

AGRICULTURE IN INDIA

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2. The main crops are wheat, rice, and cotton.
3. The irrigation system is based on the use of wells and tanks.
4. The soil is generally poor and the climate is hot and dry.
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Assam Legislative Assembly Debates

OFFICIAL REPORT

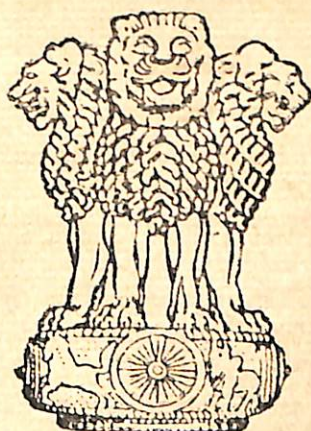
SEVENTH SESSION OF THE ASSAM LEGISLATIVE
ASSEMBLY ASSEMBLED AFTER THE FIRST
GENERAL ELECTION UNDER THE
SOVEREIGN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLICAN
CONSTITUTION OF
INDIA

MARCH SESSION

VOLUME I

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The 22nd March, 1955



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LETTERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

(March 1913)

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1913

The Association

The Association was organized on March 1, 1913, at the University of California, Berkeley, California. The purpose of the Association is to promote the study of the history and development of the United States and its people. The Association is composed of members who are interested in the history and development of the United States and its people. The Association is organized into sections, each of which is devoted to the study of a particular aspect of the history and development of the United States and its people. The sections are: American History, American Literature, American Art, American Music, American Science, American Industry, American Agriculture, American Commerce, American Education, American Social Life, American Government, American Law, American Religion, American Customs and Manners, American Language, American Literature, American Art, American Music, American Science, American Industry, American Agriculture, American Commerce, American Education, American Social Life, American Government, American Law, American Religion, American Customs and Manners, American Language.

1913

The 2nd March 1913



1913
RECEIVED AT THE ASSOCIATION
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For the Association

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

The Assembly met in the Assembly Chamber, Shillong, at 10 A.M. on Tuesday, the 22nd March, 1955.

P R E S E N T

Shri Kuladhar Chaliha, B. L., Speaker, in the Chair, the nine Ministers, the two Deputy Ministers, the two Parliamentary Secretaries and seventy-four Members.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

(To which answers were laid on the table)

Re: Arrangement for a boat fitted with motor engine for Badati Ferry Ghat.

Shri KARKA CHANDRA DOLEY asked :

51. (a) Will the Minister-in-charge of Public Works Department be pleased to state whether a representation from local M.L.As. was received by him requesting the Government to arrange for a boat fitted with motor engine for Badati Ferry Ghat ?

(b) If so, what action has been taken on the said petition ?

(c) Whether it is a fact that the approach roads of Badati Ferry Ghat is not properly maintained ?

(d) If so, whether Government propose to take immediate necessary action in the matter ?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) replied :

51. (a) & (b)—No representation from any other M.L.As. except one from the Questioner, was received for arranging engine-fitted boats in the ferry. The ferry has been converted, auctioned and settled as a power-driven one from 1st April, 1955.

(c)—Government have no information and there has been no complaint in this regard.

(d)—The Executive Engineer concerned has been asked to take immediate action as necessary and report.

Inability of a qualified Doctor to maintain a Pharmacy without a Pharmacist.

Maulavi TAJUDDIN AHMED asked :

52. Will the Minister of Medical be pleased to state—

(a) Whether it is a fact that a compounder or a registered pharmacist can maintain a pharmacy whereas a qualified doctor cannot maintain one without a pharmacist ?

(b) If so, why ?

Shri RUPNATH BRAHMA (Minister) replied :

52. (a)—Yes.

(b)—The Indian Pharmacy Act, 1948 (VIII of 1948) seeks to regulate the profession and practice of Pharmacy as distinct from the profession and practice of medicine which is regulated by the Assam Medical Act, 1916 (Act 1 of 1916). It is not the intention of the Indian Pharmacy Act, 1948 (VIII of 1948) to permit a medical practitioner of medicine, and for that matter any person other than a registered Pharmacist, to carry on the business or profession of Pharmacy. It, however, does not prohibit dispensing by a medical practitioner of medicine for his own patients on his own prescriptions.

Income of Mechpara Court of Ward Estate from Mooring Tax in Goalpara Dihi in different years.

Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB of Sidli asked :

53. Will the Minister, Revenue, be pleased to state—

(a) The amount of income derived by the Mechpara Court of Ward Estate from Mooring Tax (Khutigari Mahal) in Goalpara Dihi in the year 1952-53, 1953-54 and 1954-55 ?

(b) If it is a fact that the said Mahal was settled with the Municipality of Goalpara at about Rs.10 per year ?

(c) If the Mechpara Estate has suffered any loss due to such settlement ?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Deputy Minister) replied :

53 (a)—The amount of income derived by Mechpara Ward Estate from Mooring Tax (Khutigari Mahal) in Goalpara Dihi is as follows :—

					Rs.
In 1952-53	...	...	...	...	335
In 1953-54	...	...	...	...	200
In 1954-55	...	...	...	...	10

(b)—Yes

(c)—The loss is immaterial as compared to the complications which used to arise due to collection of Mooring Tax separately by the Mechpara Estate and the Municipality.

Zamindaris in the district of Goalpara taken up by the Court of Wards.

Raja AJIT NARAYAN DEB of Sidli asked :

54. Will the Minister, Revenue, be pleased to state—

- (a) If some of the Zamindaris in the district of Goalpara are taken up by the Court of Wards ?
- (b) If so, the names of the Zamindaris so taken up and their proprietors ?
- (c) If the notices served under the State Acquisition of Zamindaris Act will remain in force or be withdrawn with respect to these Estates ?

Shri HARESWAR DAS (Deputy Minister) replied :

54.(a)—Yes, Gauripur Estate has been taken over by the Court of Wards (in addition to the Mechpara Estate, which is already under the Court of Wards).

(b)—The names of the proprietors of the Gauripur Estate are :—

- (1) Kumar Prakritish Chandra Barua.
- (2) Kumar Pronobesh Chandra Barua.
- (3) Raj Kumari Nihar Bala Barua.
- (4) Raj Kumari Nilima Sundari Barua.

(c)—The notification relating to the Gauripur Estate issued under Section 3 of the Assam State Acquisition of Zamindaris Act, 1951 has been withdrawn for the present.

**Personal Explanation by Shri Mahendra Mohan
Choudhury on resignation from the Ministry
under Assembly Rule 111**

Shri MAHENDRA MOHAN CHAUDHURY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, under rule 111 of the Assam Legislative Assembly Rules, I want to make a statement.

Sir, in the ordinary circumstances there is no necessity for making a statement by an outgoing Minister when he leaves office for no difference of policy. Apparently, therefore, I had no necessity to make a statement under rule 111 of the Assam Legislative Assembly Rules as I have left the Cabinet for no difference of policy nor out of any grievance borne out against any of my old Cabinet colleagues. I have been prompted to make this statement with your permission Sir, as some of my Friends in certain quarters have questioned as to the propriety of my resignation. I have, therefore, taken my stand under rule 111 to clarify my position and explain the causes behind my resignation. I was deputed to Japan by the Government of Assam to study the organisational side of the Cottage Industries there and also to China to study her Rural Development Schemes. This entailed the Government, no doubt, a comparatively high expenditure. Many of my Friends, therefore, criticise that I have not acted fairly by resigning my office of Minister instead of utilising my experiences of China and Japan. I have made it clear on many occasions and also want to repeat here that had I not been to China and Japan I would not have, most probably, got the strength to resign. My Friends very well know that by choosing to be away from the Ministry I have not chosen a bed of roses. The life which I have chosen to live is hazardous and the burden of office I now carry is more arduous in its nature. Economically also I have been very much hard hit and to speak plainly that the step I have taken has completely upset my life and living. I need not emphasise here as my Friends very well know that for no personal benefit of material gain I have decided to walk away from the rather covetable position of a Minister, which carries in its trail some amount of comfort and luxury along with the burden of office. I have resigned to serve a cause, which is dearer than my life. During the days when we were engaged in the struggle for Independence, none of us thought in the terms of loaves and fishes of office. We contributed

our humble mite without the least thought of any return. Our goal then was to make India, our mother land, free from bondage. That chapter of the fight is now over and we are at the present moment in the midst of a much harder and grimmer fight, namely, the fight for economic betterment of the people. On the successful termination of this fight, the future of our country depends.

I went to Japan and saw there the organisation of the Japanese people for promotion of their Cottage Industries. I held the portfolios of Cottage Industries and Co-operatives along with some others. I saw in Japan that unless the people in general are organised and enthused, neither Cottage Industries nor Co-operative can thrive in our country. Our people are disorganised, their poverty-stricken condition has made them suspect each other. In the field of Cottage Industries for introduction of new design and scientific technique, a collective effort is necessary. For marketing of the products and also for supply of raw materials Co-operatives are imperative. I saw in Japanese villages a complete network of co-operatives. The Co-operatives offer design to the technicians, train personnel with new technique of production and above all supply them with raw materials and arrange for marketing of their finished products. Such an organisation is at the root of successful development of Cottage Industries in Japan. I feel that unless we can create conditions in Assam for such an organisation, it is no good talking about development of Cottage Industries in Assam.

Mass enthusiasm in such matters is a condition precedent rather than the matter of subsequent development.

Since I assumed the responsibility of a Minister along with my other colleagues, I tried to enthuse people in this behalf. But people, as I could find, did not pay proper attention to our preachings rather they sometimes expressed that by doing so we were only trying to keep in tact our public position and we did not mean to do as we profess. In China also I saw a new people rising up. There I saw the people doing their own development works by dint of their own labour and could witness the immense enthusiasm of the people for self-help work. As I have already stated above, I was of confirmed opinion that I could serve the cause better or utilise my experience of Japan and China better by working with the people outside than being inside the Government immediately and in the present circumstances. I gave an earnest thought on the matter and I decided, while I was even in China, to

resign. I returned to Assam and was seeking for an opportunity because I was confident that in the normal circumstances my Chief Minister won't allow me to get out. The Chief Minister as I could feel, had some fancy on me and I was in search of an opportunity to walk out. The election of President of the Assam Pradesh Congress Committee in the meanwhile fell due. Some of my friends raised before me the issue whether I was prepared to relinquish the office of Ministership in favour of Pradesh Congress Presidentship. In this question I found an answer of the struggle that was going on in me for the last few days after my return from China. I replied to them that under the banner of the Congress, we pledged our life in the struggle for freedom and now if a mandate comes from my friends to serve that organisation, I shall be only too glad to serve that organisation in whatever capacity it might be. Things so shaped that on 23rd December after thirty-seven days of my return from Japan and China, I was elected the President of the Assam Pradesh Congress and the very day I submitted my resignation from the Council of Ministers. As President of the Assam Pradesh Congress I am now endeavouring to utilise my experience of Japan and China in rousing the enthusiasm of the people so that the Cottage Industries and Rural Development works may receive better response from the people.

The question may now arise as to why I have chosen Congress as medium of my service. The reply is quite obvious and plain. A strong, powerful and dignified political organisation is an indispensable requisite of sound and efficient democracy. The Congress has, by reasons of its service in the past and the recent years, acquired an abiding place in the hearts of the people. Because of such trust, and because of its solidarity, it has been able to deal successfully with difficult and intricate problems to assure an orderly and progressive Government to the people and to undertake planned development on a wide scale through democratic processes. The Congress looks back with pride and gratification on its contribution towards the freedom and advancement of the country and it is therefore the only organisation that can deliver real goods and fulfil the aims and aspirations of the people. Even for the success of the Government policy and plan, mass enthusiasm of people is necessary and I felt that after my experience of China and Japan I had an advantage which I might, as the President of the Assam Congress, be able to

utilise for the good of our State and also for the success of the Governmental plans.

My resignation has been more justified than ever after Avadi Session of the Indian National Congress. In Avadi the people of India have decided to work for a Socialistic Pattern of Society. Achievement of a Socialistic Pattern of Society is never possible through Governmental effort alone. To establish a Socialistic Pattern of Society, people and Government should work hand in hand and shoulder in shoulder. In the ordinary circumstances it is difficult, now-a-days, to mobilise popular enthusiasm merely through slogans. To enthuse them, we all should go to them, work with them and feel as one of them. As Minister carrying on with him certain official paraphernalias, it is difficult to merge one's own identity with the common mass of the people. After ceasing to be a Minister I have been able to go to the humble of the humblest of the villages and of the society and share with him his aims and aspirations of life and also I shall be able to work for a society free from all and every kind of exploitation.

I, therefore, hope that as a humble servant of the Congress, I shall be able to serve the people better. It is of course not possible to achieve our goal by single handed effort. None alone can arouse the feeling of enthusiasm without active co-operation of Government, Members of Legislature and the people as a whole. I therefore, beseech of you to lend your wholehearted support so that we can march ahead successfully towards building up a better and prosperous Assam based on Socialist economy.

I am extremely grateful to you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to explain my position and to my hon. Friends, the Members of this august House, for giving me a patient hearing.

I thank you again, Sir (*Loud applause*).

Demands for Grants

Grant No. 41

“57—B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes, financed from Ordinary Revenues”.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 36,41,500, be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for the administration of the head “57.-B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues”.

Mr. SPEAKER: Motion moved is that a sum of Rs. 36,41,500 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in the course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for the administration of the head "57.—B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues."

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs. 15,89,000 under Grant No. 41, Major head 57.—B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues, Minor head A.—Capital expenditure on Bus Service, Sub-head—Section III—Pandu-Gauhati-Shillong Service (total), at page 299 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, i. e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 36,41,500 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

The object of my Cut Motion is to criticise the failure of Government to make adequate capital outlay in this section of the State Transport Organisation.

Sir, we find from the statements given in the Budget that we had, last year, made a total income of Rs. 16,54,000 on Road Transport Schemes by making an investment of Rs. 36,41,500. So, this appears to be rather a huge profit and this profit has come as a result of the sweat and toil of the labourers engaged on this organisation and by working on the capital that has been invested. We find in this Grant that instead of showing the four factors of production, namely, land, labour, capital and organisation in four different heads, there has been actually made two classifications—Capital Outlay and Working Expenses. And just now we are concerned with Capital Outlay wherein land has also been included.

In this Motion I want to confine myself to the section known as Pandu-Gauhati-Shillong Service. We have seen that in this section an amount of Rs. 15,89,000 is sought to be expended. So far as the position of the different vehicles, plant and machinery in this section are concerned, it is far from satisfactory. We have seen that due to the shortage in the number of vehicles, some vehicles are to run even three times a day from Shillong to Gauhati and then from Gauhati to Shillong and again from Shillong to Gauhati in course of one day. Not only for human beings, but also for machineries some amount of rest is necessary. If on a road like this the vehicle has to run 3 times then necessarily that vehicle will deteriorate quite soon, and far less said about the human element the better.

We have seen that only last year some vehicles with diesel engines were purchased and we have also seen that before a year has elapsed many of them have proved to be defective and it has become necessary to repair them. The discomfort and hardship in running these vehicles have been described by several Members of this House including the Secretary of the Congress Assembly Party. And therefore, I don't want to further elaborate on that. This is so far as the vehicles are concerned.

Then we have also seen that instead of placing these very big vehicles with 40 or such number of seats, I mean the new vehicle with diesel engines, on the plains routes they are placed on the hilly zigzag routes which means greater discomfort to the driver and greater discomfort to the passengers. So, Sir, my suggestion in this connection will be that these vehicles should be replaced by smaller ones as they may perhaps be better placed in the plains routes.

