that the scheme would cost one crore of rupees. The cost of the scheme, however, went up to rupees 2.33 crores. "Ordinarily", according to the Government of India, "any expenditure over and above the original estimate of rupees one crore should have been provided by the State in accordance with the normal pattern of assistance followed in case of other flood control scheme. In view, however, of the special circumstances under which the scheme was taken up, the the Government of India have agreed, as a very special case, to extend the original pattern of assistance approved for the scheme to the revised estimate also. This means that the Government of India would meet 50 per cent of the expenditure as Grants-in-aid and the remaining 50 per cent provided in the form of an interest-free loan. The Government of India very much regret their inability to go beyond this".

In a letter the Government of Assam wrote to the Government of India that however much we would try we could not realise more than Rs.30 lakhs from the people of Dibrugarh. The Government of India's comment was that this was

so because the rates prescribed under the Assam Betterment Fee and Mooring Tax Act were too low. They said further "The Government of India feel that the betterment levy in respect of Dibrugarh can be expected to be more than what can normally be levied in case where the value of the land has gone up on account of increased irrigation facilities". So it will be seen that they were pressing us to raise the rate. They also said—"The Government of India would therefore urge upon the State Government to re-examine the matter urgently and raise the rates of betterment levy". The Government of India expressed their inability to revise their previous decision and requested Government of Assam to "kindly extend their co-operation in the matter of betterment levy". So it will be seen that correspondences were going on between the Government of Assam and the Central Government and the first letter I referred is dated 1st March, 1957 and the last letter is dated the 4th December, 1957. In this letter the Government of India requested their inability to revise their previous decision and further said—"As regards the betterment levy, the Government of India feel that the rate adopted by the State Government is rather low" and they also opined that "the increase in the rate of betterment levy would have helped the Government of Assam to an appreciable extent in repaying the loan taken for the protection of Dibrugarh town. But if for any reason they are not in a position to increase the rate of betterment levy, it would only mean that they would have to find money from their own limited resources for repaying the loan". Sir, the position stands like this: after so much correspondence the Government of India is pressing us for raising the betterment levy and realise the amount from the people of Dibrugarh. Now we stand in an embarrassing position. My Friend, Sri Borthakur, agitates the matter inside the House and my Friends, the other Members of the Legislative Assembly from Dibrugarh—viz: Srimati Padma Kumari Gohain, Srimati Lily Sen Gupta, Sri Deben-dra Nath Hazarika, Sri Jogo Kanta Borua and Sri Indreswar Khaund—they press this matter very much outside the House for exemption from payment of this tax. Inside the House, we are to face the agitation started by my Friend, Sri Borthakur, and outside the House we are to meet the demand of our afore-said Friends. What can we do? Sir, we feel very much that there is hardship on the part of the people of Dibrugarh some of whom might have lost some of their valuable property due to erosion. When the Assam Betterment Fee, etc., Bill was discussed, this House agreed to realise Rs.50 lakhs. Now the people of Dibrugarh is to pay Rs.1.16½ crores. It is doubtful if the people of Dibrugarh are able to pay so much money even

within 20 years. But as the matter stands, something will have to be done. Though no assurance can be given at this stage, we feel very much for the people of Dibrugarh in this matter. Government will have to consider this matter very seriously and if something can be done, I can say this much that it will be done in favour of the people of Dibrugarh. Now what I have said above, it does not look dignified for this Government nor this House, which already accepted the principle to realise the betterment fees from the people of Dibrugarh, to go up to the Government of India with this request. If this is adopted once there is no knowing where it will stop. Under the Embankment and Drainage Department we have got many schemes scattered all over Assam. Some of the schemes were executed with grant money and the major portion are done with loan money. All people benefited by the latter schemes will have to pay betterment fees. If this resolution is passed, everywhere people will make similar demands. It is not a fact, Sir, that the people of Dibrugarh has been singled out to pay this fee. In the Act of 1955 the provision of realising the fee is there. In case of other towns also Government will have to realise the fee. I hope my Friends will appreciate the position. This being the position, I request my Friend, Sri Borthakur, to appreciate that it is neither dignified for this Government nor for this House to pass a resolution like this and to go up to the Government of India for writing off the entire amount.

In view of this I request my Friend, Sri Borthakur, to withdraw his resolution.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is Mr. Borthakur going to withdraw his Resolution ?