Secondly, Sir, I have seen a sign board in the Shillong Motor Stand where it is written "Office and Rest House of the Running Staff." I do not think that even 4 or 5 persons can sit in that room. Formerly, there were so many shops nearabout the station compound where the running staff could take a little rest with Pan or Kwai. Those also have been demolished and no alternative sheds have been made by the Government for those running staff who do such arduous work. So, my suggestion in this connection will be that Government should be up and doing in making buildings not only for the workshop or repair-shop or sheds for the vehicles but also as sheds of shelter for the human element who contribute so much to our profit.

Thirdly, with regard to the plants and machinery. We have seen and repeated on several occasions previously that as a result of the employment of several types of vehicles, greater number of varieties of machinery have become necessary. So, it would be better if the Government can use one or two types of vehicles which would mean less expenditure in repairs and spare parts and this will also mean saving of time and expenditure in book keeping.

Then I come to the item on furniture and equipment. We have seen that not only with regard to equipment of vehicles but with regard to equipment of offices there is shortage, and the Government will do well to improve the present condition.

With regard to the tools and implements a provision should be made to keep them in sub-stations as well so that at least minor repairs can be done in those places. Only

the other day we saw a big vehicle with diesel engine lying nearabout Jorabat and this had to wait there for a long time whereafter it was taken to Gauhati. Now, if the trouble of the engine is not a very serious one and if there be tools and implements ready at hand then minor repairs can be done by the driver-cum-mechanic on the spot and it will help in better administration of the Department.

With these suggestions, Sir, I request the Government that for better running of this profit-earning Department of the Government, the human element as well as the machinery side should be given special attention and I beg to commend my Motion to the acceptance of the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved is that the provision of Rs. 15,89,000 under Grant No. 41, Major head 57.—B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues, Minor head A.—Capital expenditure on Bus Service, Sub-head—Section III.—Pandu-Gauhati Shillong Service (total), at page 299 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, i. e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 36,41,500 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, I find the Cut Motion No. 3 is of the same kind. So, if the Mover moves this also then I shall be able to cover the reply entirely. He can also move Cut Motion No. 2 together.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYA: There is some difference. They are not the same.

Mr. SPEAKER: Your view is ruled out.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYA: They are not the same, a careful study will show it.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to speak a few words in support of the Motion moved by Mr. Bhattacharyya.

Sir, if the figures placed before the House by Mr. Bhattacharyya are correct that the capital outlay last year was Rs. 36,41,000 and the income was nearabout Rs. 16,00,000 then I must say that it is not a public utility concern, but a profit earning Department of the Government.

Now, at the very outset I want to know from the Government whether this transport system is a profit earning concern or a public utility concern. I want to know this because our entire discussion will depend upon the reply of the Government on this point. If it is a profit earning concern then Government may earn as much profit as they can. But if it is a public utility concern then there must be certain restriction to be imposed on the Government. Sir, like other public utility concerns, for example, electricity,

we have seen that by legislation not by the State but even by the Centre the profit earning is restricted. So, a percentage of the profit must be utilised for the benefit of the people for which this transport system has been organised. Now, taking advantage of this monopoly service is it fair on the part of Government to earn a profit of 50 per cent or so, which is evident from the figure supplied by Mr. Bhattacharyya? If such a profit was earned by any private concern in these days then what would the Government do? I wonder the Government profess to do one thing, so far as profit earning is concerned, and they themselves do the contrary. Sir, can you conceive that the Government should earn 50 per cent profit by taking advantage of monopoly service? So, it should be decided first whether in Assam it is public utility service or a profit earning concern of the Government. It has been rightly said by Mr. Bhattacharyya that this accumulation of profit is due to the toil of the people who are in the employ of Government in the Department. They are not given proper shelter, proper salaries and proper facilities. And again, contribution of the public to this accumulated profit is none the less. But they too are not getting such comfort or such facilities which they should get for their contribution. It is very difficult to find out from the Budget how many vehicles are in order, how many of them are written off and how many are new vehicles. So, until and unless we get a proper picture of all these, it is very difficult to ascertain the profit and loss account deducting from the gross profit the wear and tear charges, i. e., the depreciation charges. Sir, it was discussed more than once in this House that unless a proper balance sheet is presented to the House, it is difficult for the Members of this House to find out the actual position of the Department. So the charges which have been levelled by my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya.....

Mr. SPEAKER: What is your suggestion? Do you mean to say that a proper balance sheet should be presented to the House?

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Yes, Sir, because it is more a business concern than a Department of the Government, and therefore its profit and loss account should be like that of any other business concern so that the Members can understand the figures very easily. My Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has rightly said that our Government is very shy in placing new vehicles in proper places for the convenience of the passengers. But instead of doing anything that like, it seems Government is laying great stress in earning a big profit only. Therefore my request to the Government

is that they should consider this Organisation as a public utility concern, and in judging its success, Government should not put the entire stress only on the profit earned. In respect of the Electricity concern, Government has put the limit to its profit at 5 per cent. In case of the State Transport also there should be a similar limit set, so that Governmental concerns also may not earn profit beyond such a limit and the balance of the amount earned should be utilised for placing the Organisation on a better footing, *e.g.*, raising the pay and emoluments of its employees and also for giving better amenities to the passengers and others whose contributions go to swell up its earnings.

With these few words, I support the Cut Motion, moved by my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: Sir, is the 3rd Cut Motion out of order?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, it is out of order. If you refer to pages 299 and 300 of the Budget Estimates, you will see that stock charges and other charges—these things—are mentioned there.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: So we can speak on the 1st Cut Motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: Yes, if you like.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, what is the fate of my 2nd Cut Motion?

Mr. SPEAKER: 2nd Cut Motion has not yet come.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, I beg to submit that I have included lands in my 1st Cut Motion, but I have omitted lands in the 3rd.

Mr. SPEAKER: I cannot allow you to go on like this. Page 300 of the Budget Estimates—Major head—covers this also. So any Cut Motion is redundant. I rule it out of order. Do you like to speak on the 2nd?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Yes, I will, of course, if not ruled out.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the provision of Rs.4,00,500 under Grant No.41, Major head—57—B.—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues, Minor head—A.—Capital Expenditure on Bus Service—Sub-head—Section VI—Gauhati-Goalpara Service (total),

at page 299 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.36,41,500 do stand reduced by Re.1.

In my previous Motion, Sir, I discussed about Section III—Pandu-Gauhati-Shillong Service, and in this Motion I propose to discuss Section—VI-Gauhati-Goalpara Service. While in my previous Motion I showed that the total expenditure demanded is Rs.15,89,300, here under this particular Motion I beg to show that the total demand comes to Rs.4,00,500. In this particular Motion I want to confine myself to one particular item, *i. e.*, vehicles. We have seen that as a result of a smaller number of vehicles placed on the Gauhati-Goalpara route, there has been a great deal of inconvenience to the people, specially on the Bazar days and on the Hat days. Having created this artificial scarcity of State buses some demi-gods of the Congress have been given licenses to run “Bazar Buses” and these buses, in many cases, carry passengers who are not actually bazar-goers, but who would have travelled in the State buses and thereby these demi-gods of the Congress, these persons of authority, are depriving the State Government of its legitimate share of income.

Mr. SPEAKER: Is there any condition in the permits of the bazar buses that they should not carry passengers ?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I cannot say what thing is written in the permits as I am not a favoured person or a demi-god of the Congress to be favoured with a permit. But the point is that for several days in the week these buses go to ‘Hats’, and there are so many weekly ‘Hat’ in South Kamrup that if on every bazar day people are carried by these bazar buses in this way to this or that bazar, then I submit, Sir, State Transport buses are definitely deprived of a large share of their legitimate income. Therefore my charge to Government in connection with this Cut Motion is that of favouritism and nepotism.

Not only that. We have also seen some of these bazar buses are allowed to be stacked in the compounds of certain Government buildings, *e. g.*, in the Weaving School Compound which has been converted to a veritable bus-stand. So, Sir, not only with regard to giving licenses but with regard to using Governmental premises for the benefit of some private individuals simply because they happen to be in the good book or special favour of the authority concerned, Government have been following a policy based on nepotism and favouritism.

Therefore by this Motion, I beg to place before the House that this sort of favouritism and nepotism and irregularities specially when it is at the cost of the State and for the benefit of a few favoured individuals, will make the State Transport a losing concern.

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

Mr. SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved is that the provision of Rs.4,00,500 under Grant No.41, Major head 57—B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues, Minor head—A—Capital expenditure on Bus Service—Sub-head Section VI—Gauhati-Goalpara Service (total), at page 299 of the Budget, be reduced by Re.1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs.36,41,500 do stand reduced by Re.1.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, when we discussed the State Transport business last year, we praised the Department for bringing about certain improvements in passenger traffic. Sir, during this year also we do not want to criticise about the comforts made available to the travelling public though it must be said that the improvement that was registered last year is not continuing this year. Sir, what we have seen is that some buses need immediate replacement and because of non-replacement their engines very often go out of order causing unnecessary hardship and trouble to the travelling public. I know personally after proper enquiry that some buses have been in service for more than 5 or 6 years, whereas the actual life of these buses is only 4 years. The State Transport Department should have taken steps to replace these buses by new ones thus saving discomfort to the travelling public.

Then, regarding station also, so far as the Nowgong Station is concerned, only day before yesterday I read a letter in "Naton Assamiya" which depicted clearly the condition of that office. I have personally visited that office several times and I can say that what has been stated in that letter in "Naton Assamiya" is true to the word. There are actually no amenities afforded to the passengers and even to those who work there. The office also needs immediate repairs, if possible, it should be shifted to a better place.

Sir, coming to the profit side of the State Transport Organisation, I should say that the Organisation could have possibly earned more profit than what it has earned now, if it could have stopped plying of private jeeps, jeeps with trailers and other vehicles in competition with the State Transport. Although the

competition has not been open and legal, the fact remains that there is to-day a competition between the State Transport on the one hand and jeeps, jeeps with trailers, bazar buses and other private vehicles on the other, both on the Shillong-Gauhati Road and the Gauhati-Goalpara Road. We have seen that in the Shillong-Gauhati Road, even during regular timings jeeps going with trailers laden with goods—not goods of the owner but of other people. In this way a huge amount which was actually due to the State Transport has been taken away by private persons, and although this has been the complaint for the last few years, nothing has been done to stop it. The whole transport system on the Gauhati-Shillong Road, Gauhati-Goalpara Road and Gauhati-Dibrugarh Road is—though not legally, but factually—a monopoly of the State Transport, and if we allow other people to compete with it, it results in a drainage of the State Exchequer.

Coming to this question of monopoly business, we passed a Bill in this House last year, *viz.*, the Assam State Transport Bill. Although it was passed last year, nothing has been done to implement the provisions of that Act. In the legislative business of this Session we found an item that amendments to that Bill would be brought before the House, but yet we are not in possession of those amendments and we do not know what is in the mind of the Minister-in-charge about it. Unless that Act comes into force, the State Transport Organisation cannot legally be called a monopoly organisation. There are also certain difficulties in making it a monopoly and it was laid down in the Bill that a State Transport Commissioner would be appointed to look into these matters and draw up a proper scheme. But although the Bill was passed about 3 or 4 months back, nothing has been done up till now and we do not know what waits fate of the Bill. We know that the Allahabad High Court has declared *ultra vires* some sections of the Uttar Pradesh Transport Act and possibly because of that our Act has not been given effect to. But it is our duty in this House to remove those defects in the Bill and bring it into action as soon as possible and take a stringent view about those private parties who ply vehicles on these roads in competition with the State Transport.

Sir, what my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has said about bazar buses is equally true in the Gauhati-Goalpara route. We have so many bazars, which are visited by large numbers of people. Five days in a week are bazar days and for these days we do not find any special arrangements being made by the State Transport concern to carry people from place to place. What happens is this: I have seen with my own eyes in

some big bazars, that people when they do not get State Transport buses, go back by bazar buses and other vehicles which are meant to carry with the traders and their goods to the bazar. You can imagine, Sir, that if 5 days in a week this is done by several Bazar buses what amount of loss the State Transport is sustaining on this account. Therefore, I would request the Minister-in-charge to consider whether it is not possible to have bazar buses owned absolutely by the State Transport, so that on this route, which we have nationalised and kept reserved for the State Transport, other people cannot come in competition with it. Not only in this line, even in Jogighopa-Bongaigaon line, between Abhayapuri and Bongaigaon there is competition between State Transport buses and private buses.

Similarly, there is competition between Bilasipara and Dhubri, and all these things, because we have not been able to legalise the monopoly business of the State Transport Organisation and only because we have allowed some people to place their private vehicles on the roads. Sir, I am not in favour of these private vehicles plying on the National High Ways or on the routes where we have our State buses. It is necessary now to stop this private business by private buses on the National High Ways and on the routes where the State Transport buses are plying. Similarly, Sir, between Jogighopa and Bongaigaon if we cannot make it a National High Way, we must not allow the State Transport buses to ply on the road. At present we find a good number of private buses plying on the same road ; thereby the revenue of the State Government goes to the private parties.

Another point, Sir, is regarding the Gauhati-Shillong road. We find there are four classes—1st class, 2nd class, Inter class and 3rd class, whereas the Railways have reduced the number of classes and they have only at present 2nd class, Inter class and third class. There is no necessity for an Inter class. Sir, I would like also to say that the fares of 1st and 2nd classes are really very high and I have also seen that because of poor amenities in the Inter class very few people travel by that class. So, Sir, I would suggest that Inter class should be eliminated altogether, there should only be three classes—First, Second and Third class and we should have more amenities. As I have already said, Sir, the fares for the first and 2nd classes are very high. I would request the Minister-in-charge to take my suggestion of reducing the fares of 1st and 2nd classes into consideration. All that we want is that there should be no loss on this account, but we should also see and it is also necessary that we should not charge too high fares for the 1st and 2nd

classes. Sir, the present fares are found to be higher than the fares charged by the Commercial Carrying Company.

Then another point, Sir, regarding night plying of buses. In certain routes buses do not ply beyond 6 p. m. in the evening. But in certain roads—for example between Jorhat and Sibsagar-Gauhati-Chaygaon—you will find buses required to be plied after 6 p. m. Sir, it should be seen whether we cannot put some buses there even after 6 p. m. Also, Sir, it is seen that private buses ply after 6 p. m. between Gauhati and Chaygaon and in many other roads also. These private parties are earning a good amount, thereby depriving revenue to the State. I suggest, Sir, whether we can place one or two vehicles on such roads after 6 p. m. even by employing some more men for the purpose. I am sure, Sir, the State Government will earn more profit and at the same time render better convenience to the travelling public.

Sir, in the Gauhati-Shillong road also we should see whether we cannot have more wagons for carrying goods and luggages. Sir, the luggage vans are not very good. I have rather complaints that even if we book suit cases in the luggage vans, it is sure to be damaged on arrival at its destination. Therefore, I suggest that we should place some good vans in order that the luggages are carried in good condition, so that people may feel better comfort.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Motion moved by my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, because what I have suggested, I believe Minister-in-charge will please take serious notes of all those things.

Shri GHANA KANTA GOGOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to speak a few words in support of the Motion of my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya. Sir, Mr. Bhattacharyya says that there is inadequacy of vehicles in Section 3 of the State Transport Organisation.

Sir, due to inadequacy of vehicles, many private buses and also private cars carry goods of traders as well as passengers without license. Sir, what applies to this Gauhati-Goalpara section applies also to the Dibrugarh-Khowang section and Dibrugarh-Saikhowa section. It may be known, Sir, to the hon. Members of the House that in Upper Assam we have bazars in every day of the week and most of these bazars are held in the tea gardens and it is seen that a good number of private vehicles carry the passengers and goods of traders to bazars and back and these vehicles are plying every day of the week. Sir, these unauthorised vehicles are carrying on this unauthorised trade under the very

nose of the police people. Sir, if something is not done to place adequate Transport buses to serve the purpose of the passengers and the traders in going and coming to and from bazars, this traffic can never be stopped. So, Sir, I request the Minister-in-charge to consider this and place State Transport buses adequately, otherwise private parties will carry on this unauthorised business indefinitely. If this be done, Sir, the private parties will be prevented from doing unauthorised trade under the very nose of the police or under the very nose of the Departmental authority and thereby the private parties will not be able to take away what really should go to the State Transport Organisation. With these words, Sir, I draw the attention of the Minister-in-charge and support the Motion moved by my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the last Budget Session and also in the two previous Budget Sessions I have fully explained to the House the policy of the State Transport Organisation. Sir, the State Transport Organisation came into being on the strength of a Resolution adopted by this House in 1948. Last year also I referred to that Resolution and I shall again refer to-day, because my Friends, it seems, have forgotten the entire policy of the State Transport Organisation. Sir, I give below the relevant portion of that Resolution:—

“The policy adumbrated therein is mainly one of full development of public passengers services and short haulage of goods by routes through the agency of the Government so as to eliminate uneconomic condition of wastage of capacity and to promote adequate and efficient services consistent with fair wages and equitable working conditions which will yield profits that will be utilised for public benefit rather than for private gain. Reference must also be made to the necessity of organising road transport on the important routes in the interest of the essential supplies and services which are liable to be affected by emergencies due to natural calamities or other reasons. The essence of the scheme is however to raise the productivity of the transport both as earning proposition and as one leading to the industrial and general development of the Province.” This can only be done by a process of gradual nationalisation. By gradual nationalisation of transport on important routes within the next few years which the Government proposes to do.

Sir, this Resolution which was passed in September, 1948 had clearly laid down the policy to be followed by the State Transport Organisation. I have repeated this time without number before this House within the last 3 years,

yet my Friends—The Leader of the Opposition and other Friends in the Opposition—will not remember it or intentionally misinterpret the policy laid down in this Resolution. Now, this is financed from the revenue of the State and it contemplates a profit also and that profit will certainly go to the benefit of the people and welfare of the State. If it would have a losing concern in that case also the Leader of the House would have criticised the Government for the losses. Now there is a profit. They mis-represent the fact that State Transport earn a profit amounting to Rs.16 lakhs by investing 36 lakhs only. My Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya wants to criticise the Government for making huge profit by making an investment of Rs.36 lakhs only (Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya—At the cost of the worker?). Sir, the fact is not true, and the charge is baseless. He has misrepresented the whole thing to the House. I shall personally give the figure of capital investment. This is a temporary Organisation. The capital investment in acquisition of capital assets for this Organisation should be gradual and there should not be over-capitalisation and wastage. Sir, I shall give the figures for capital investment in land, vehicles, buildings, plants and machinery, equipment, tools and plants, one by one for each route. The total capital investment during these years comes to Rs.76,60,939, and we have budget provision for the current year for about 36 lakhs ; so all told it will be about one crore, seventy-one thousand and one hundred and ninety. The Organisation has already invested Rs.2,74,672 on land, Rs.14,45,995 on buildings, Rs.2,96,171 in plant and machinery, Rs.1,79,392 in tools and equipment, Rs.1,17,929 in furniture, Rs.53,43,780 in vehicles. So, the total capital investments is Rs.76,60,939 and not Rs.36 lakhs as my Friend stated. As regards the routes referred to, i.e., for the Gauhati-Shillong Route, the capital investment already made is Rs.40,14,777.

Mr. SPEAKER: His contention is that the profit of Rs.16 lakhs out of an investment of Rs.80 lakhs is a bit too high.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): So far as the Gauhati-Shillong Road is concerned, the capital investment so far made is Rs.40,14,777 and for the Gauhati-Goalpara Route is for Rs.8,74,816. So, Sir, it is not a fact that a profit of Rs.16 lakhs is earned by investing Rs.36 lakhs only.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: And you earned the profit during the previous years also.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Now, had there been any losses, we would have been criticised

Now, that there is a profit, they have come up with their criticism for earning profit. I do not know how to please my Friends in the Opposition. If there would have been any losses, we would have been accused of mis-management of the Organisation. Now that there is a little profit, they have accused us by saying why should you make so much profit?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Sir, I said why should a conductor get only 8 annas for 64 miles when a Minister gets 8 annas for a single mile. Surely, the Minister's belly is not 64 times bigger than that of a conductor! (*Laughter.*)

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Now, Sir, it is very difficult to please the Friends in the Opposition because if there is loss, they will criticise the Government for incurring a heavy loss, but when there is a little profit also they will come upon this Government with criticism for earning profits. Sir, when we are dealing with the public, first we must look to their interests and this profit is not a personal one, it goes to the benefit of the public, i.e., people at large. We invested public money for provision of good accommodation, of good and efficient transport to them and the profit earned will go to the people. Generally, Sir, this money is spent for the improvement of the road communication. So, it goes to the advantages of the people. Therefore the State Transport Organisation deserves praise but not adverse criticism from the Opposition.

Shri Bhattacharyya has criticised Government in the matter of issue of permits for bazar buses, etc., Sir, he is expert in misrepresentation of facts and he will always misrepresent facts to gain his objects. He knows for certain that Government does not issue permits either for private and public carrier and for stage carriage or bazar buses. The Regional Transport Authority issue permits in the region and this body is quite independent of Government. This is quasi-judicial body. This body settles or issues permits according to the provision of Motor Vehicles Acts and rules made thereunder. If any one is not satisfied with the order of the Regional Transport Authority, he can file appeals to the Appellate Board for redress. Any aggrieved party can seek redress before the High Court to redress their grievances. My Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has simply made a sweeping remark that all permits are issued to the Congressmen. This is not a fact and the charge is baseless.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: There are as many as 90 per cent.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, there may be some Congressmen, there are persons of the Socialist and other political Parties also and I do not like to mention their names. In issuing permits, the Regional Transport Authorities do not consider to which political party—Congress, or Socialist Party or Communist Party or any other party—the candidate belongs. Permits are issued on merits.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: There was no applicant of Communist Party, Sir.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA: (Minister): They can apply.

(A voice—দরখাস্ত করক, আপোনানোকেও পাব।)

So, Sir, the Regional Transport Authority issue permits and they do not distinguish whether an applicant belongs to the Congress Party or Socialist Party or to Communist Party. So, Sir, this charge is baseless. Again, Sir, my Friend criticised Government for allowing private buses to run in the transport route which causes loss to Transport Department. Sir, this is a temporary organisation and the policy adumbrated by the resolution referred to above by me just now, does not likely exclude the private sector from the route. And monopoly cannot be introduced without an Act. Steps are being taken to nationalise the route. There are bazars on the National Highways and in the interior. Some of these roads leading to Hats in the interior are *kutchas* and the State Transport does not like to ply their vehicles on these roads. The only road on which State Transport ply their vehicles is the National Highways, *i.e.*, from Dhubri to Saikhowaghat. So, Sir, the Regional Transport Authority have issued permits to us as well as to other applicants. So we have not nationalised these roads because the resolution adopted has not ruled out the private sector altogether and has not adopted a monopoly policy also. That is the reason why bazar buses are allowed to ply everywhere. As I said, unless a Bill is introduced with a view to monopolising this road, these private buses cannot be ruled out. Probably during the Budget Session of last year, a Bill was introduced in this House but then, the Supreme Court in a case from the U. P., has ruled that cancellation of permit on a route is not possible without payment of compensation and without legislation. In our Bill there was no provision for compensation. So, this Bill which was introduced in this Assembly will have to be amended in the light of the decisions of the Supreme Court. So, Sir, I propose to bring an amending Bill as soon as it is ready. I have repeatedly admitted before this House that Government was not unaware of this fact that private vehicles carry passengers illegally on the route and necessary steps have been taken to stop it,

I know about 400 to 500 cases were instituted at Gauhati and about the same instituted at Shillong and some cases are pending even now before the Gauhati and Shillong courts also and in other places stringent steps have been taken to stop this crime.

Sir, the organisation has been criticised also for inadequacy of vehicles. I shall give the number of vehicles used in each section. In section 1, Gauhati-Nowgong route there are 8 petrol-driven and 4 diesel oil-driven vehicles—altogether, 12. In section 2, Nowgong-Jorhat-Silghat route, 22 buses. In Pandu-Gauhati-Shillong route there are 14 cars, 22 buses, 1 ambulance, 11 luggage vans and 92 trucks, so altogether, 140 vehicles. During the current year 4 station wagons, 8 cars, 5 buses and 20 trucks have been entered for this route. We have already placed orders for these vehicles and I think that 4 or 5 have arrived and the rest will arrive very soon. They are to arrive during this month of March, but there may be some delay. They will arrive in April or May. So, altogether there will be 193 vehicles. In the Jorhat-Sibsagar-Dibrugarh route there are 21 buses, one Vanette, altogether 22. In Gauhati-Goalpara route there are 21 petrol and 7 diesel-driven buses, total 28. 7 new buses will be placed this year, or on the next year in April or May. So there will be in all 35 vehicles on this route. In the Dhubri-Jogighopa route, there are 25 buses and one Vanette, total-26. In the Dibrugarh-Saikhoaghat, 11 buses. Sir, altogether there are at present 288 vehicles of which petrol-driven 261 and 27 diesel-driven. Total strength of this fleet will be 306, excluding those which will be replaced.

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

Sir, my Friends in the Opposition, have no practical experience in these matters and they are theoretical. Suppose you want to place some buses on a certain route, how will you determine the strength of the fleet? It can be determined by traffic survey and from past experience of those who had run the line before. Friends in Opposition have not touched the point. That will depend on traffic survey and past experience as to what number of buses will be necessary to meet the traffic demand. So, Sir, it is determined by a traffic survey. On ceremonial occasions or on bazar day, the number is increased according to needs. To meet the demand on such occasions we place additional buses. Permits are given by the Regional Transport Authority to meet Bazar attending shop-keepers on the route and in the interior. But sometimes it is found, Sir, that even when we place a number of buses the people do not use the State Transport buses because they know they will have to change at a certain point on our route to attend a *hat* in the interiors. The private

buses go into the interior *hats* and so they prefer the use of the private buses instead of the State Transport buses. The House is aware that State Transport ply State Transport buses on nationalised highway only and in no other routes. Government have also been criticised for use of different kind of vehicles. The State Transport has got some vehicles of different makes as a legacy of the old Assam Transport and purchased new one in the past. Here also it is very difficult to satisfy the hon. Members of the Opposition. Year before last one hon. Member of the Opposition, Shri Sarju Prasad Singh, vehemently criticised Government for not using the diesel-driven vehicles. So, on their advice, State Transport purchased and placed these vehicles on the road. Now they say that these vehicles are too big and they want smaller ones. State Transport may take that into consideration in future. But then I hope they won't criticise Government again for introducing smaller buses. So, Sir, I say it is very difficult to satisfy my Friends in the Opposition. I can tell the House that these diesel-driven buses are used everywhere in India by the State Transport Organisation.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYA: Not in the Hills.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Yes, they are being used in the hills also. The bigger vehicles are more comfortable than smaller ones. So it is not possible to reconcile their opinions.

There is another allegation made from the Opposition that this profit is earned at the expense of the employees. It is not also a fact. I replied to a similar charge made in the last Budget Session of the Assembly that they get more pay than the other Government servants of that category. I shall cite only one instance. What is the pay scale of the Lower Division Assistant in the State Transport? It is Rs.65—5—100—E. B.—5—140 per month. Minimum is more than Rs.10 or 15 and maximum exceeds grades by Rs.40. Other employees of similar grade get higher initial than Government servants of other Department.

Then, Sir, as regards breakdown of vehicles on routes, all possible care has been taken by the State Transport to reduce them. State Transport has introduced a mobile section of staff to reduce breakdown on the roads as far as possible. I quite realise that whenever there is breakdown there is some inconvenience to the passengers. Steps will be taken to reduce the breakdown on the route. In this connection one thing should be remembered that one who uses a car or vehicle knows perfectly well that even the best or a new car or vehicle sometimes goes out of order. We have supplied with best and new vehicles and even then they sometimes

go out of order and give trouble. All possible arrangement will be made to prevent breakdown on routes as far as possible. The number of breakdown of our vehicles on route is not so high as is depicted by my Friend in the Opposition. We shall also take into consideration the suggestions made by the Leader of the Opposition in other respect.

Now, Sir, I come to the point regarding classless class in State Transport services. The intermediate class of buses has been retained just to accommodate the passengers coming from Calcutta side. For this reason it has not been abolished. We find that the passengers coming from Calcutta side by train desire to travel in intermediate class. My Friends opposite may not like to travel in the intermediate class, but there are people who like to travel by the intermediate class and we are to accommodate them and for that reason we are unable to abolish this class.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: What is the average number of people from Calcutta who travel daily in the intermediate class?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): I shall be glad to supply this information later on and not now. Sir, I always invite suggestions from my Friends in order to remove any defect and to improve the services or to improve our transport system as well as the conditions of the employees. But no suggestions are forthcoming except adverse criticism in the floor of the House. Some profit must come to the State coffer for the welfare of the people of the State. So, Sir, any suggestion given by my Friends, the Leader of the Opposition and Shri Bhattacharyya, will be taken into consideration. Instead of criticising the Government by tabling Cut Motion, if the Members come forward with suggestions and point out the defects of the organisation then the Department will be very thankful to the Hon'ble Members and try to remove the defects as far as possible.

But this is rarely done by my Friends. The other day my Friend, Shri Dharanidhar Basumatari, who is the Secretary of our Congress Parliamentary Party, criticised Government for some inconvenience felt by him and the passengers. I am in constant touch with him but he never mentioned about the incident to me, which took place not recently but long ago. I have come to know the incident referred to by him taking place long ago, at any rate before the last Assembly Session. Is it fair criticism, Sir? He should have referred the matter to me or to the Secretary, Board of Control, after the incident had taken place. This was not done. If there is anything wrong anywhere, I shall be too glad to remove them, if that is brought to my notice timely.

(A voice—কথাটো হৈছে, ওঁৱাহাটি চয়গাওৰ মাজত সন্ধীয়া আৰু বজাবৰ পিচতো গাড়ী দিব লাগে।).

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: My suggestion is that we want buses to run beyond 6 O'clock between Gauhati and Chhaigaon, between Jorhat and Sibsagar, between Dibrugarh and Tinsukia to enable people to go from one place to another in places where there is no alternative facility to travel. In such places it is necessary to have buses to ply beyond 6 O'clock upto 9 O'clock at night.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): All right, the suggestion will be taken into consideration and it will be seen how best it can be given effect to. But in that case more buses and men will be necessary (A Voice—Also more revenue) and the employees will have to be divided into two shifts. Because it will not be possible for one man to work from morning till 9 O'clock. However, the suggestion will be considered.

Sir, the other day a question was raised as regards supplying of uniforms to the employees. That matter is also under consideration. As regards accommodation to the staff, steps are being taken to provide accommodation to those of the employees whose presence nearabout the station or the workshop is essentially necessary. Some new buildings are now under construction, and it is hoped that in a year or two it will also be possible to provide accommodations to other employees.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYA: And what about increasing the trip allowances?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): At present it is not possible for me to give any assurance on that point. But this matter also will be taken into consideration. At present trip allowances vary from annas twelve to rupee one and annas four according to the nature of services rendered. All these matters are now under consideration. Not only that, the question of giving bonus to the employees will also be examined.

Now, Sir, I think I have explained all the points raised by my Friends during their discussions of the Cut Motions, and as such I request the Mover to withdraw his Cut Motion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What do you say, Mr. Bhattacharyya?

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : After hearing the Minister-in-charge, I cannot but seek the leave of the House to withdraw my Motion, Sir.