Shri NILMONEY BORTHAKUR (Dibrugarh): No, Sir.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Then I put the main question.

The question is that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do move the Government of India to bear the entire expenses incurred by them in taking measures for the protection of the Dibrugarh town, thereby absolving the Government of Assam of their liability to pay fifty per cent of the said expenses.

(The Motion was negatived).

Resolution to move the Union Government to construct an alternative Railway line, connecting Golakganj with Cooch Behar through Indian territory which will connect Assam with the rest of India

Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI (Golakganj):
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that as the only Railway communication of the State with the rest of India through link line remains frequently closed during monsoon, this Assembly is of opinion that the State Government should move the Union Government to construct an alternative Railway line, connecting Golakganj with Cooch Behar through Indian territory which will connect Assam with the rest of India.

Sir, in support of my Resolution I beg to submit that I would like to speak a few words. After partition of our country, the developmental works of our State have suffered most because the only Railway line which we had before independence is now in Pakistan and our State was practically cut-off from the rest of India for some times. Of course, a new Railway Link was constructed within a very short period of time, but it was so hurriedly constructed that it was not a successful one. Though I am not an Engineer and as such I cannot say anything with vehemence about it, what I could gather I understand from the topic particularly from the people of engineering department of the Railway that this new Railway Link would never be a successful one. There is enough doubt about its stabilisation. We have seen that there have been breaches, from the very starting time, without number. Though this new Railway Link line could be established and stabilised, still even then we need a second alternative line for the development of our State. I think the hon. Members of this august House are of the same opinion.

In 1952, during the heavy flood, when Cooch Behar, a part of West Bengal were detached from West Bengal and Assam, Dr. B. C. Roy, Chief Minister of West Bengal, submitted a proposal to the Union Government requesting the Central Government to connect Cooch Behar with Assam through Golakganj, and the proposed line may be made through Golakganj via Agomoni, Halakura, Baxirhat and Tufanganj and other commercial and important places. If the proposed line is made through the new proposed area, then an old railway bridge will be available over the river Gangadhar. If this alignment is made in another line, then a few bridge will have

to be constructed. But the only obstruction for this new proposed railway line may arise that the line will be nearest to Pakistan and the nearest distance will be 3 miles from Pakistan border. But there are many railway stations over the existing Railway Link line which are very nearer to Pakistan, such as Noxal. So Sir, I think this proposed new line should at once be constructed. If the proposed new line, which I propose is taken up then it may be constructed within a very short period, because the railway line may be constructed on the existing National Highway and the distance will be about 38 miles from Golakganj to Cooch Behar. I think, if our State Government make a little effort, I am sure, this proposed line can be made within a very short period of time and at the most minimum expenditure. So, Sir, I would request the Government for the Development of the State as well as for the benefit of the people of a portion of the State which has been left behind after independence and no practical development works have been, done this proposed line is essential. Therefore, I would request the Government to move the Union Government to take up this project and construct the railway which I propose through this Resolution of mine.

Sir, with these few words, I commend my Resolution for the acceptance of the House.

Dr. GHANASHYAM DAS [North Salmara (Reserved for Scheduled Castes): Mr, Deputy Speaker, Sir, I wholeheartedly support the Resolution moved by my hon. Friend, Shri Bhuban Chandra Pradhani. The reasons are obvious. From our experience of the meter-gauge railway line in that part of our State, due to frequent dislocation of the railway line, people have been experiencing great difficulty in railway travel between Alipur Duars and Fakiragram, because of the frequent breaches of the railway line during the floods. Therefore, there is necessity of an alternative railway line which has been proposed by the mover of the Resolution. The line will not be a long one. It will be only about 38 miles in length which is essentially necessary for development both industrial and commercial and also for the improvement of State economy.

Since some years back, the people of Goalpara district have been urging upon the Government and also waited upon the Union Government by deputation to construct a railway line from Bongaigoan to Jogighopa, because the people of the region have been experiencing great difficulty specially during

the rains from the recurrent floods of the rivers like Aie Pagladia, etc., between Bongaigaon and Amingaon. But Sir, the Union Government have been pointing out the difficulty of steel position for which the railway line proposed to be taken up between Bongaigaon and Jogighopa could not be materialised. Now it is high time and I would request the Union Government to come forward with that proposal within the Third Five Year Plan, because there is possibilities of getting coals from the Garo hills which could be easily connected with Goalpara.