(The Cut Motions were by leave of the House, withdrawn.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is that a sum of Rs.36,41,500 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for the administration of the head "57-B—Capital Outlay on Road Transport Schemes financed from Ordinary Revenues".

(The Motion was adopted)

Grant No. 27.

"50—Civil Works (Excluding Tools and Plants and Establishment.)"

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs.6,49,95,500 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1956 for the administration of the head—"50.—Civil Works (Excluding Tools and Plants and Establishment.)"

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The Motion moved is that a sum of Rs.6,49,95,500 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1956 for the administration of the head—"50.—Civil Works (Excluding Tools and Plants and Establishment)".

There are three Cut Motions. I think Mr. Bhattacharyya, it will be better if only one Motion is moved and the others speak on it as they are all of the nature of omnibus Cut Motions.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA : Yes, Sir. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs. 6,49,95,500 under Grant No. 27, Major head.—50—Civil Works, at page 269 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, i.e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.6,49,95,500 do stand reduced by Re.1.

Sir, I again have stood to criticise the Hon'ble Minister on this very important subject. Because we have seen that the progress of the work of this State so far as Civil Works are concerned is very unsatisfactory in various ways. Let me mention only a few of them.

The first thing that I want to stress is that taking a general view of things we have noticed that the progress of work in Public Works Department is rather very slow. We ought to have by this time spent about 20 crores of rupees out of the total provision of Rs.23 crores which we proposed to spend up to this year. But we have seen that a sum of Rs. 6½ crores has been spent last year and this year another sum of Rs. about 6½ crores. will be spent. This brings us only to a total of Rs.13 crores. Therefore, it appears to me that we have lagged behind by at least a sum of Rs.7 crores worth of work.

Now, Sir, we know, certain difficulties might be pointed out in connection with this. The first difficulty that would be mentioned by the Minister will be with regard to paucity of labour, because most of the works in this State are earth-work, and it is said that our people are averse, generally speaking, to doing earth-work. Therefore we are to depend often on outside labour. Formerly we used to depend on labours coming from Noakhali as well as from Bihar. But now as a result of the Partition of the country labourers coming from Noakhali have become much smaller in number, and therefore there has been dearth of labour to do earth-work. That might be pointed out. That may be true to a certain extent. But we also know that our people, I mean the people of this State have now become more active and more forthcoming in the matter of this work. This has been testified by the different Ministers. This is so specially with regard to works such as bund making, embankment and drainage, etc. Now if we want actually to invite more people of this State to this work, can we not raise, if necessary, the rate that has been paid to these indigenous labourers? We see that almost every year some amounts have to be surrendered because they cannot be spent. Instead of surrendering money like this and thereby proving ourselves unworthy of carrying on the responsibility bestowed on us, will it not be better if we can raise the existing rate for this type of work still higher so that it may attract our indigenous labourers to work, so that it may entuse them to come forward to take up this type of work? The other day in private conversation with the Minister concerned I came to know that as a matter of fact, in the matter of erecting Bunds or constructing embankment, etc., when people do work themselves

without coming under any contractor, a higher rate is paid. If it is so, I think even in the works of the Public Works Department and for works which are outside the scope of the Embankment and Drainage Department there also such favourable terms may perhaps profitably be given to local workers. and that will in the long run be to our profit than to our loss.

Secondly, Sir, I want to stress another point, which is important from the point of view of planning. We have seen that there have been roads, rather too many roads, in some areas. I have not been able to understand the significance of all these roads in the light of our planned economy. Taking even some risk, I should say, Sir, that in my home circle at Rangiya, I have seen two roads running parallel to each other, one is known as Kamalpur-Marowa Road and the other is known as Bagal Sahib Road, which run almost in front of my house, so to say. These two roads run parallel to each other and the distance between them in some places will be only half a mile. There is no industrial centre on either extremity of these roads to justify construction of two parallel roads at a distance of one or half a mile from each other. May be my villagers will be very pleased with the Minister for giving these roads, but I submit, Sir, that if one road serves the purpose there is no need to construct another road. Roads should be constructed in greater national interest rather than to satisfy the people of the constituency. If I were the Public Works Department Minister I would not have constructed two roads there, even if it displeased some of my villagers.

Then, we have seen that, as a matter of fact, people have not gained thereby. Two costly bridges have to be constructed on Borolia river. If there had been only one road, then with less amount of money we could have got a better bridge and by this time the construction would have been finished. Then, two big bridges are necessary over Pagladia river also and so on. At the time of planning Government should have taken these factors into consideration. I have given only one example, there are many others.

There is another danger in constructing too many roads running from east to west. This obstructs the natural flow of water coming from the Himalayan ranges. That adds to the intensity of floods. Even when bridges are constructed, they are not constructed at all the necessary points and are also not wide enough to carry all the surplus water. The result is that there is stagnation of water which adds to the intensity of the floods. We have seen that for generations and centuries our

forefathers even without degrees in Engineering but with strong common sense understood this and they constructed very few roads running from east to west. Whenever they did, like the Gohain-Kamala Road, they took care to construct it far above the flood level, so as not to create too many difficulties for the people living in the lower fringes. Now, we have got some money for the Public Works Department and the policy seems to be "let there be roads everywhere". Whenever anybody comes, and particularly if he is my "yes man" and I want to please him, I give him some concession in the form of a road. That in many places appears to be the main factor in determining construction of roads. I do not thereby mean that no benefit has been conferred on the people, but what we should lay more stress on is not immediate service to the people but long-term service. Why did we not provide more money, or pay more attention, for building a road in the Goalpara Garo Hills sector? If we had given more attention to it, that would have gone a long way in the development of industries for which there are potentialities in the Garo Hills. For example, we want a cement factory badly. After the partition of the country, Chhatak has gone to Pakistan and the Garo Hills have got all the basic materials needed for a cement factory. If we had paid more attention to the development of road communication to the Garo Hills, that would have facilitated the establishment of a cement factory. Similarly, if we had made certain civil works construction, keeping in view the growth of the Umtru Hydro-Electric Project, that would have given scope for the development of various cottage industries, both in the Khasi Hills and also in the neighbouring districts of Kamrup and Nowgong. Therefore, Sir, I want to ask, what actually has been the long-term view of the Department in undertaking construction of roads? The Department appears unable to see beyond its nose. The result is that a situation has been created where although we have got potentialities for development we cannot utilise them. While making criticism of the Department in the deployment of their funds, I also offer a suggestion that whenever any plan is taken that should be taken with as long-term a view as possible, and not within the nose only.

Now, Sir, I want to make another suggestion and I finish. It is in the matter of development of necessary technical personnel in our country for improvement of the work of this Department. We have been hearing times without number, and perhaps the Minister will say the same thing to-day also,

that we would have done better if necessary technical personnel was available. But have we taken steps to train up technical personnel in our country? Or have we given sufficient attention to bring technical personnel from outside in adequate number on contract basis, so as to cope with the demand? My observation will be "No". Not that we have not brought some technical personnel from outside on contract basis, but their number is too small compared to our necessity. It may be said that we cannot go beyond that, firstly because there are similar demands in every State of India and, secondly, because there may be criticism in this House as well as outside that outsiders are being brought into the State. Sir, so far as bringing outsiders on contract basis even by giving them a little higher pay is concerned, I think no responsible person will object to it if it leads to the development of our State. We are prepared to incur certain expenditure, even at a higher rate, if it ultimately gives us more return. More over, when there is an emergency and the emergency is to transform our State from a predominantly agricultural backward State into a progressive industrial one, we should give particular emphasis on speedy training up of our own boys in the matter of technical trainings, and with that end in view, I don't see any reason why Government is so slow in developing our Engineering College at Jorhat, the Engineering School at Gauhati and also in developing the different technical institutes at Tezpur, Nowgong and other places. We want that all these technical institutes should be developed and we must develop them if we want progress.

We should also have made arrangements with the Railway authority to utilise the new workshop at Dibrugarh for the purpose of training up some particular types of technicians within our State. Sir, I don't know whether our Government has made efforts or contacted the Railway authority on this point. What we have heard and seen in the newspapers is that on the plea that the demand of the Railways in Assam is much less now some parts of important machineries have been taken away to Gorakhpur and some of the workshop staff also have been transferred. When there is such a necessity of training up our young boys, I think Central Government would not object to giving scope in the matter of training up our young men in that workshop if our Government should have made proper representation in this matter to the Central Government. I don't know whether our Government did it or not, but there is no result in this respect. What have been

said by the Government about these difficulties are not insurmountable. Therefore, in the form of this Cut Motion I again stress the necessity of giving much more attention to the points raised in these observations of mine. With that end in view I commend my Cut Motion to the acceptance of the House.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Motion which has been moved by my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya is similar to that of mine; so instead of moving mine let me support his Motion. Sir, we have seen that Public Works Department is the most important Department so far the heavy amount in the expenditure side is concerned; and more particularly, Assam being a backward State—the railway system also is very limited, and so we must depend more and more on the development of our roads. Specially this necessity has increased manyfolds after partition of the country. Sir, unfortunately since Partition, that is, since the year 1947 and during these 7 or 8 years we have not yet completed those urgent roads when there is no railway system. Motor roads are the only way to depend upon for the next few years to come. For example, Sir, it is not quite easy to go to Aijal or Lungleh and other places in the hills. Even, Sir, the road from Badarpur to Shillong is yet under construction. I do not know when that road will be completed. The development of roads, specially in the hilly areas of the State, is the most important function of the Public Works Department after partition of the country. Let us see what has been done during these years. My Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has said that during the first three years of the Five-Year Plan we could spend only a little over six crores out of the total allotment of 23 crores, and during the current year I asked a question about the up-to-date expenditure, but it is said by Government that up-to-date expenditure is not available. So, from the experience of the previous three years, it is obvious that we won't be able to spend more than four crores this year, that is to say about 10 or 11 crores only will be spent during the period of four years, and this would be the highest figure which can be shown by Government in expenditure side. I don't know what should be the position of the Government or how far Government would be able to spend during the next year, that is the last year of the Five-Year Plan. Sir, every Minister or high Official from the Government of India who visited Assam said that Assam Government could not spend even the sanctioned amount. So, Sir, here it is not the question of money, it is the question of other things which will have to be given due consideration by our Government. Sir, I am highly concerned on this big shortfall by our Government. We

are lagging behind other States of India in respect of progress, and secondly it is the directive principle of the Planning Commission and the Finance Department of the Central Government that allotment of funds in the Second Five-Year Plan would be made on the basis of spending capacity of a State. So, Sir, if this spending capacity of our State is less, naturally in the Second Five-Year Plan our Government would forfeit our claim for a better grant. Sir, there are many reasons for this big shortfall and delay in work. These are mainly fixations of alignments, delay in land acquisition and dearth of technical personnel, good labour force and also good contractors. So, I will deal one by one. So far alignment is concerned, it has been noticed that Government in the Public Works Department gave very little reliance upon the officers of the Department. I have known many cases how fixing of alignment was done. It takes two or three years to fix an alignment because interested parties are always there to save their paddy land and some leaders are also found to support these people against the greater interest of the community. If that is the policy of the people, that they are found doing like that, you cannot depend upon them or their leaders. So too, much of democracy in fixing the alignment will not be helpful always. It is obvious that the progress of the work would be slow. Here I would ask the Government to rely on their officers. In this matter also I have seen too much of democracy. It is obvious that the Government cannot satisfy all people or all leaders. Whenever any road or Bund is going to be constructed in any place in the State, it is obvious that it will spoil a portion of somebody's land. So, it should be the intention of the Government to derive maximum gain with minimum loss and in the matter of fixing the alignment, they should depend mainly upon the Departmental Officers on whom, at least we in the Opposition, have great confidence.

Now with regard to the question of land acquisition, there is delay. It may be that Land Records Department or the Civil Department is not co-operating with the Public Works Department or it may be that the number of officers in the Ilam office such as Kanungo, Mandal, etc., may be short and the existing staff cannot cope with the extended work under the Five-Year Plan as they are over-worked. This is one thing and the other thing is that there had been vehement objection against acquisition from the people particularly from the people of Cachar because a portion of that district is under permanent settlement areas. So, until the notification is published in the Gazette, there is no chance for the Department to

do any work over there. I am glad that an Act is going to be passed by this House regarding the speedy acquisition of land for flood protection works. Some sort of speedy arrangement should also be enacted for the development work for the acquisition of land for roads and other urgent works, otherwise the delay in acquisition of land will lead to delay in the progress of work. Now let us take up the most important item, that is, about the dearth of technical staff in our State. Sir, we know the present staff in the Department are over-burdened with works. Take for example the District of Cachar. If the annual expenditure of this District prior to Partition was Rs. 7 lakhs and now the annual expenditure have gone up four times. But if you calculate the number of personnel you will find that only one or two overseers and Muharirs have been added to the existing staff. How can it be possible for the staff to cope with the work that has increased three or four times? Naturally it will over-tax them and there will be a tendency on their part to neglect their duty, and therefore there will be bad expenditure. After all they are all human beings and if they work which is more than that is possible for a man to do, it is sure there will be negligence on their part. You cannot avoid it. So, early steps should be taken so that our Department in different areas are equipped with trained personnel. Sir, we have heard that we are short of such number of overseers—about one hundred overseers, about fifty engineers, some draftsmen, etc. Sir, we are hearing this thing since 1951, but what steps have the Government taken during these years to replenish the dearth of personnel? My Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya, has rightly said that Government has not given due consideration to this question. These difficulties can be solved. Here I am giving some suggestions to the Government. I do not know whether it will be helpful to them. I am dividing my suggestions into two different groups. One is short term and the other is the long term. In the short term scheme, I would suggest that Government would procure these personnel from other States even on a higher scale or on contract basis for 3 or 4 years. Further I should suggest that when we have not yet developed our own Engineering College to the proper standard, we must make arrangements with other colleges in other States by giving some grants so that at least we may get, say, 10 of our boys trained in those colleges every year by giving stipends to these boys on condition that they would serve the Government for 10 years. Thus by this short term method within two or three years we may get some trained men. The long term policy would be to set up an Engineering College in our State itself. It may take some time, because it is not an easy thing

to set up and develop an Engineering College fully within a short time. It may take five or six years. Suppose by this method, as I have stated above, we spend ten thousand rupees for ten of our boys, we will be able to do work worth several lakhs of rupees more. So, the main question is that there should not be any dearth of roads and other development works and our State should not lag behind other States in this respect, due to the excuse of dearth of technical personnel. In future we must not forfeit our claim in the Second Five-Year Plan. Sir, I hope Government will give serious consideration to the points mentioned by me and with these words I support the Motion moved by my Friend, Shri Bhattacharyya.

Shri NILMANI PHOOKAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to oppose this Cut Motion on the ground that the criticism that has been levelled against the measures taken by Government as yet are not to the mark and this criticism I do not believe will take us a long way to solve the problem—to solve the problems of technicians and engineers and so on. What my Friend could have said is this that Government has already taken energetic steps to do the work of the Public Works Department as regards the building of roads, Bunds, etc., and nobody can deny that within this short period of six or seven years these works have been done four or five-fold of the works that have been done in 1947.

But my Friend might have said, as the work has increased manifold, the Government should be up and doing without losing a single moment to definitely take the initiative in giving effect to the establishment of Engineering Colleges both at Jorhat and at Gauhati which have been already doing some useful works. But instead of that, my Friend has suggested some patch work to send some of our boys (Shri Ranendra Mohan Das: That is an interim arrangement only)—might be as he said that on a short term contract, some of the technicians and engineers should be brought at once to give effect to the work that has already been taken in hand and which will not be properly done unless good engineers and technicians are there on the spot to expedite the work. I understand so far. But when he suggested that Government might send some 10 or 20 young men of the State to outside colleges by giving them grants and all these things so that they may come back after 7 or 8 years as engineers, this will not be supported by the country. We do not want patch work. The Government has already taken in hand the development of the existing shools and Technological College to a higher grade. So far as I understand and as the country understands and the people already believed that within this period of 5 years, the Jorhat

Technological Institute will be a full-fledged Engineering College of three branches—mechanic electrical, and civil—and I have the authority of the Regional Committee who made it clear that these three branches should be established there. Of course Jorhat or Gauhati Engineering College may also be upgraded. It is not a question of one college, it is a question of two or three colleges even ; therefore, my Friend should have suggested along with us that all these things should not be delayed any more on this or that ground. Government hope that all the political parties should put their heads together to solve this problem very quickly and take step of giving effect to the Engineering Colleges at Gauhati and also at Jorhat. Within this five year plan scheme definitely Government should make up their mind to do this and if we fail to co-operate in this matter and if we do not want it then it will be a misfortune for the whole of the country. Therefore, instead of giving this constructive criticism and only concentrating to the point of raising this institute at once to the stage of the College, my Friend is diverting the minds of the Government and the public outside by saying that some of the boys should be sent for training outside. I believe that within this period of five years all these institutions will be completely working otherwise Government will be also blamed and the people will not be convinced if all these things could not be done. I suggest that my Friends in the Opposition instead of making criticisms so cheaply, just to make the people outside believe that Government is not doing anything and that they are lethargic and to create such impression, should give constructive criticism to the Government and Government ought to give due respect to their constructive criticisms from whatever quarters they may come so that the people may believe, and I do believe these things will be materialised within this Five Year.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS : On a point of personal explanation, Sir. I suggested the establishment of a full-fledged College in Assam. I want to suggest one more thing that the College should be situated in a central place like Gauhati (Applause).

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have also got a Cut Motion but I will not move mine. I only want to raise a discussion about the fallure of the Public Works Department to execute the works in time and thereby surrendering money at the end of the term. Sir, I have not got the audit report of last year. From Adit Report of 1951-52 also it will be seen that there is a re-appropriation of unnecessary expenditure, even there is no judicious surrender and non-surrender of savings which leads to lapses. I do not want to dilate on these figures and they do not speak about last year but what I have been able to understand is that, even now-a-days, the

total amount of money is not spent and that a big sum is left unspent. As my Friends here have rightly pointed out that there is shortage of personnel and that is not only in connection with the Public Works Department. There is this difficulty with other Departments also. We have been suffering very much for want of technical personnel. As I have said, I whole-heartedly support the suggestion made by my Friends, Mr. Ranendra Mohan Das and Mr. Bhattacharyya as well as my esteemed Friend, Mr. Phookan. Mr. Phookan has in no way contradicted what my Friends here have said. Mr. Bhattacharyya also spoke about this. I am sure that in the next year, Engineering Colleges will be started both at Gauhati and at Jorhat to cater for the various needs of the State but the point is that immediately we have to do our work. I would request the Public Works Department to consider whether it will not be possible to train up personnel in short courses. It may not be necessary for the personnel to go through long processes of learning in four years. Certain things can be done without going through the elaborate processes. I would also request Government to see if we can have shorter, refresher courses so that we may not feel the absence of technical personnel so acutely as we are feeling today. Take for instance, we have the Muharirs and Surveyors. I think it is quite possible to give them training in shorter courses and if this is taken up immediately, the bottleneck of shortage in personnel would be removed to a certain extent. It has also become necessary not only to give technical training but also to increase the number of scholarships for students who are going for engineering studies.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I think you will take some time, Mr. Goswami ?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : I will be able to finish within five minutes, Sir.

Adjournment

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

After lunch

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I was speaking that even in the present circumstances it is possible to have short courses to train up people so as to meet our urgent demands under the Public Works Department. Recently, Sir, many engineers fresh from Colleges were brought to this State from Mysore and other States of India. Some of them have already left their services here and gone back and I don't know how long the rest will continue here. What I have learnt is that an agreement was arrived at and signed between them and the Chief Engineer that they will be given certain facilities here.

But after they had arrived here they were asked to sign a different agreement altogether changing the terms and conditions of service relating to certain amenities, and when they were asked to do that they felt naturally very much inconvenienced and aggrieved and some of them have, because of this feeling, gone back. Sir, I do not hold any brief for these people, but what I want to impress is this: That when we bring people from outside and at times it may be necessary when we are not able to have enough number of people within our State, then we may have to take the aid of people from outside and when we bring them here then they should not be made to feel that they have been given a different treatment, and the agreement we arrived at with them should be very meticulously respected so that they may not feel that this Government is trying to coerce them to come into some other agreements. This I say is very important.

Secondly, Sir, another point I want to say is that the Public Works Department is spending to the tune of more than six crores of rupees only under this head. This is a very important type of public investment. If for these things employment is not given to our people it does not bring more income to our people and the expenditure is in a way from the point of view of the people of Assam, not profitable expenditure. From the point of view of employment—let there be no misunderstanding, roads and houses will be there, but in doing so when we give employment to the people outside but fail to attract people from inside the State and thereby cannot create employment, it is really a very lamentable.

Then again, Sir, when we give contract to the people, we should also see—as I also stressed last year—that the contracts are not made too big enough so that only big companies like Britania and other monopoly companies should get. So these contracts should be divided into small ones so that our people also can get these contracts.

Mr. SPEAKER: Suppose they are for buildings, how can you divide them? Can you make any suggestion?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: I think it can be done, Sir, say by giving them to some companies or co-operatives formed of people with smaller finances. But my point is that we should see that our people can get finance or the Financial Corporation can also come to their aid. Also, Sir, it is not that these big companies are any better than our people but they have got financial backing, and that is the main thing and therefore they can undertake work and they do it. Then in the matter of making payments also the Public Works

Department is not very particular because I have heard that in making payments by the Public Works Department it takes a long time. Assamese contractors or contractors with small means cannot go on investing money all the time. So if some payments are made immediately at least a portion of the payment is made so that the money is not allowed to remain blocked, then more people may come forward. But if the whole money is blocked or in other words, if the whole money sunk is barren and blocked, people with small finance will not be able to compete. It is possible only with people having big finance.

Another difficulty is about tenders. It may not be regarding big contracts but I speak about small contracts. Here we find that although the Government have the right not to accept the highest or the lowest bid or tenders whatever it may be, Government in accepting tenders do not do justice to the people. Because we find a man who has given a higher tender, his tender is not accepted but the work is given to another one with a lower tender. In this connection I had a question in this House regarding a contractor in Mangaldai when the Minister although he was not present, the Parliamentary Secretary in charge of the Department admitted giving of a contract in this manner, although this very man failed to execute a work in connection with another contract. Even in another case although there is a better man with a better tender, he was not accepted. Sir, this type of favouritism at least by some Executive Engineers in certain places should not be allowed to be practised and in giving tenders we should see that there is full justice done to the people. Although, as I have said, Government have the right not to accept the highest tender and so they can accept the lower bid in preference to a higher bid something very pressing must be there to justify such action and we must not leave things only to the sweet will of the Executive Engineer, it is not the question of likes or dislikes of a particular Executive Engineer.

Now, Sir, coming to the Roads, as I have already stated, the roads in the North Trunk Road require improvement. It is perhaps the worst road in the whole of Assam. From Storbhog onwards up to North Lakhimpur it is in such horrible condition and one wonders that even in 1955 we should have such a bad road. Sir, recently I had been to Mongaldai and Tezpur and I saw that the road was being repaired but the repair was also very slow. It was really difficult to go on a good car by that road.

Mr. SPEAKER: On what item you were speaking?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: I did not move my motion, Sir, but I am speaking generally on the failure of the Public Works Department to complete the execution of work in time.

Mr. SPEAKER: Failure of the Public Works Department to execute the work in time !

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: Yes, failure to repair the North Trunk Road. That has not been done properly.

Then also on several occasions I drew the attention of the Minister to the plight of the Palasbari-Loharghat-Bardwar Road. Sir, due to the extremely bad condition of this road, every now and then the buses plying on the road break down and as a result buses have stopped plying over the road. And although the Minister gave us an assurance that the road would be repaired, nothing has been done. Sir, while new roads are being constructed, the existing roads should also be taken good care of so that people may get some benefit. With these words I support the Cut Motion moved by my Friend, Mr. Bhat-tacharyya.

Maulavi MUHAMMAD UMARUDDIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I see several Cut Motions have been moved on the Grant on 50—Civil Works and the previous speakers have dealt with almost all the salient points and particularly slowness in the progress of work. I quite agree that slowness of work has rightly been the main point of attack. As a matter of fact, I personally feel that having regard to the huge commitments which the Department of Public Works has taken up, the staff at their disposal is really very short. Of course I do admit that Government have been trying to get more engineers and overseers even from outside to cope with the increasing volume of work they have been undertaking from year to year. But, Sir, if there had been better planning and better co-ordination, I dare say much more progress could have been made even under the existing conditions. First of all, before works are undertaken the Department has got to make a proper plan for proper execution of the projects. Without reference to the importance of a particular area, what we find is that in this State of ours the development of roads and other Public Works Department projects are taken up and they are not evenly distributed in the districts, and as a result more deserving places are left out. This was disclosed even by the Minister-in-charge last year. I therefore suggest that we must examine from time to time the progress made in the matter of development of roads and other Public Works Department projects, having regard to the needs of the State as a whole. We must also bear in mind certain backward areas and give them preference over the areas which have

already progressed. But, Sir, all these things are lacking in our State. Projects are not taken up on consideration of the importance of a particular area but on certain other considerations which are really unwarranted. So, firstly there is lack of planning.

Secondly, in the preliminary stage what we generally find is that in the preparation of plan and estimates a very long time is taken. It may, however, be pointed out there is not adequate staff to cope with the work. But if a certain officer plans his work properly and exercises strict supervision, there is no reason why reasonable progress cannot be made out with standing shortage of staff.

Another reason why good progress cannot be made in the work is because every year we are initiating into this contract business new inexperienced elements. While distributing the work the officer concerned does not care to know who is the man whom he is selecting, what are his antecedents, whether he is financially sound and has experience of the work for which he has tendered. Sir, I know of people like Cooly Sardars who have become Public Works Department contractors now-a-days. I know of some persons who have had no experience of bridge work yet they have been given contract for construction of some important bridges some two years ago. That is because this department always make the plea for accepting the lowest tender. Sir, in the Railway as also in the Central Government there is a definite method for distributing contracts. First of all the names of the contractors, his antecedents, previous experience and financial stability—all these are recorded in a register and work is given only to those who are approved contractors. There they have a classification of contractors in three categories, *viz.*, A. B. C. and contractors are selected according to the nature of the work. There a man has got to obtain a certificate from the bank to prove his financial stability. So before he is entrusted with any work he will have to prove his financial stability and experience to execute the work successfully. But, Sir, here nothing of the sort is done. Here we are following a bad unmethodical system, I should say there is no system at all in distributing Public Works Department works. I can prove by certain instances that people who are novice, who have come forward for the first time have been given work simply on the plea that their tenders were the lowest. I know in

certain cases tenders which were lower by 20 or 30 per cent have been accepted knowing fully well that they could never execute the work properly. Is it possible for these men to work on such low rates? I fail to understand why these people should be preferred without taking into account the interest of the work itself. Many such people have been entrusted with important works particularly in my district and the reason is that their tenders were the lowest. They of course know the means by which they can have their bills made out and passed. So this practice of selecting only the lowest tenderer must be stopped and certain principles must be laid down without fulfilment of which no man should be entrusted with any work. We are now faced with a very big problem of unemployment and the Public Works Department is the department which is spending the largest amount. Therefore the Public Works Department should readjust its policy for distribution of contracts in such way that results in larger employment for our people and thereby partially solves the problem of un-employment in the country.

Next there is the question of materials. I have seen how people submitting tenders on lowest rates are deceiving the department. They supply inferior materials and utilise them in important works, Sir, for the reasons which I cannot explain, the officer entrusted with the supervision of the work does not care to check up the materials supplied. He goes only at the time of measurement and the result is that the quality of the work is far from satisfactory. Unless we get efficient contractors we cannot expect better work because efficiency is the most important thing to be aimed at. We must get the value of the money spent.

Thirdly, Sir, something about employing our local people in Public Works Department works. I have no doubt that our people can do certain work such as earth work in the Public Works Department. People can be trained to take to work like earth cutting, house building, etc. In Upper Assam one Sramik Bahini was organised by certain gentleman and there is surely the possibility of a similar move in every district, if only certain social workers evince interest in the matter. We must give them certain opportunities of employment to our people and therefore the policy of the Government is to be so adjusted that it really leads to more employment of our own people who are becoming poorer and poorer every day

So, Sir, I request the Minister to first of all lay down certain definite principles for the efficient working of this Department so that the money is properly spent and efficiency is achieved. Unless the present method is stopped, then it will set in a rot which may jeopardise the efficiency of the Department ultimately.

With these words, Sir, I support the Motion moved by my Friend, Mr. Goswami.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my Friend Mr. Bhattacharyya, has criticised the Public Works Department for unsatisfactory progress of work and Shri Ranendra Mohan Das has criticised this Department for slow progress of work and Shri Hareswar Goswami, Leader of the Opposition, has criticised for failure of the Public Works Department to complete the execution of work in time to avoid surrender of money. Sir, although I am in charge of the Department I do not like to hold brief for this Department but would like to place some plain facts for consideration of this House which will clearly prove that they are not so.

This Department rightly deserves appreciation and encouragement from the Members of the House and from the public outside instead of adverse criticism. My Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, has criticised this Department also for having too many roads. Sir, the communication in a State indicates the civilization of a country and its development. His complaint is for the unsatisfactory progress of work, but on the other hand he said that the Public Works Department has constructed too many roads in the State and incidentally he cited an instance that there are two parallel roads at Rangia (Shri Gaurisankar Bhattacharyya : I said in front of my house) Sir, the State have not too many roads rather the State is far behind the requirement of road in the State. According to the Nagpur Plan the State requires 13,198 miles of roads, and of this 9,238 miles should be in the plains districts and 3,969 miles should be in the hill districts. Out of 9,238 miles of roads the State has actually 6,468 miles of roads including the incomplete roads and this is 50 per cent approximately of the total requirement of the roads in the State. 6,468 miles of roads have not yet been completed. Before Independence, that is, 15th August 1947, there were only 2,588 miles of roads in our State of which 804 miles of roads are national high ways and 1,748 miles are State roads. After 15th August 1947, 3,880 miles of roads have been taken up and of this 1,286 miles have already been completed and of the rest of 2,594 miles 1,583 miles were taken up under the plan and the work is in progress, 1,011 miles are taken up this year. So, Sir, we are far short of our total requirement of road. If

we have 13,200 miles of roads in the State according to Nagpur Plan even then the average distance to a village will be not less than 5 miles. This shows, Sir, that we have not too many roads in our State, rather we have much less than what is required by our State and we hope that under the next Plan we may be able to take up the 50 per cent of the deficit.

Last year my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya made a slogan that all roads led to Hajo, Rangia and Morigaon. But this time he has given up the slogan. He should not speak things which he cannot substantiate. I think, my Friend is a well-read Member of this House. But so far as this Department is concerned it seems from his criticisms that he is less informed or misinformed; he is not keeping proper information. He has said that there are two parallel roads close to each other for which two bridges are going to be constructed over Baralia and Pagladia. If he looks into the proposal of the Assam Road Communication Board he will find.....