Then, Sir, there is also dislocation of the river route, I mean through Pakistan portion of the Brahmaputra with the rest of India. During the monsoon, the railway communication is also dislocated during most of the months of the year. Then the only communication by air with the rest of India is also sometimes dislocated due to bad weather. When we pointed out these difficulties of ours to Shri Jagjiwan Ram, the then Union Minister for Railways and Communications, he realised the difficulties of the people of Assam. Even after independence the Government of India had to bring cement by air transport into various places in Assam when both the railway and steamer services are dislocated, and the air communication that also sometimes dislocated in bad weathers. When we once explained our position to the Union Communication Minister, Shri Jag Jiwan Ram, he realised our difficulties. You can well imagine, Sir, what will be fate if the railway link and the steamer line also which carry so many goods from outside are dislocated. Therefore, it is not only in the interest of Assam but as a strategic State also that such a railway line is of great importance. For this reason, I urge upon the Government to take up this matter seriously and they should not remain satisfied with the present position of our State. It may be that the Government of India a few years hence might review our position. But I say that a proposal in this regard should be there. Our Government should not remain content by merely passing the proceedings of the Assembly with the Resolution to the Union Government. But our Ministry should take up the matter in right earnest and discuss this with the Union Minister concerned, as they did in the case of the Oil Refinery movement when they happen to go to New Delhi.

It is a very important Resolution and I support this and hope that Government will readily accept this.

Shri BISWANATH UPADHYA (Patharkandi) :

माननीय उपाध्यक्ष महोदय !

माननीय सदस्य श्रीभुवन चन्द्र प्रधानीजी ने सदन में जो प्रस्ताव पेश किया है उसका समर्थन करने के लिये मैं खड़ा हुआ हूँ। इस प्रस्ताव का समर्थन करने के लिये मैं इसलिये खड़ा नहीं हुआ हूँ कि यह प्रस्ताव सिर्फ आसाम के हित के लिये ही रखा गया है, बल्कि इसलिये कि इस प्रस्ताव से सारे राष्ट्र का हित होनेवाला है। जो प्रस्ताव इस वक्त सदन में रखा गया है उसका समर्थन करना हमारा कर्तव्य है। प्रस्ताव के जरिये गोलकगंज होती हुई एक विकल्प (दूसरी Railway line) रेलवे लाइन की मांग की गई है। चाहे कोई भी व्यक्ति या किसी भी दल का प्रस्ताव हो इस तरह के प्रस्ताव का समर्थन सभी को करना चाहिये। यह नहीं होना चाहिये कि एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रस्ताव सदन के सामने उपस्थित किया गया हो, किन्तु उसे इसीलिये समर्थन नहीं करना चाहिये कि वह विरोधी दल के द्वारा रखा गया है। मैं समझता हूँ कि इस तरह की महत्वपूर्ण बातों में हमें किसी भी तरह की पार्टीबन्दी का सवाल नहीं उठाना चाहिये। इसलिये मेरा विनम्र निवेदन है कि सदन इस प्रस्ताव का अनुमोदन करें तथा इस दूसरी रेलवे लाइन के लिये अपनी केन्द्रीय सरकार से मांग करें।

आसाम के लिये एक ऐसी दूसरी रेलवे लाइन की अत्यन्त आवश्यकता है। हमने अक्सर यह देखा है कि बरसात के दिनों में हमारी रेलवे लाइन टूट जाती है। और सारे प्रांत के लिये एक विकट समस्या का उद्भव हो जाता है। इस परिस्थिति में हमारे राष्ट्र के अन्य भागों से हमारा संबंध बिल्कुल टूट जाता है। चीजों का दाम अत्यन्त बढ़ जाता है। खासकर काछाड़ जिले में इसका बहुत बुरा असर पड़ता है। उस अवस्था में चीजों का दाम यहां इतना बढ़ जाता है कि वह हमारी कृषिवित्त से बाहर हो जाता है। उस हालत में जनता को एक विकट समस्या के सम्मुखीन होना पड़ता है। इसके अलावा हमारा प्रदेश उद्योगिक विकास में बहुत ही पिछड़ा हुआ है। हमेशा यही कहा जाता है कि हमारा Transport Bottleneck, अर्थात् यातायात की असुविधायें ही इसका मूल कारण है। यातायात की असुविधाओं के कारण ही हमारे यहां बड़े उद्योगों की संभावना नहीं हो रही है। इस दृष्टि में भी इस प्रांत के लिये एक दूसरी Railway line का होना अत्यन्त आवश्यक है। एक ऐसी Railway line हो तो हमारे यहां के बड़े उद्योगों का सवाल दूर होगा। इसके साथ साथ हमारा प्रदेश कई विदेशी राष्ट्रों से घिरा हुआ है। किसी संकटकाल की उपस्थिति में भी ऐसी एक लाइन की आवश्यकता है। इन सभी दृष्टियों से इस प्रदेश के लिये एक उचित यातायात व्यवस्था का होना बहुत जरूरी है। आशा है हमारी सरकार इस अवस्था को जरूर ही पूरा करेगी।