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Yes, I know the two roads will have a common bridge at Baralia and at Pagladia and then it will have to be bifurcated.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): No, Sir, you will find that the road from Kamalpur to Bahar Ghat joins at Bagal Road at Bahar Ghat. The road from Kamalpur to Bahar Ghat joins at Bagal Road with a common crossing at Baralia; it does not extend beyond as two roads. So two bridges at Baralia and Pagladia are not necessary. The Bagal Road passes through three different police stations—Nalbari, Rangia and Kamalpur. On the one side it extends to Mangaldai subdivision and on the other side, to Barpeta Subdivision. Only the portion of the road between Nalbari and Kamalpur has been taken up. This road passes through Moruwa. The other road from Kamalpur will join Bagal Road near Bahar Ghat. It mainly passes through the constituency of my Friend, Shri Mahendra Deka. These are not exactly parallel roads. My Friend, Bhattacharyya, has said that two bridges will be necessary, over Baralia and two over Pagladia. This is entirely baseless. Only one bridge will be necessary at Bahar Ghat, over Baralia. Mr. Umaruddin has also complained that distribution of road mileage between different districts has not been properly and evenly made. I propose to reply to this allegation also. It is not true and baseless. Sir, as explained several times before on the floor of this House, distribution of road mileage and funds between the different districts is made in accordance with the Grid and Star Formula. This formula has been accepted as the most fair and equitable basis of distribution of road mileage and funds not only by the Government but also by the Road

Communication Board. This time also distribution both in respect of road mileage as well as money were made on the basis of this Grid and Star Formula. At the time of distribution of money and mileage to different districts, members of the Road Communication Board took into full consideration the deficiencies of each districts. My Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, who is also a member of R. C. Board, I am sure, will fully bear me out when I say that no discrimination was made by the Road Communication Board in the matter of distribution of money and mileage to different districts. Facts and figures will also amply prove my contention. Accordingly Dhubri got the highest fund and largest mileage this year as the deficiency in the Subdivision is highest on percentage basis.

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Goalpara has got the highest as it has the lowest mileage of all the districts.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Yes, that is quite so. So the policy of the present Government is to allot more funds and mileage in proportion to the deficit. It is not possible for me to offer explanation as to the omissions and commissions of the British Government or those that may be made by the past Government. As the basis of distribution on Star and Grid Formula which takes into consideration the deficit also has proved to be the most equitable and fair one, nobody has up till now been able to bring before my notice a single case of mal-distribution or unequitable distribution. So, Sir, the contention of my Friend, Mr. Umaruddin, that we are not making a fair and equitable distribution is baseless. The charge of Shri Bhattacharyya that there are too many roads in one place and dearth of roads in Garo Hills and Goalpara is most mischievous and has been made without having sufficient knowledge of the communication position in these two districts. To prove that there has not been any unfair treatment to the hills as against the plains, I would like to refer to certain figures.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Who has brought this Hills and Plains question? I said this east-west business is bad.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, there are about 1,800 miles of Motorable and Jeepable Roads in the Hills including the roads taken up but not completed. There are 1828 miles of bridal paths in the Hills maintained by the District Councils and the Public Works Department.

Before Independence the mileage of road in Hills was much less. There were approximately 570.23 miles motorable and jeepable roads before Independence.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: What is the use of bringing this Hills and Plains question?

Mr. SPEAKER: You said something about not giving greater emphasis on roads in Goalpara and Garo Hills.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I said that in connection with developing a cement factory in Garo Hills-Goalpara.....

Mr. SPEAKER: Will you please take your seat, Mr. Bhattacharyya? I cannot allow you to go on raising a quarrel like this, as if we are not in the Assembly but somewhere else.

Mr. Bhattacharyya now wants to convey the idea that he did not mean any disparity of road mileage in the Hills and Plains.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: I did not mean it; only I said that a road in Garo Hills is necessary to develop a cement factory.

Mr. SPEAKER: I say, Mr. Bhattacharyya, please take your seat.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): The total mileage of roads taken up in the 5 Autonomous districts of Assam under Article 275 of the Constitution is 472 miles. This programme is estimated to cost Rs.256.2 lakhs.

Out of this 94 miles of road is being executed in the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills alone at a total cost of Rs.61 lakhs.

Over and above this programme, the Union Government have recently approved the enlarged programme consisting of 5 road projects at an estimated cost of Rs.86 lakhs and with a total mileage of 152 in the two districts of Garo and the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills. Survey work of these roads has just been started. Out of 152 miles, 48 miles of roads at an estimated cost of Rs.29 lakhs fall in the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills Districts. Moreover, the major portion of the Jowai-Badarpur Road, 82 miles in length, is being executed in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills District at an estimated cost of Rs.94 lakhs, out of the total estimated cost of Rs.110 lakhs. About 58 miles of this road fall in this District. The Shillong-Jowai-Passi Road, 48 miles, has already been rendered motorable and metalled. The Mawsmat-Umwai Road, 16 miles, estimated to cost Rs. 9,44,000 is also in good progress.

Sir, the statement showing expenditure to the end of 1953-54 and the proposed expenditure to the end of 1954-55 along with the progress achieved will be read before the House.

Under the expanded Five-Year Plan (General) estimate to cost Rs.35 lakhs in the Hills, a length of 383 miles of road has been taken up for survey and construction. Of these 383 miles, 64 miles from Mawngap-Mairang to Ranigodam fall in the United Khasi and Jaintia Hills. Construction of the road from Mawngap to Mairang, 15 miles has been started already and survey work of the remaining portion is also well in hand.

In this connection I shall read the names of the roads :
 Amguri-Mokokchang Road, 66 miles... The road is opened to traffic.
 Silchar—Aijal Road, 112 miles ... Section I—38 miles formation cutting completed, Section II—work already started.
 Mawphlang-Balat Road, 48 miles ... Section I—23 miles already opened to traffic Section II—60 per cent of work already done.
 Mawshamok-Shella Road, 16 miles ... The road has since been opened to Jeep traffic.
 Laitmawsiang-Mawthawpdah Road, 20 miles. Survey work completed.
 Dawki-Muktapur Road, 10 miles ... First 4 miles of the road opened to traffic.
 Dalu-Baghmara Road, 42 miles ... 60 per cent of formation work completed.
 Phulbari-Hallidaganj—Garobandha Road, 36 miles. 80 per cent of formation work completed.
 Rongran Rongrenggiri Road, 37 miles Survey work completed.
 Damra-Rongrenggiri Road, 40 miles Survey work nearing completion.
 Dimapur-Mohendijua-Dokmak Road, 65 miles. Section I—13 miles opened to traffic ; the rest of the work is in progress.

Now, Sir, under the enlarged programme under Article 275 of the Constitution, the following roads have been taken up :—
 Nongstoin-Sonapahar Road, 16 miles-Survey works being started.

Jowai-Jarain-Muktapur 32 miles.	R o a d,	Survey work com- pleted.
Damra-Rongrenggiri Road, <i>via</i> Bangshi, 40 miles.		
Extension of the Dalu-Baghmara Road to Mahadeo, 24 miles.		Survey work in progress.
Baghmara-Darugiri Road, 40 miles ...		Survey work in pro- gress.
Two bridges with approaches of 1 mile each on the Aijal-Lungleh Road.		Work started.

In addition this, Sir, the following roads are proposed to be taken up under the State Plan:—

	Rs.
Mawngap-Mairan g-R a n i g o d a m Road, 64 miles.	4 lakhs.
Woka-Mokok c h a n g Jeep R o a d, 44 miles.	5 „
Aijal-Lungleh Jeep Road (further improvement) 126 miles.	4 „
Diphu-Mohendijua Road, 12 miles	4 „
Mupa or Maibong to Diger area in North Cachar Hills, 16 miles.	3 „
Nelli-Umpnai Road in Mikir Hills, 20 miles.	0.5 „
Kohima-Henema Road in Naga Hills, 73 miles.	0.5 „
Kohima-Phek-Larmi Road, 28 miles	4 „

Sir, this is the position with regard to the hill roads.

Sir, the Public Works Department has been criticised for slow progress of work. But, Sir, it is not a fact. If my Friends of the Opposition study the figures, of expenditure which I propose to place before the House they will find that the progress has been much better than that in previous years.

Year	Budgeted amount	Expenditure
	Rs.	Rs.
1946-47	1.79 crores	1.55 crores
1947-48	2.83 „	2.22 „
1948-49	5.05 „	2.93 „
1949-50	2.94 „	2.82 „
1950-51	4.02 „	3.74 „
1951-52	4.26 „	3.30 „
1952-53	4.87 „	4.50 „
1953-54	6.25 „	5.74 „
1954-55	11.00 „	8.00 „

Now, Sir, we must also see the cost of establishment in order to judge the achievement of the Public Works Department. In 1951-52, the percentage of establishment charges was 9.2; in 1952-53, it was 7.5; in 1953-54, it was 6.9 and in 1954-55, it was 7.0. So, from 1951-52, the percentage of establishment charges has gone down by 2.2. On the other hand, the expenditure has increased by about 30 per cent to 33 per cent. This is no mean achievement for which the Public Works Department deserves appreciation and encouragement.

(Interruptions from the Opposition.)

Mr. SPEAKER: Your (meaning the Opposition side) complaint was the failure of the Public Works Department. The Minister says there has been no failure.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): I shall meet their other complaints.

Mr. SPEAKER: The opposition should be prepared to hear the replies.

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, what are the limitations of the Public Works Department? My Friend Mr. Das has mentioned certain limitations and difficulties. Sir, the main difficulties are shortage of technical personnel. I shall come to that point later on. Then, Sir, there are shortages of materials specially iron materials and also cement. There is also shortage of labours, shortage of contractor, shortage of blasting powder and on top of all these there is transport bottle-neck.

Now, Sir, with regard to shortage of trained personnel, my Friends in the Opposition being probably ill informed want to criticise for in action. Action has been already taken, steps have been taken to train personnels at Gauhati. Sir, regarding the point raised by my Friends in the Opposition, that outsiders do not take service under the Government of Assam because of the inadequate condition of service, this is not true. The officers from outside are appointed under special terms and conditions. Shri Goswami complained that original agreement has been altered. Sir, agreement was not materially altered. Only the general agreement as prescribed by Government in consultation with the Legal Remembrancer for all departments were adopted by the Public Works Department. Some raised objections without going fully,

through the modified agreement. But when explained fully they have since signed the agreements.

So, Sir, you will see that there is no alteration in the agreements. As regards the agreements drafted by the Legal Remembrancer there were no material changes was only the agreement re-drafted by the Legal Remembrancer with the proper wordings only. There was no material difference in those agreements, with regard to pay, travelling allowances, etc. The main agreement is there.

Sir, I had a talk with a number of engineers who came from other States. They said that they did not like to stay here for the main reasons that they were getting appointments in their own States.

They will be near their homes; so they do not like to stay in a place far away from their own homes. Secondly, Sir, another reason is the kind of food the outsiders are accustomed to take. The kind of food which they are generally accustomed to take is not easily available here in Assam. People from U.P., Mysore etc. would not like our food. They are not Rice-eaters, they are Chappatti-eaters. So when they go to the interiors it is really difficult for them to get good Atta, Ghee, etc.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: দাল ভাত খোৱা বঙালী কেইজনমানক আনিলেনো কি দাম লাগে ?

Shri SIDDHINATH SARMA (Minister): Sir, there is no question of Bengalees and Assamese. My Friend should not have raised this question. Sir, we are recruiting Engineers and Overseers from India including Bengal. Notice for invitng candidates from any State has been issued throughout India. We have made no distinction between a Bengalee or a Madras or a Punjabi. Qualified and suitable persons are being appointed, if he is a citizen of India. Sir, there are 200 vacancies for Overseers and about 20 vacancies for Engineers. Suitable and qualified men are only needed from India. We do not make any distinction of any caste, creed or race. Sir, our only main concern is qualifications. Sir, Government have been criticised for not taking steps to train up men locally. Sir, in this connection, I like to mention that we have already taken steps to train suitable men to work as Moharers, Surveyors as well as Work-charge Overseers, etc. Already we have trained a batch of 80 persons, and another batch of 90 persons are being trained, There is a proposal also to increase the number of students of the Engineering School at Gauhati from 120 to 160.

Sir, arrangements are being made to start the Civil Engineering College at Gauhati and Electric and Mechanical Engineering College at Jorhat as early as possible.

Sir, with regard to materials also, Rolled Joists are not easily available. We have to indent from Calcutta and other places. Sir, the Government of India give preference for supplying iron materials for River Valley Projects. Our Chief Engineer had to go and meet the Manager of the Tata Iron and Steel Company and arranged for Rolled Joists for construction of bridges. Sir, when Rolled Joists were being despatched 400 tons a month, due to breakdown of the Railway line during the last flood, there is dislocation and delay in getting the Joists consequently constructions of the bridges are delayed. Even when materials were available transport bottle-neck would caused delay. With regard to cement also it is very difficult to get in time. The protection works at Dibrugarh which is given the highest priority, require cement. chairman of the C. P.W.D. arranged 7,000 tons of cement from the Defence Department. It has not yet reached Assam. So Sir, materials are not available for construction work in time. Sir, in hilly areas works are held up for want of explosive also. Works were held up for about 15 days throughout Assam during this winter. Wagon carryings were explosive misdirected and could not be had. It took several days to have their by Railway authorities. It took about 15 days to get those wagons and get the explosives. In the meantime, we had to arrange supply of the explosives by aeroplane, although the cost of air transport is higher and it is not ordinarily allowed to be carried by aeroplane according to the rules. We had to make exception to meet the urgent needs.

It is known to the hon Members that in hills adequate numbers of labour are not readily available, and for want of labour our works are held up. There is dearth not only of labour but also of contractors for works in Hills and for big works in Plains like Barak Bridge, for the construction of a bridge over Dikhu and Dikrong, etc. The local contractors did not generally come forward to submit tenders for such works. Public Works Department had to negotiate and accept the tenders from contractors outside the State.

As regards the charges brought by my Friend, Maulavi Umaruddin, that tenders are accepted at 20 to 30 per cent. less than the scheduled rate, I would like to say that it is not correct. Ordinary rule is to accept the lowest tenders. Tenders are generally accepted where rates vary between the estimated rate and 10 per cent. less than the estimated rate. Tenders are not accepted at 20 to 30 per cent. less than the estimated rate. If he can cite any instance, I shall look into the matter.

Sir, it is known to all hon. Members that last year there was a heavy flood and almost all the roads

in the State practically got damaged. The Public Works Department had to work very hard to restore the communication during rains. The North Trunk Road was very heavily damaged. Communication was restored during rains but proper repairs are taken up only in winter. It is a gravelled road and by now it has been brought to the standard of a gravelled road. As regards the Palasbari-Loharghat Road, it is not a surface road, Sir. It is a gravelled road and it has been brought and maintained in that standard. Of course my friend wants to make it a surface road. That is a different question.

As regards the question of alleged delay in payment of bills and payments are delayed for 2 to 3 years. Ordinarily it is not so. There may be such delay in disputed cases. The number will not exceed 1 to 2 per cent. Public Works Department has encouraged the local labourers by giving them the work, they do not submit any tender on competitive rates. The Executive Engineers are instructed to allot works not exceeding Rs. 10,000 to the local people at the estimated rate if they give assurance to the Executive Engineer in writing engage local labours and select a leader to receive payment. Their bills are paid as quickly as possible. My Friend has not been able to cite any instance of delay where the payment had been held up for two to three years. That is an absurd thing. It cannot be so. In case of dispute there may be delay. If there is any such instance, if it is brought to my notice, I shall look into it. Generally payment is made on running bills according to works completed within a month or two.

Now, Sir, the suggestions for distribution of works offered by the Leader of the Opposition and my Friend, Maulavi Umaruddin, are contradictory. The Leader of the Opposition suggested that we should divide the work in parts. How can you divide a building or a bridge. It is not possible to do so. But for earth work Public Works Department are accepting the small tenders in parts. My Friend, Maulavi Umaruddin, suggested to make classification of the contracts. So it is difficult to reconcile the suggestions made by him and the Leader of the Opposition.