श्रीनीलमणि बरठाकुरजी के प्रस्ताव का उत्तर देते हुए हमारे मुख्यमंत्री महोदय ने अभी अभी कहा था कि बिना किसी अत्यन्त आवश्यकीय बात के हमें केन्द्रीय सरकार से मांग नहीं करनी चाहिये। पर यह प्रस्ताव अत्यन्त आवश्यकीय और महत्वपूर्ण है। पिछले साल भी तेल शोधनागार संबंधी एक महत्वपूर्ण प्रस्ताव हमने इस सदन में पास किया था। वर्तमान जो प्रस्ताव रखा गया है वह भी अत्यन्त आवश्यकीय है। इसलिये मेरा निवेदन है कि सदन इस प्रस्ताव को ग्रहण करेगा और साथ ही अपनी केन्द्रीय सरकार से यह मांग करेगा कि हमें एक दूसरी Railway line दें ताकि हमारी यातायात की असुविधायें दूर हो और साथ ही हमारे बड़े उद्योगों की समस्या का समाधान हो।

मैं इस प्रस्ताव का हार्दिक समर्थन करता हूँ और आशा करता हूँ कि आप सब लोग इसका समर्थन करेंगे।

***Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA:** (Minister, Transport): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I quite appreciate the feeling of the hon. Mover who has introduced this Resolution before the House, and I am glad that he and his supporters have realised the necessity of having an alternative railway link line to connect Assam. Though I appreciate the feeling of my Friend, Shri Bhaban Chandra Pradhani and his supporters I am unable to accept a particular proposal which has been suggested by Mr. Pradhani in his Resolution. But I can tell him, Sir, that the necessity of having an alternative railway link line to connect Assam has been felt by this Government. This matter has been taken up with the Government of India, as some of the hon. Members are aware, in the year 1956 and in this connection a Railway link line Stabilisation Committee was appointed by the Government and at that time this Government took the opportunity to suggest to that Committee to construct an alternative railway link line from Balacoba to Fakiragram *via* Cooch Behar. The majority of the members of this Committee accepted this proposal. For the information of the hon. Members I may tell that the order for surveying a portion of this suggested alignment has already been passed and the survey work for a portion of the suggested alignment between Dumohani and Cooch Behar has already been taken up. But the survey work for the portion between Balacoba and Dumohani is kept in abeyance as the site for the bridge across a river on the National Highway or the Assam Access Road has not been finalised. When this will be finalised, the survey work will begin. So, Sir, a particular proposal in connection with Mr. Pradhani's Resolution cannot be accepted on various reasons. First, it cannot be accepted from the security point of view also, because of the fact that the Chief Minister of West Bengal made certain statement in this connection in the year 1952. But the said Stabilisation Committee which examined the whole question in the year 1956 also is of opinion that the portion between Fakiragram and Cooch Behar can be stabilised. Now, Sir, what will be the position if this particular suggestion of Mr. Pradhani is accepted? He said that it would be only 38 miles; it may be so from Cooch Behar to Golakganj but the overhall distance from Siliguri to Amingaon would be increased. From that point of view also it will not be possible to accept his suggestion. This Government has already submitted a specific proposal for an alternative link and it has also been accepted by the Stabilisation Committee, and, as I said, survey work

has already started from Balacoba to Cooch Behar. It will therefore, not be desirable for us to suggest another alingment now. So, Sir, in view of the fact that Government have already pressed for an alternative rail link to Assam in order to improve our communications and as it has received the attention of the Government of India and certain preliminary works have already been started, I believe my Friend, Mr. Pradhani, would not insist on the Government to accept his Resolution. I would rather request him to withdraw the Resolution. I can also tell, him, Sir, that along with the suggestion for an alternative link, this Government have also expressed the opinion that the existing link should also be retained. If both the lines are retained that will improve the communications to Assam and at the same time in case there is a breach in one line at any particular time, the other line will come to our rescue. Sir, these are the proposals of the Government and action has already been taken by the Government of India in this respect. I would, therefore, ask Mr. Pradhani to withdraw his Resolution.

***Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI (Golakganj) :** On the assurance of the Hon'ble Minister that there is a proposal before the Government for an alternative link, I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution. At the same time I would request the Government to bear my suggestions in mind.

(The Resolution was, by leave of the House, withdrawn)

Further discussion on the Resolution to move the Government of India to persuade the Governments of West Bengal and Tripura to purchase betel leaves from the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills

Shri LARSINGH KHYRIEM: [Jowai (Reserved for Scheduled Tribes)] Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the other day I said that the Government had not deputed anybody to make a special study of the ways and means to solve this problem once for all. As you know, Sir, the products of the border areas are all cash crops and almost all are seasonal except the betel-leaf. The betel-leaf is the only source of their livelihood. Sir, as you know, the Indo-Pak Trade Agreement is not honoured by Pakistan. The Governor in his Address said, "the sudden stoppage of border markets has caused immense difficulties to our people in the border areas who have been faced with the serious problem of loss of livelihood due to stoppage

of the marketing of their agricultural produce". Sir, due to the action of Pakistan three-fourths of the total produce of oranges this year had fallen down and got rotten and less than one-fourth could be transported through the subsidised transport scheme of the Government. Sir, the border people used to get lakhs of rupees from oranges, but those days are gone. The people are now in a terrible fix. What happens, Sir, many of them with a lingering look behind and tears rolling down their eyes have to leave their near and dear ones to find out a place outside the district. Even then, Sir, they are hoping that weeping will endure for a night and joy will come to-morrow. I understand even in their new homes they are in distress. I am sure, Sir, you realise what a sad thing it is to depart from one's near and dear ones but circumstances are such that these people have no other alternative but to leave their hearths and homes. When I think of the old days when the people were very busy and had no time to waste, it pains me to see that the place looks like a dead one. While I speak here, I speak with all seriousness and I wish I could make this House realise the magnitude of this problem. Therefore, Sir, as I have said before, betel-leaf is the main source of their livelihood. I wish this House to move the Government of India to persuade the Governments of West Bengal and Tripura to purchase the betel-leaf of the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills instead of East Pakistan's.

Another point, Sir, is this: Government has got a Trade Adviser in Calcutta and also a Marketing Department. So long neither the Trade Adviser nor the Marketing Department took any interest about diverting the trade of these people. I appeal to Government to use the services of the Trade Adviser and Marketing Department with a view to find a market for the produce of these people because, as I said earlier, they are now in a terrible fix. Betel-leaf is the only source of their livelihood, they depend mainly, so to say, on betel-leaf and this is very important thing and I would request the Government to use the services of the Trade Adviser to the Government of Assam in Calcutta and the Marketing Department so that they can divert this Pan leaf to some other place for market.

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

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKAR: The Resolution moved is that in view of the great hardship of the people of the border areas

of the Khasi and Jaintia Hills caused by the trade deadlock between India and Pakistan, this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do to take early and effective steps to move the Government of India to persuade the Governments of West Beagal and Tripura to purchase betel leaves from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills instead of East Pakistan.

***Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA, (Minister, T.A.D.):**

I again appreciate the feeling of my Friend, Mr. Larsingh Khyriem and welcome his feeling when he expressed the difficulties of the border people in not finding market for their agricultural and other produce. We fully realise that people in the border areas of Pakistan have been made to face number of difficulties for the partition of the country and consequent utter dislocation in the economic life of these people. This Government is fully aware of all these facts and I had occasion to make reference to the various steps taken by this Government to bring succour and render relief to the suffering people of the border in the past. Though we have not been able to create alternative market for the produces of the border people, I believe, the hon. Mover of the Resolutson will agree with me that the Government has done its best to render relief to these people and Government will continue to render relief to these people till they can be made secure. In order to create market for their produces a number of projects have been taken up by the Government. Test relief work has been started in border areas so that people can work and earn something and also various agricultural schemes for rehabilitation of the border people have been taken up. As far as distressed people are concerned as I said in the beginning we are fully aware of their difficulties and we have been trying our best to find out how best these people can be rehabilitated, how not short term but long term measures can be found out and for this purpose a Committee has been set up. I believe, that Committee will suggest the Government how best these border people can be rehabilitated so that they have not to depend on Pakistan to market their produce.

I regret, Sir, it is not possible for the Government to accept the Resolution as the mover has suggested that this Government should request the Central Government to persuade the West Bengal Government and Tripura Government to purchase betel leaves from the Khasi and Jaintia Hills instead of from East Pakistan. Though, I fully appreciate his feelings in this respect but I cannot accept the Resolution on the ground that the State Government cannot move the

Central Government to request West Bengal and Tripura Governments for this purpose of purchasing Khasi betel leaves instead of Pakistani betel leaves, mainly because this commodity is not in the hand of Government but is in the hands of private businessmen. How can you expect the Central Government to suggest West Bengal and Tripura Governments to do this? The suggestion given in the proposal is not feasible and practicable and therefore the Resolution is unacceptable. I would request the mover to withdraw this. Thereby I do not say that Government ignores the difficulties of the border people, but Government knows fully their difficulties and for amelioration of the same special attention has been given for relief in various ways in this particular districts as well as other Hill districts which are bordering Pakistan.

With these words, I would request the hon. Mover again to realise the difficulties for not accepting his Resolution and to withdraw his Resolution.

Shri LARSINGH KHYRIEM [Jowai (Reserved for Scheduled Tribes)] : Sir, I appreciate the help so long given by the Government but I am afraid, Government cannot help these people all the time and I do not like my people to depend on begging.....

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You cannot discuss. Please say whether you are going to withdraw your Resolution or not?

Shri LARSINGH KHYRIEM : I beg leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

(The Resolution was withdrawn by leave of the House.)

(Resolution No. 8—standing in the name of Shri Deven-dra Nath Hazarika was not moved.)

Resolution to adopt and execute a scheme of dairying and milk supply by Government.

Shrimati KOMOL KUMARI BARUA (Katoni-goan) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to draw your attention to one thing. I had submitted to the Assembly Office on 13th March, 1958, an amendment to this Resolution in my name. May I know, Sir, whether I can move the amended Resolution or the original one?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You first move the original Resolution.

Shrimati KOMOL KUMARI BARUA (Katonigaon): Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly is of opinion that the Government of Assam do adopt and execute a scheme of dairying and milk supply on experimental basis at least from the current year with a view to (i) supplying abundant pure milk in the State, (ii) raising the standard of living of the people who are earning livelihood by dairying or selling milk and (iii) improving the cattle wealth of the State.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we will take up the half-an-hour discussion on Starred Question No. 92 of 25th March, 1958. You will get your chance afterwards.

Half an hour discussion under Assembly rule 49(2) on Starred Question No.92, asked by Shri Devendra Nath Hazarika, on the 25th March, 1958, regarding grant of Free Studentship to all students who are economically, socially and politically most backward.

Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the 25th March last there was a question against my name regarding grant of free studentship to all students who are economically, socially and politically most backward. Sir, in reply to my question No.92 (c)—let me read out that question: “92.(c) Whether Government propose to grant free studentship to all students of these most backward classes reading in different schools of Assam similar to the students of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes with effect from this financial year?”—the answer was like this—“(c)—There is no proposal at present. Government will, however, take up the question after suitable criteria for the specification of particular sections of the people to be treated as socially and educationally backward and also the numbers that would come within the category of such classes have been determined”. Now Sir, with regard to my question—I rather narrowed down the compartment of my question that day. Government already assessed information about other backward classes. Sir, the Director of Public Instruction has in his letter No.46.A.33519-3519, dated 29th September 1957, collected the information about the students of different communities, in different schools in Assam. Here are some of the communities, such as, Ahoms,

Chutiyas, Rajbhongshi, Sut, Katonis, Nath, Matak, tea garden and *ex-tea* garden tribes, and certain classes of Nepalis. Now, I cannot understand why the Minister in his reply to my question said that there was no proposal, when we know definitely that informations were obtained already. Sir, as I have pointed out in the notice that there are a large number of students who deserve educational facilities similar to those of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes. I wanted that same educational facilities should be extended to certain groups of persons of these other backward classes. Sir, when Government have decided to give educational facilities to these types of backward people, I cannot understand why certain sections of the population who deserve special care and attention at the hands of the Government are omitted.