Sir, I have probably met all the points raised by my Friends in these Cut Motions. I feel, Sir, the Public Works Department is straining every nerve to build the roads, buildings, etc., for the welfare of the State and as such, the Department deserves encouragement and appreciation from the House and not adverse criticism. They are really working very hard. My Friend, Shri Ranendra Mohan Das, pointed out reasons for delay for execution of the work in Cachar. In

Cachar most of the Zamindars put all sorts of obstructions for acquisition of land. He has himself admitted that the land acquisition takes two to three years. If it is so, naturally there will be delay in construction and the progress of the work will be naturally retarded. The Public Works Department cannot be accused if the land is not available. They cannot construct a road in the air. With these words, Sir, I request my friends to withdraw their Cut Motions.

Mr. SPEAKER: The question is:

That the total provision of Rs. 6,49,95,500 under Grant No. 27, Major head,—50.—Civil Works, at page 269 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 6,49,95,500, do stand reduced by Re. 1.

(The motion was negatived.)

I shall now put the original motion. The question is:

That a sum of Rs. 6,49,95,500, be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1956 for the administration of the head "50.—Civil Works (Excluding Tools and Plants and Establishment)."

(The motion was adopted.)

Grant No. 50

(81.—A.—Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes)

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs. 1,03,78,300, be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for administration of the head "81.—A.—Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes."

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion moved is:

That a sum of Rs. 1,03,78,300, be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for the administration of the head "81.—A.—Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes."

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move:

That the total provision of Rs. 1,03,78,300 under Grant No. 50, Major head—81.—A.—Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes, at page 351 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, *i. e.*, the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,03,78,300 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

The object of moving this motion is to raise a discussion on the progress of Umtru Hydro-Electric Scheme.

Umtru falls within the jurisdiction of the United

Khasi Jaintia Hills and I am afraid, I may be misunderstood in certain quarters for going to discuss a project which is situated in an area, which somebody may claim to be the exclusive area of the Ministers alone. At any rate, this is a project about which we all are very enthusiastic and to which we are very eagerly looking at. Though this is the smallest of such projects in India, there has been perhaps the biggest of noise about it. Though the ultimate capacity of this project could have been 45,000 kilowatts, the present target is reported to be only 7,500 kilowatts. It is also reported that even the town of Gauhati may be by passed and that the present arrangement which is there at Gauhati may be allowed to continue for some time to come. It is reported, Sir, that of the two tunnels, the smaller one being of the length of 800 feet and the bigger one being of the length of 2,200 feet, there has been progress only to the extent of about 100 feet of the bigger one. Though the smaller one of 800 feet is said to have been completed, its cement work has not yet been done and moreover, it is also reported that not even half of the dam has been completed. If this be the progress of the Umtru Hydro-Electric Scheme, then shall we be able to say that its completion would be within the time within which we expected it to see. That is a question on which I want some enlightenment from the Minister concerned.

Secondly, Sir, we hear that orders have been placed in Canada or somewhere in some country beyond seas and 13 rivers and that the fate of the project depends on the machineries coming from so far away land and that we cannot proceed as we would like. We want to know from the Minister—what is the fate of the machineries that we expected from that far far away land—whether they are on the way or towards the destination or not.

Then, thirdly, when we make some budget provision we should have some idea about its future utilisation. What is the purpose of this Umtru Hydro-Electric Project whether we want it just to give lights in some towns or we want to use it as a power for helping other industries as a feeder—motive force for other industries, like cottage and medium size industries? And in case of the latter, what are the industries aimed at or visualised?

Fourthly, we read in some papers that so far as the local people of Umtru are concerned, some people of the Khasi Hills have submitted representations that there should be some plan there so as to utilise the power generated at Umtru for the development of some

cottage industries or so in the surrounding areas in this Khasi Hills. Whether Government has taken or has envisaged any such plan so as to bring willing co-operation of the surrounding people of the locality. On that point also, I want to have some enlightenment.

Lastly, we want to know, that in view of the fact that the project is expected or rather hoped to be completed within a year or two, what type of industries are going to be fed by the power that would be generated at Umtru and where these industries are expected to be located? In order to get the information on these matters, I have moved this cut Motion.

Mr SPEAKER: Cut Motion moved is:

That the total provision of Rs. 1,03,78,300 under Grant No. 50, Major head—81.—A.—Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes, at page 351 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1., i. e. the amount of the whole grant of Rs. 1,03,78,300 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am surprised to hear from Mr. Bhattacharyya to-day that he wants to know from me the purpose for which the power that is going to be generated by the Umtru Scheme will be utilised. Sir, I think this is not the day on which this question should have been put in. Sir, this scheme has been going on for the last two to three years and the budget for this purpose has been voted by this Assembly including my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya for the execution of this scheme. The appropriate time to put the question in the way in which Mr. Bhattacharyya has done to-day, would have been that day when the budget provision for the execution of this scheme was placed in the floor of this House. This question should have been put at that time and not now. If Mr. Bhattacharyya does not know wherein or for what purpose, the power produced by this scheme is going to be utilised and if he did not take care to know about this so long, then it is better and safer for him to remain silent about this now.

Sir, it is known to all that we are going to get machineries for this scheme from Canada through the Colombo Plan and through the help of India. Sir, Canada has placed order with one big firm in that country to produce the required machineries which are under construction and which will reach Assam by the end of April 1956. The machineries can be fitted only after arrival. In the meantime if the required step already taken, for example, the construction of a dam, tunnels and the power house, etc., are completed, then there can be no objection to the progress of the work we have so far done. Sir, it is not true that this Umtru area is a reserved area for the

Ministers alone—I do not see or I do not know the reason for which Mr. Bhattacharyya has passed this remark ; this place is open not only to the Ministers or to the hon. Members of this House, but to one and all. On the 16th of this month we requested not only Mr. Bhattacharyya alone but all the hon. Members of this House to go there and see the progress of work so far done on this scheme and most of them went there to see. On the face of that I do not see any reason why that sarcastic remark was passed by Mr. Bhattacharyya saying that this place is reserved only for the Ministers. Why such kind of pin-pricks should be there, I don't know. I must say that these are palatable for him and not for us.

Sir, we have to depend on the machineries which have to come from Canada through the Government of India and these machineries are expected to come only by April 1956. So we can give an assurance to the House that power can be produced only when the machineries are set up for which all necessary steps have been taken by us. So whatever short-fall there is in the progress of work of this scheme these short-falls will be removed by the time the machineries reach Assam. On the face of this I do not think why Mr. Bhattacharyya should have any mis-apprehension about production of power.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: But I have no information.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Mr. Bhattacharyya should have known this because this scheme has been going on since a long time.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: When you do not give it, what can I do ?

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): The information was made known to all, but you did not take care to know it.

Now, Sir, as I have already said, that power will be produced from this scheme by the end of 1956 and that power will be utilised not only in big cities like Gauhati but it will be utilised in other places near about the area and for all purposes including running of cottage industries.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: What industries are visualised ?

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): Like that of Jute Mill if you can have it at Gauhati, and many other industries including cottage are visualised.

So, Sir, after hearing what I have said, I hope my Friend, Mr. Bhattacharyya, will see his way to withdraw his Cut Motion.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: Yes, Sir. I appreciate the Minister's difficulty. I don't mind to have the information afterwards when he can give it to me.

Shri RAMNATH DAS (Minister): No, Sir, I did not say that I will give him the information. What I said was that this is not the appropriate time to ask that question. He should have asked this question long before.

Shri GAURISANKAR BHATTACHARYYA: বুজিছো, বুজিছো, আমি আপোনাৰ অনুবিধা খিনি বুজিছো—তথাপিও আপুনি যি কলে তাৰ বাবে আমি শলাগো লৈছো।

Mr. SPEAKER: Has the hon. Member leave of the House to withdraw his Cut Motion?

(Voices—Yes—Yes.)

(The Cut Motion was, by leave of the House, withdrawn.)

The question is that a sum of Rs.1,03,78,300 (Rupees one crore, three lakhs, seventy-eight thousand and three hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for the administration of the head "81—A—Capital Outlay on Electricity Schemes."

(The motion was adopted.)

Grant No. 13

"29—Police"

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor of Assam, I beg to move that a sum of Rs.1,71,39,800 (Rupees one crore, seventy-one lakhs, thirty-nine thousand and eight hundred), be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March 1956, for the administration of the head "29—Police"

Mr. SPEAKER: The motion moved is that a sum of Rs.1,71,39,800 be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1956 for the administration of the head "29.—police."

I find that these cut motions can be grouped into three groups, namely; Nos. 2,3,4 and 5 taken as one group, Nos. 6,7,8 and 9, another group and No. 1 of course can be taken as a different group.

I also find that No. 9 covers all the others. So if it is convenient to the hon. Members, Mr. Gogoi may move his motion No. 9.

Shri GHANA KANTA GOGOI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I beg to move that the total provision of Rs.1,71,39,800 under Grant No. 13, Major head—29.Police, at page 76 of the Budget be reduced by Re. 1., i. e.. the amount of the whole grant of Rs.1,71,39,800 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

Sir, my object of moving this Cut Motion is to raise a discussion on the working of the Police Department.

This Police Department is one of the most important Department because on it rests the peace and tranquility of the State and also smooth running of the administration. Police people are by far the most powerful people. We know and every villagers know that a police officer in charge of a Thana is a very powerful officer because he is not only to maintain law and order but he is at the same time a terror to the people. Sir, police people are so important and so much powerful and they in the name of maintaining law and order, in most cases, violate law and order. When a villager goes to lodge an Ejahar in a Thana it is the usual practice of the police officer to ask him to give him some money before his Ejahar is registered. This is the general complaint everywhere, and it is very difficult to check this practice of the police people. When an outpost is placed in charge of an Assistant Sub-Inspector of Police and when the constables under him run short of money they catch anybody going near the outpost and under one plea or another usually extort money from the victims. It is also a general complaint made everywhere. And it is very difficult to check this habit.

Sir, in order to check corruption I think the pay scale of the lower paid category of police staff should be substantially raised so that they may have no necessity to harass the people

and to take bribes. Sir, it is an accepted fact that a constable or an A. S. I. of police drawing a pay ranging from Rs.22 to Rs.50 cannot manage to meet his both ends and so in order to supplement his poor income there is the necessity for him to take bribes. Sir, if we really visualise a classless society or a socialistic pattern of society then the pay of the lower paid category of officers should be substantially and immediately raised.

We find that some of the Village Defence Parties are doing some good work, but on many occasions we find that the Secretaries or the leaders of the Village Defence Parties in coalition with the police people try to harass those people who for some reason or another do not agree with the people belonging to the party that is ruling to-day. Sir, in many cases we find that the Village Defence Parties are doing this. Some power should certainly be given to the Village Defence Parties. But unless and until they can prove that they have the required amount of sense of responsibility and training they should not be entrusted with power. They are no doubt doing some amount of good work, but that they are also doing a lot of mischief. So, some vigilance must be there to check the activities of the Village Defence Parties as well.

Sir, some action on the part of the Government is necessary to check the illegal activities of the police officers, as they sometimes detain people for days together in the Thanas on one pretext or another and before they are sent before the magistrate the police personnel in order to create or concoct evidence give them doses of treatment. That is the practice commonly applied all over and this should be checked.

I draw the attention of the Government and of the Chief Minister to see that this very important department of the Government on which rests the peace and tranquility of the State works properly and corruption, inefficiency and slackness do not remain any longer.

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

Mr. SPEAKER : Cut Motion moved is that the total provision of Rs.1,71,39,800 under Grant No.13. Major head—29.—Police, at page 76 of the Budget, be reduced by Re. 1, i. e., the amount of the whole grant of Rs.1,71,39,800 do stand reduced by Re. 1.

Maulavi MAHAMMED UMARUDDIN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Cut Motion moved by Shri Ghana Kanta Gogoi.

Sir, we have seen how our expenditure on the police of the State has been mounting from year to year. So far as the increase of expenditure in the nation building departments is concerned we have an anxiety to build up the State and as such we are providing more money to be spent for implementing certain development plans which are calculated to bring prosperity to the State. But at the same time in other general administrative departments the expenditure should not have been as large as is particularly the case with the Police. We find in the Police Department the expenditure was Rs.1,01,56,000 in the year 1952-53 and it rose to Rs.1,12,00,000 in the year 1953-54, then it rose to Rs.1,39,00,00 in the current year and now it has jumped to Rs.1,71,39,800. In my opinion this big rise in expenditure is not justified in view of the results achieved. First of all it is our duty to provide sufficient funds for development plans but in implementing those plans we have been very much handicapped for want of finance. But at the same time we find that if there is any Department for which ostensibly there is no reason to spend more money, it is in my opinion the Police Department.

Now, Sir, we claim to achieve the ideal of a welfare State, but a welfare State is distinguishable from a Police State. Now, the question is whether our State is a police State or a welfare State as claimed. In a State where the police power is mainly employed to keep the ruling authority in power and the resources of the State are utilised primarily to that end it becomes a Police State. But in a welfare state resources of the State should be primarily employed to serve the best interests of the people to bring about all round improvement of the people, socially, intellectually and economically. In our democratic pattern of Government we are committed to bring about a social change, an economic change and a change, in all spheres through a spirit of service. But our Governmental authority should not utilise the Police for the purpose of consolidating their ruling power, but they should utilise it only to maintain law and order, to maintain peace and tranquility of the State so that the people can live peacefully and happily and free from interference from unruly elements. Now, Sir, from the way they have been increasing the expenditure on the police administration it appears that the Government attitude does not conform to the principle

they profess that they stand for a welfare State. Again we find that the police has a legacy from the past, a reputation that they were a mere instrument of the Imperialist power for the suppression of the people. But even after 8 years of Independence this outlook both of the police as well as of the people has not changed. Can we not bring about a better relation between the police and the people? Can we not make the police feel that they are the servants of the people and not their master? Still a feeling of fear and seclusion exists between the police and the people—the police do not care to enlist the willing co-operation of the people and the people are also very shy of getting nearer the police. What is it due to? Is it not because of the numerous cases of oppression by the police over the people, is it not because of numerous cases of corruption rampant among the police? Government have failed to develop that spirit of service and co-operation, that feeling of unity of purpose between the police and the people, which alone can ensure better administration in the country. As a matter of fact, we should try to bring about an entirely changed outlook in the police administration. Police should be an instrument of service to the people, to the society, and then only the purpose for which the police force is maintained in the State will be fulfilled. Now the question is—how to achieve it? Sir, it is possible only by recruiting the best available people and by getting them passed through a process of training which will change their mentality and outlook. At the same time there should be persistent propaganda emphasizing the role the people have to play so that their outlook may be changed. This is indeed a very difficult process, but until and unless this can be done, the same amount of misunderstanding, suspicion and fear that existed before will stand as a permanent barrier between the people and the police.