Sir, regarding the criteria as to who should be considered as backward, I would like to quote a line from the Memorandum of the Government of India placed before Parliament in the year 1956. Here it is said, Government consider that all backward classes should be helped irrespective of religion, caste or ethnological group. Sir, then again I find that there are certain classes of people in Assam who deserve special sympathy at least in matters of educational facilities. I would like to name some of them. They are the Nagas, Mikirs, Mishmis, Garos, Khasis, Abors, Daffs, Singphos and other Assam Tribals living in the plains. Sir, in my opinion these people should also get equal treatment in respect of educational facilities at least similar to that of our plains tribal people or scheduled castes from people. Practically these people are most backward. Whatever the definition of the word backward may be, I feel that these people should not lag behind in our social ladder. Sir, according to our present arrangement these Assam tribes who are living in the plains though their original homes are in the Hills, or in North East Frontier Agency area, we consider them as our brethren and as our kith and kin as the Assamese people themselves. So, Sir, we find that some of our brethren who living in the plains and whose condition is deplorable, they deserve facilities at least in educational matters. Therefore, I seek a clarification from the Government whether Government is going to extend educational facilities to the Assam tribes who are living in the plains districts. Further, I seek clarification on this letter of the Director of Public Instruction also who has collected information of other backward classes to grant free studentship to such classes.

With these words Sir, I conclude my statement.

***Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA (Minister, T.A.D.):**
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my Friend seeks clarification on two points. The first of my Friend's contention is that Government had occasion to ascertain what will be the financial implication if free studentship is extended to all communities belonging to other backward classes. I have a circular here, Sir, dealing with this subject. Now, after receipt of the representation submitted by the All-Assam Matak Students' Federation addressed to the Chief Minister, wherein they have requested that they should also be requested that they should also be given free-studentship. Government wanted to find out what would be the financial implication in case these students also are given free-studentship. That does not mean that Government have come to a definite decision that these students also should be given free-studentship as it is done in the case of the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes students.

But this Circular itself shows, as I have already replied, that in regard to this matter Government have no proposal at present. Government will, however, take up the question whether or not certain particular sections of the people can be treated as such. We have not ruled it out of consideration. In fact, steps have been taken, preliminaries have been done, to ascertain as to what will be the financial implication. But thereby it would be wrong on the part of the hon. Members to come to the conclusion that the Government has come to a definite decision to grant free-studentship to communities belonging to other tribal classes. According to the report it was found that if free-studentship is to be given to these people, it will cost the Government exchequer about Rs.10 lakhs, nay a little bit more about Rs.10½ lakhs. As I had stated previously when I had the occasion to reply to this particular question once before, although the Government has the intention to extend such facilities to students belonging to certain other backward communities, it will not be possible until and unless the criterion is fixed by the Government of India.

Now regarding the second point with regard to educational facilities to be granted to Nagas, Mikirs, Khasis, Garos Mishmis, Abors, Daflas, Akas, Singhphos and other Assam Tribes living in the plain districts of Assam, the people are given free-studentship. The Nagas, Mikirs, Khasis, Garos and others

living in the plains are now getting free studentship. Students belonging to all these communities are entitled to free studentship provided their parent's income does not exceed Rs.3,600 a year. So it will be a mistake to suppose on the part of my hon. Friends that only because a certain Circular is issued, that certain information is being sought for by the Education Department, that Government has decided to grant free studentship to these people. I think, Sir, I have explained the whole position.

***Shri DEVENDRA NATH HAZARIKA (Saikhowa):** May I know, Sir, whether the Hon'ble Minister in-Charge knows that free studentship to different Naga students reading in the plains has been suspended with the Naga Hills forming part of a separate administrative unit?

***Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA (Minister, T.A.D. etc.):** For this year, they have got grants, but regarding the future, it is yet to be decided by the Government.

***Shri MOHIKANTA DAS (Barchalla):** In the Memorandum also it is written that the State Government have been requested to continue to render every possible assistance and to give all reasonable facilities to the people who are included in their existing list and to such others who in their opinion deserve to be considered as socially and educationally backward in the existing circumstances.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Das, you have to put it in the form of a question.

***Shri MOHIKANTA DAS:** All right, Sir. I was given to understand by the Hon'ble Minister in-charge that 14 post-Matric scholarships and 28 Middle English scholarships and 54 or 58 Lower Primary scholarships are granted to the people of the other Backward Classes, and that this has been done ever since the days of the British. Now I am asking the Hon'ble Minister whether in view of the recommendations of the Backward Classes Commission and the recommendations of the Government Memorandum, the number of scholarships in the post-matric stage or in the Middle English Examination or in the Lower Primary Examination have been increased even by a single stipend on any of the schools? Secondly whether any single seat has been reserved in any University or School, either in the higher stage of education

or in the lower stage, either for technical education or for general education for any of the Backward Classes ; and, thirdly, whether any single seat in any cadre of service has been reserved for any of the Backward Classes ; and lastly whether, as desired by the Memorandum, the Government has taken any step to increase at least by a whit the existing facilities that have been given to the Backward Classes since the time immemorial ?

***Shri BIMALA PRASAD CHALIHA (Chief Minister) :** Government has considered that pending final recommendations of the Government of India with regard to the classes of people who have to be treated as Backward Classes. In the mean time whatever facilities so far given is being decided to continue. Not only that. It is in the contemplation of the Government to go a bit further and do a little more for our other Backward Classes consistent with the capacity and resources at their disposal. But the matter is still under consideration and that we will do all that may be possible for us to do.

Shri BHUBAN CHANDRA PRADHANI (Golakganj) : From the reply of the Hon. Minister we have come to know that no definite decision has yet been taken by the Government as to how the facilities will be given to the students of the Backward Classes. But, Sir, is it not a fact that there is a proposal from the Central Government to give free studentship to the students of the Backward Classes and there is also a further proposal from the Central Government to the effect that they are prepared to bear 50 per cent and they asked the State Government to contribute another 50 per cent of total expenditure to be involved and that necessary data has actually been collected from the different schools by the Director of Public Instruction and that the Director of Public Instruction has already submitted their proposal to the Government and that it is now lying with the Government pending for disposal ?

Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA (Minister, T.A.D., etc.) : Sir, I have already replied that there is no proposal from the Government of India to that effect—that the students belonging to other Backward Classes should be given free studentship. A representative of the All-Assam Matak Students' Federation wanted to know from me whether or not it is decided by the Government to award free studentship to the students belonging to other backward classes of the State. Sir, this question is still under consideration of the Government and they

are now considering the financial implication of such a proposal. As I have already placed before the House, if this demand is conceded, it will involve an expenditure of Rs. 10½ lakhs.

Now with regard to the facilities that are to be given, I made it very clear the other day that after the recommendations of the Backward Classes Commission are accepted by the Government of India, they will give us a direction to us in this matter as to what other facilities will have to be given. All these details will have to be taken into consideration and the matter will be decided by us. The Chief Minister has been kind enough to say that something will have to be done in the meantime, and that also has been indicated in the previous reply.

Shri BISHNU LAL UPADHAYAYA (Gohpur) : Sir, our State Government recognised all the sub-communities except the Brahmin of the Nepali Community living in Assam, but the recent circular of the Director of Public Instruction of Assam does not mention all of them. Why is the omission there, Sir? Will the Government be pleased to continue the previous decision and extend the same privileges as before?

Capt. WILLIAMSON A. SANGMA (Minister, T.A.D.): Sir, in fact the list has been raised to 44, by the Backward Classes Commission. At present it comes to 18 in the list. Now while the Commission visited Assam, the representatives of the various communities were given the opportunities to represent their cases. So Government is not responsible for the omission of a particular community, Sir.

Adjournment

(The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A.M., on Saturday, the 5th April, 1958).

Shillong :

The 1st August, 1959

AGP (I.A) 279/59-225-5-8-1959.

R. N. BARUA,

Secretary,
Legislative Assembly,
Assam.

Deen:
12/12