Secondly, I want to speak something about the Village Defence Organisation. As far as I know, in my own district this organisation has been doing excellent work, and I have a few good words for Mr. Barua who is the Hony. Organiser of the organisation. Recently, when he had been to my district, he told me that he was very anxious to infuse into the mind of every Village Defence Worker the bias of social service rather than of authority. I entirely agree with him. If we are really serious in our professions to improve the conditions of the villages, we must put before us as our motto, the social service. But this can be done if we can bring about a harmonious co-ordination of efforts both of the Village Defence Workers as well as of the police. I have seen only a certain amount of work of the Village Defence Organisation and with this limited

knowledge, I cannot say that all that is to be done in the villages have been achieved. Therefore I cannot vouchsafe for the fact that everywhere there has been satisfactory work by the Village Defence Organisation and there has been no malpractice as alleged by Mr. Gogoi. The work of the personnel of this organisation requires a great deal of vigilance, a good deal of supervision. In this connection, we should also remember another thing. The money that has been spent for this organisation is not at all sufficient. If we want good service from these people, we must provide them with sufficient incentive for work. They should be provided with the necessary amenities. Good work should be encouraged and recognised by award of prizes or rewards. Therefore, Sir, in my opinion more money should be provided not only for the amenities and comforts of these persons but for taking of new and more benevolent schemes so as to expand the activities of this organisation. Sir, if we really want to eradicate corruption, we must create an independent machinery for this purpose. The present arrangement of deputing some Police Officers temporarily to work in the Anti-Corruption Branch is not at all satisfactory. Some of their officers may have to deal with complaints against their former colleagues or friends or even some superior officers. This creates a very embarrassing situation for them—and besides, as they belong to the police department they cannot inspire confidence in the minds of the people. It is therefore essential that if corruption is to be effectively combated there must be an independent machinery like the Judiciary manned by persons of proved integrity and efficiency. Secondly, we must create a feeling of security among the people. Under the present set up of things, people are very much afraid of bringing forward complaints of corruption, etc., against Police Officers. When any enquiry about corruption, etc., is made against any police officer, or as a matter of fact, against any officer having power and influence nobody comes forward to give evidence. Because, if he gives evidence, the chances are that he will be put to trouble. There are instances where people are victimised for giving evidence against officers. If a sense of security can be created in the minds of the people, if fear of reprisal and victimisation can be removed from their minds, then people will naturally shake off fear and come forward to give true and honest evidence before any authority set up for detection of crime and eradication of corruption. Then again, we have set up for prevention of corruption the Anti-Corruption Committees. These Committees are of an advisory character and have no authority to take up enquiries themselves. Under the existing set up it may not be in keeping with the procedure prescribed in law to authorise

them to take up enquiries. But in my opinion, in the preliminary stage, when an enquiry is held by a police officer it should be held in presence of the Members of the Anti-Corruption Committees so that people may not have any fear to disclose true and correct information. But until the existing procedure is revised, no useful purpose will be served by these Anti-Corruption Committees. Otherwise, people will always smart under a sense of fear and victimisation and will hardly come forward to record their evidence. Then again, we should also provide that only a responsible police officer conducts the preliminary investigation in cases of corruption.

There has been no noticeable improvement in the matter of investigation of cases or detection of crimes. There is still in some cases considerable delay in investigation and this is mainly due to lack of adequate supervision by superior officers. Steps should be taken to improve the situation.

Another point to which I wish to draw the attention of Government is the necessity to redistribute the Thana boundaries. Because since the time the boundaries of the Thanas had been originally defined a good deal of change has overtaken the country. In some places population has increased enormously, in some places cases have registered a great increase. In this way, for a variety of reasons it is necessary that the boundaries of the police stations require to be redefined taking into account the population of different places so that the Police may work more efficiently and be in a position to cope with the increasing volume of work.

Another thing that strikes my mind is the increase in the expenditure of the Criminal Investigation Department branch of the Police Department. Personally, I feel that there is no justification for higher expenditure in this Department. So far as investigation of crimes and maintenance of law and order is concerned, ordinary police branch is solely responsible. This Criminal Investigation Department appears to be used only for the purpose of security. But in a welfare State we need not pay so much attention on the point of security.

In a really democratic State, in a State which we want to give the pattern of a welfare State, I do not think there should be so much stress on security. After all, we are living among our own people and our officers are also our own people and so we do not think there should be so much stress and so much expenditure on security, except of course for border security, which is a necessity.

Then, Sir, the officers of the Criminal Investigation Department in the districts have not got any superior officers on

the spot, most of the superior officers stay in Shillong. The result is that the Criminal Investigation Department officers in the districts work practically independently, though they are supposed to be under the general control of the superintendents of Police. Their activities are, therefore, not properly watched. We hear a lot of complaints that these officers cause harassment and trouble to the people. Therefore, Sir, some sort of means should be devised to establish better co-ordination and superintendence of the work of the subordinate officers of the Criminal Investigation Department stationed in the districts.

With these few words, Sir, I support the Cut Motion moved by my Friend, Shri Gogoi.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Mr. Gogoi has moved a general Cut Motion. But although his Cut Motion is general, he should have given particular instances to substantiate the various allegations he made on the floor of this House. I tried to hear him very attentively in the hope of getting some specific instances from him. First of all, he said that in police stations, the officers-in-charge generally realise money when any person comes for recording Ejahar. This is a news to me, Sir. He has not at any time brought such allegations, citing specific instances, either before the local officers, viz., the Superintendent of Police and the Deputy Commissioner, or before the Government. I may say that we on our side even take action on anonymous complaints, which previously had been thrown in the waste paper basket. Any anonymous complaint containing specific allegation is enquired into. Sir, we have a total strength of more than 12,500 police officers and not a single complaint has been received, at least during the current year, regarding this alleged payment of money at the time of recording Ejahars. A general remark does not help. If my Friend knows any case in which money was taken at the time of recording Ejahar, I would request him to bring this to the notice of the local officer concerned and if no action is taken he should bring it to Government's notice so that action can be taken. I assure him that this Government is determined to purify the police. I, of course, do not say that all police officers are angels, but this sort of general allegation does not help either Mr. Gogoi or the police officers themselves to trace officer or correct their behaviour. If there is any bad or corrupt officer he must be weeded out. This can only be done by bringing specific instances to our notice and not simply by making a general allegation on the floor of the House by taking advantage of the privilege of the House.

Shri GHANA KANTA GOGOI: I shall give instances.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Merely giving instances also does not help. Citing of instances which occurred, say, 3 years ago will be of no use as no evidence can be found. The instances must be recent instances. If any Member of the House does not want his name to be disclosed I shall keep it confidential. As I said, Sir, we want to purify the police officers and make the Department free from corruption. We want to give them a bias for social service, which my Friend, Mr. Umaruddin also wants. I hope Mr. Gogoi will help us in this matter by bringing specific instances to our notice.

Then, Sir, another general allegation was made that the police in collusion with the Village Defence Organisation realise money from the people. Sir, there is an honorary organiser of the Village Defence Force and I also attended some of their rallies. I never heard any such complaint, even from Dibrugarh side. This is a news to me. I do not know why this vague allegation has been made. It does not serve any useful purpose whatsoever.

Thirdly, he made another allegation that the police officers taking advantage of their authority detain accused persons after arrest for an unusually long period. Perhaps it is not unknown to Mr. Gogoi, that a police officer, as soon as he arrests a person, must produce him before a Magistrate within a specified period laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code. If the person is detained for a longer period, the police officer is guilty to the charge of wrongful confinement and is liable to conviction. If any accused person is detained for a longer period than what is laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code, he can complain to the Magistrate before whom he is produced and the Magistrate is bound to record his statement, enquire into the matter and take any action that he considers necessary. The accused persons are generally defended by lawyers and I have not heard of any instance, at least during the current year, where any accused person made any allegation before the Magistrate that he was detained for longer period than is laid down in the Criminal Procedure Code. I, therefore, think, Sir, that Mr. Gogoi made these vague allegations only in order to make a speech in support of his Cut Motion.

Then, Mr. Umaruddin said that the Police Budget was increasing day-by-day.

(At this stage the Speaker left the chamber and the Deputy Speaker presided).

Sir, my Friend may be knowing that on account of Partition, we had to recruit a large number of border police force and increase of expenditure is partly due to their pay and emoluments. With the object of decreasing the gap between pay scale of different groups of officers we had to increase the emoluments of low paid officers, particularly constables and head constables and Assistant Sub-Inspectors of police, and those in the armed branch. Sir, in addition to the increased emoluments, we have also to go with the improvement of the diets of the border force, because it is very difficult for them to get food-stuffs in the border areas. In addition to all these Sir, we have to pay -/12/- per head per day so long they remain in the border areas. Over and above all these we have also recently increased the former scale of pay from Rs.18 to Rs.25 to Rs.33—Rs.35 -/8/- Rs.45. Besides that, Sir, they now get about Rs.13-8-0 in cash in lieu of rations. So, Sir, if all these things are taken into consideration, there will definitely be an increase on the police budget. Sir, in comparing with the other States, although in Assam we have a border length of about 2,000 miles, yet our expenditure on police is much less than other States. Sir, I am sure, Maulavi Muhammad Umaruddin Saheb will surely never grudge in improving the emoluments of these low paid officers, who used to get previously Rs.18 per mensem and now with an increased scale of pay and better emoluments, they are also getting free dress, free food, and *plus* -/12/- daily as I have already stated, when they remain in the border areas.

I think Maulavi Muhammad Umaruddin Saheb will congratulate Government for improving the pay scale and emoluments of low paid officers, whose number is also very great. Sir, I will give some idea about the expenditure.....

Shri RANENDRA MOHAN DAS: Sir, it is past four. Are we sitting beyond 4 p. m. ?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: With your permission we should sit till we finish the subject matter.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: We did not agree Sir. We rather had several cut motions, but we were not allowed to move. I want to know whether the House will sit beyond 4 p. m.....

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Sir, when a cut motion is moved, I think it is desirable for the

hon. Members to hear my replies. In this connection, I never object even if we have to sit beyond 4 p. m. I shall finish in only ten minutes. I hope the hon. Members of the Opposition will have no objection to sit beyond 4 p. m.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: What is the sense of the House ?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: Sir, one thing I want to point out. I have no objection in sitting beyond 4 p.m., but the convention is that if we have to sit beyond 4 p. m., it is not the sense of the House to be taken, but it is on the agreement between the two parties.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is what I say.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: But there is no agreement. I wish that you will stick to the convention.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already taken the consent of the House.

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: I have no objection if the Chief Minister goes on speaking till 5 p.m., but the point is that we should respect our convention.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That convention can be taken now. Both the Leaders are here. Whether you agree ?

Shri HARESWAR GOSWAMI: We can't change the convention at any time.

Shri BISHNURAM MEDHI (Chief Minister): Sir if the cost is compared, it will appear there is gradual decrease. In 1951-52 the expenditure was 10.2 per cent, that was reduced to 8.4 per cent in 1952-53. If the percentage is taken in 1953-54 it is only 8.2 per cent. So, Sir, generally the percentage of expenditure is decreasing. From the expenditure point of view, there has been an increase to some extent, as I have already stated that this increase is utilised for the purpose of bettering the condition of the low paid officers. Therefore, on this score the expenditure on police has increased to some extent.

Then, Sir, my Friend, Maulavi Muhammad Umaruddin Sabeel, says that no effort has been made by Government to utilise the services of the police to welfare activities, etc. It may be known to him, Sir, the Village Defence Organisations have been organised under the police administration, as these organisations have in collaboration with police in different places join the villagers in their local constructive works. Sir, these Organisations will not confine themselves to only police duties such as prevention of crimes, etc., but will also join local people in the various constructive works. Sir, I am glad to inform the House that in various places the members of these Organisations are engaging themselves in constructive works,

and the police also have been trying to establish good relationships among the people in all cases of crimes, in all cases of calamities and flood. It has also been seen that the police serve the people and help in creating enthusiasm in connection with social welfare work. Sir, those who happened to go to Dibrugarh during the flood time might have seen that a large number of police force available at Dergaon had to be taken to Dibrugarh to help and co-operate with the people in dismantling buildings and transporting materials to safe place. From all these, Sir, it will be seen to my Friend, Maulavi Muhummad Umaruddin Saheb, that Government efforts have always been to utilise police not only in detecting of crimes or in establishing peace and tranquility which are essentially necessary in the country, but their services are also being utilised for development works. They are to come to the rescue of the people and to help them when they are in danger and trouble.

Sir, these are some of the duties which the police are called on to discharge in the net set up of things. We have seen these police officers working day and night in shifts in the discharge of their duties and I am quite sure they have risen to the occasion and have been discharging their duties to our great expectation.

So under these circumstances, the general idea that the relation between the police and the public has not improved is not correct.

Then my Friend, Maulavi Umaruddin, has said that there should be revision of the boundaries of the existing Thanas. As a matter of fact we have a plan to do so. Sir, there was a Police Re-organisation Committee and that Committee has submitted a report. We are gradually giving effect to their recommendations, after detailed examinations. We cannot give effect to all the recommendations immediately. It must be in consistence with our financial resources. That will have to be done under a plan. So all these questions will have to be taken into consideration. There is a proposal also in Dhubri Subdivision for revision of the Thana boundaries.

As regards the general charge of corruption amongst the Police Officers, I shall just show by facts and figures that it is on the wane. We have a Police force of about 12,521 men and what is the number of cases against them on this account? During the year only 16 cases have been reported against them. Moreover there is a 'Corruption Box' which is opened by the Deputy Commissioners, but everywhere it is found that there is no complaint. My Friend may also know that the Criminal Procedure Code has been so amended that it has given the trying Magistrates powers to exempt an

approver from guilt in such cases, and the bribery cases have been made cognisable offences. Formerly these facilities were not there. In spite of these if people do not come forward with complaints, it may be taken that the number of cases of corruption has decreased. There are Sub-Judges, exclusively under the jurisdiction of the High Court who will try such cases. There is no question of any fear on the part of any body in bringing to light such cases of corruption, if there be any. All these will show, Sir, that the position has definitely improved. We do not wish to rest here; we want more improvement. We want our Police to be worthy of an independent country so that they may be considered by the people as their friends in difficulties. If there is any wrong idea about our Police it should now vanish from our minds. They should be considered as our own men and it is upto us to encourage them for the good work that they do. We should not decry them and say that all the Police Officers and men are corrupt. It is our duty to encourage them, and it is then only we can have good results. I am sure with the help and co-operation from all it will be possible for us to make our Police Department an ideal department which will serve the people for the best interest of the country.

With these words, Sir, I request my Friend, Shri Gogoi to withdraw his Cut Motion.

Shri GHANA KANTA GOGOI: I withdraw.

(The cut Motion was, with the leave of the House, withdrawn.)

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that a sum of Rs.1,71,39,800 (Rupees one crore, seventy-one lakhs, thirty-nine thousand and eight hundred) be granted to the Minister-in-charge to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending 31st March, 1956 for the administration of the head "29.—Police".

(The Motion was adopted.)

Adjournment

The Assembly was then adjourned till 10 A.M. on Thursday, the 24th March, 1955.

Shillong.

R. N. BARUA,
Secretary,
Legislative Assembly, Assam.

The 27th January 1956.

AGENTS IN INDIA

1. Messrs. Thacker Spink & Co., Calcutta.
 2. Messrs. W. Newman & Co., Calcutta.
 3. Messrs. S. K. Lahiri & Co., Calcutta.
 4. Messrs. R. Cambray & Co., 6 and 8/2, Hastings Street, Calcutta.
 5. Messrs. D. B. Taraporevala Sons and Co., 103, Meadow Street, Fort, Post Box No.187, Bombay.
 6. The Indian School Supply Depot, 309, Bow Bazar Street, Calcutta.
 7. The City Book Company, Post Box No.283, Madras.
 8. The Director, The Book Company, Limited, Book Sellers and Stationers, 4/4A, College Square, Calcutta.
 9. The Manager, The Imperial Publishing Co., 99, Ry. Road, Lahore.
 10. Messrs., Chapala Book Stall, Shillong.
 11. Messrs. Sirbhum Publishing Co., Calcutta.
 12. The Proprietor, 'Graduates Union,' Gauhati.
 13. Mr. Banwarilal Jain (Book Seller), 1719/2002, Mati Katra, Agra (India).
 14. Messrs. Low Book Society, 65/3, Harrison Road, Calcutta.
 15. The Director, Benares Corporation, University Road, P.O. Lanka.
 16. Messrs. Law Book Society, 4A, Wellington Square, Calcutta.
 17. Messrs. Bodh Raj Marwah, Booksellers, Shop No.63, Pusa Colony Market, Delhi-Karol Bagh, New Delhi.
 18. The Oxford Book and Stationery Co., Scindia House, New Delhi/17, Park Street, Calcutta-16.
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